Sourdough Gold

MARY LEE DAVIS

WHITEHORSE PUBLIC
BOX 2703
WHITEHORSE YUKON

Yukon Room

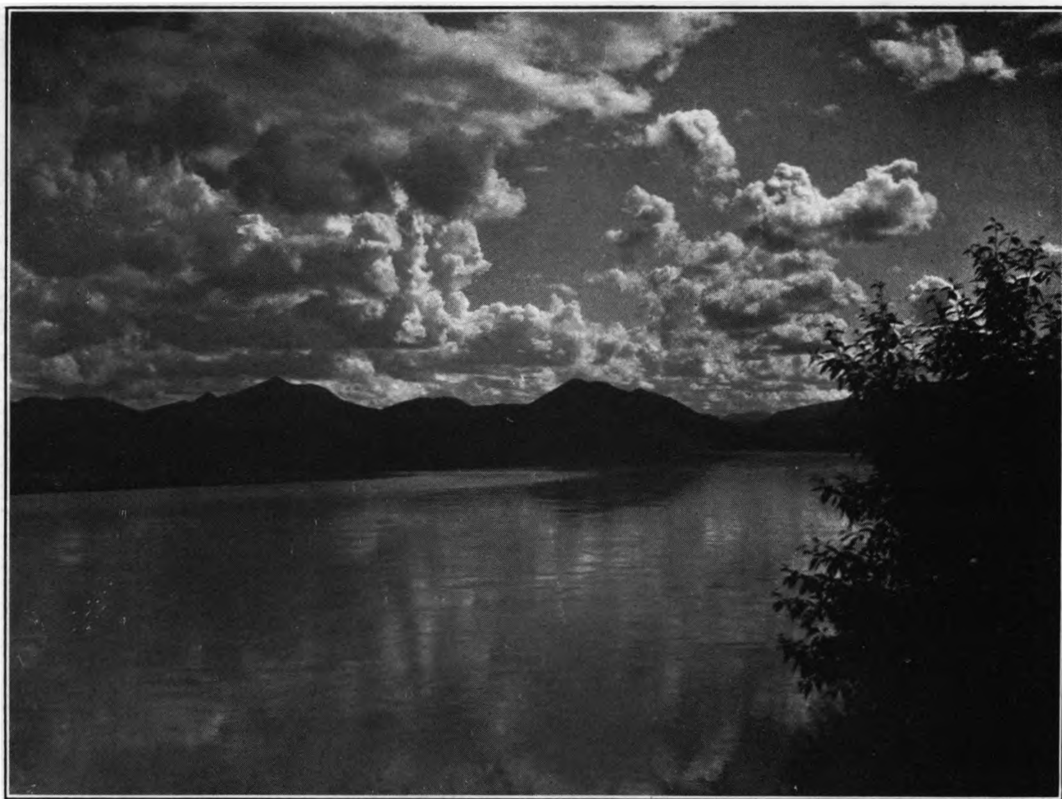
Yukon Regional Library
Whitehorse, Yukon

SOURDOUGH GOLD
The Log of a Yukon Adventure

BOOKS BY

MARY LEE DAVIS

Uncle Sam's Attic, the Intimate Story of Alaska
We Are Alaskans
Alaska, the Great Bear's Cub
Sourdough Gold, the Log of a Yukon Adventure



"The Yukon ran West, following the sun-path"

SOURDOUGH GOLD

The Log of a Yukon Adventure

By

MARY LEE DAVIS

Author of "Uncle Sam's Attic," "We Are Alaskans," "Alaska, the Great Bear's Cub"

WITH MAPS BY THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

W. A. WILDE COMPANY

PUBLISHERS BOSTON

Copyrighted, 1933,
BY MARY LEE DAVIS
All rights reserved

SOURDOUGH GOLD

Printed in the United States of America
971.21
Da
c. 1.

To

HOWARD ATWOOD KELLY

Surgeon Extraordinary—Trail breaker of Rare Vision
Master of Strong Sympathies, Energies, and Loyalties
—A Learner always, though accounted with the Wisest—
I dedicate this Book

SOURDOUGH:

One who has wintered in the North, beyond 54° 40′; one who has "seen the ice come and go."

That is a practical and dictionary-like definition, perhaps as good as any. But to describe the real meaning of Sourdough is another and a more difficult matter. If you are not a Sourdough yourself, you find it hard to discover. If you are yourself a Sourdough, you find it hard to tell. The very essence of the word is personal experience—picturing a person who knows the North so well, is so at home there, that all he needs is just his crock of living sour-dough yeast in order to set up a happy housekeeping in any farthest corner of the land.

Perhaps—just perhaps—this whole true story, which "Duns Scotus" and I have together put together, is our best definition of the meaning of "Sourdough."

MARY LEE DAVIS.

CONTENTS

I. KLONDIKE JIM THE FUTTEGUHR FAKIR

In Red and Black 17
One River Ran West 24
Silver Flute and Faery Fjord 32
Twice '49 Is '98 39
Up and Hike! 46
Anybody's Gold 55
Beds of Alaska Feathers 64
Riding White Horses 74
The Knight's Move 86

II. THE DUSTS OF HER STREETS WERE GOLD

The Hub of the Klondike 97
When Mercury Froze 108
The Saint of Saint Mary's 120
Vis Medicatrix 131
Square Meals and Social Rounds 140
Victoria—or My Uncle? 153
A Line from "Iolanthe" 167
Scarlet Curtains 183

III. RIVER AND I

The Craft of Buddha 203
Spitting Eagle 217
Foot in the Circle 228
Rolling River 243

CONTENTS

Mnemosyne, Her Garden 255
The Mirror of the Wilderness 267
Wind Upon Water 288
Delta and Omega 306
Kai-ya-no—Pee-o-vah 317
"Get Your Man!" 327
End of a Yukon Log 342

ILLUSTRATIONS

"The Yukon ran West, following the sun-path"
Frontispiece

OPPOSITE PAGE

"Crystal glaciers dropping to the fingering Sea" . 36
"Majestic Lynn Canal."
Rough Sketch Map of the Trail.

The Summit of Chilkoot Pass, that spring of '98 . 54
Sketch Map from Dyea to Dawson.

"A little city of amateur boat builders at Lake Bennett" 70
Waiting at the Lake Camp for the ice to move.
"The motley fleet which followed the ice down the Lake."

"The quiet alternation of lake and river" . . 76
—"Was soon to know swift change!"
"A quarter mile of vertical rock wall."

"We crossed lovely Lake Lebarge by night" . . 84
"Limy sandstone pocketed and patterned."
"Black forests rose."
Five Finger Rapids.

Dawson City, looking up-river to the mouth of the Klondike 98
"The Dawson Waterworks"
Dawson's crowded streets, in '98.

"All the earth sitteth still and is at rest" . . 110
"The Northern Lights dropped silver, jade and amber curtains."

"I wish that you had known Father Judge" . . 132
"Men with fortunes waiting on the next stroke of the pick."
The sun at *midnight,* from a mountain back of Dawson.
"A landscape carved in Carrara."

Governor Ogilvie 166
A Yukon graybeard rocking out his placer gold.
"Where *is* the boundary?" was the question.
The concrete answer to an old dispute — the international line.

"Now that my river flowed once more to sea, I, too, must follow" 192
"As May days lengthened, I became impatient."

"The military post adjoining the town was called Fort Egbert" 224
"The painted sky-land of our American Eagle."
"The older houses wore flower gardens on their tops."
"The day's work done, a good westing made."

"Loggers had been cutting wood for hungry steamboat boilers" 256
"The slow rhythm of my sibilant River."
"Summer fish-camps of the River Indians never slept."
Young Rex Beach once lived in this Rampart cabin.

A Yukon steamer and her barges at Fort Gibbon . 262
"The Tinneh canoe is slim, long and pointed."

"A lone blockhouse — all that was left of the Russian redoubt" 328
Kai-ya-no, pee-o-vah! — Thanks and good-bye to "The land that measures each man at his worth."

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Deep thanks are due to five friends of the North, for many photographs of old days and odd places here reproduced: Arthur H. Merritt of Boston, The Honorable James Wickersham of Juneau, J. G. Blanchard of Skagway, F. G. Kimball who called Saint Michael "home" at the turn of the century, and Clarence L. Andrews of Sitka, Skagway, Eagle City and points still further North.

I

Klondike Jim the Futteguhr Fakir

In Red and Black

WHEN I came North those several years ago, much of the veritable magic of Alaska lay, for me, not in the hidden, golden treasure underground but in that other richness found in sourdough tales. Although the whole of the wide-spread glamourous North is raw material of adventure, in no place and at no time had such venturing been so concentrated, perhaps within the memory of man, as on the Trail of '98 into Canadian Klondike from the Alaskan seaports of Dyea and Skagway.

Of winter nights, especially, I listened for long hours to countless tellings of that passage of the passes. No two, of all my weather-beaten, sourdough friends had met identical experiences, though all had crossed the border into the mysterious North, at similar times, by similar trails. If more than one old-timer should happen to be present, we usually were treated to rare argument; for no two could apparently agree on certain little inessential facts! The years between had mellowed certain happenings, had sharpened others. The memory of man is eminently fallible—a jackdaw thing, snatching and retaining for its shaping nest only what glitters and attracts.

Dark facts, drab facts, are lost and can not be recalled. My sourdough friends could tell me, after a lapse of more than thirty years, the color of a partner's eye, the type of lace he used to latch his shoe-pacs, and just how many spoons of sugar or molasses he lavished on his coffee. But if I asked, "How much did beans cost, in that winter? How large the boat you built on Bennett? When did the ice break on Lebarge that

year?" it angered them—for either they could not remember or disagreed in violent controversy!

Never shall I forget one near-to-fist-fight argument, precipitated between two men both in their sixties, sane and sober pioneers whose word was better than a gilt-edged bond—and all about the simple matter of a cedar brush! One said, in telling of the steepness of Chilkoot's heart-break climb, "I grabbed at a scrawny bunch of cedar growing from a rock, or the stone loosened from above would have been the death of me." The other snorted.

"You never crossed the Chilkoot, or else you're a liar. There wasn't a green twig or brush upon the whole bloody face of Chilkoot. If you were a man of truth, Andrew, you'd know it, and not be telling the lady, for facts, a yarn spun clean out of your head!"

After at least an hour of bitter argument—hot and acid and all but homicidal, apparently!—we learned at last the tiny fact which cleared it all and sent them away into the night with linked arms, singing. Andrew had crossed the Chilkoot in '96, before the great stampede when thousands blackened the pass with human, crawling figurines of men; whereas my good friend Scotty had come over Chilkoot in the spring of '98, with the great rush and after any little twig or growing bush that might have clung there had long ago been torn from that cliff's bald and worn and rocky face by grasping fingers of tired men. It was so simple a solution.

Yet that was the night when I first thought to myself—"If only some one of those thousands had kept a daily journal, and jotted down the things that one forgets so easily—then and there and freshly at the time—with all the force and impact of immediate experience, and beyond all later controversy." For the Trail—and Dawson City, the far ending of that trail—were one thing in the fall of '96, another in the winter of '96, the spring of '97, and so on through each season. There were

changes, notable differences of conditions, up to the summer of 1900. Whole groups of statement, true at one of these seasons, would be untrue at others.

Some day, I thought, I'll hope to find a truly first-hand record of the Trail of '98. These blessed sourdoughs read back into all those early years so much of later experience. Their minds run out along so many tangents, one never gets the days of '98 alone, or the fresh impact of the earlier impressions. They seem to feel ashamed, almost, of their own first experiences. "I thought then as a child," they seem to say, "but now I have become a man, and I have put away the many childish things which are of interest only to green cheechakos. I have become a Sourdough, now. All newcomers are children. I have long forgotten what was interesting to myself, as child."

I started hunting for that journal, which I knew some one must have kept. I asked so many, "Did you keep a diary?" But they all laughed at me. "Good gracious, woman, no! If you'd have seen that trail! Don't you know what Robbie Service said of it? And he was dead right, too.

"'You've read of the trail of '98, but its woe no man may tell;
It was all of a piece and a whole yard wide, and the name of the brand was "Hell."'

"No fellow's going to sit himself down and write things in a note-book, if he's scratching for his very life and up-keep. It just ain't done. Be sensible. Quit asking us old-timers if we kept a journal. The boys will figure you're plum dotty."

Of course it is not likely that many would have kept a day-to-day account, for not many were of careful, contemplative mind; and most were far too eager, far too hurried, far too extrovert, when on that arduous journey north. Perhaps, though, if some day I could find some one among the seeking-gold thousands, who had not been a gold-seeker, *he* might have

kept such a record. And because I am a person who believes so very firmly that the things we truly seek are seeking us, I felt strongly that one day this long-sought journal of the Trail of '98 would find me out. Then I would walk a while, quietly, alone, with its lost maker, in that Land of Forgotten Things. But meanwhiles I stopped asking folk if they kept journals, for I didn't care to be considered foolish by my new Northern friends.

The years rolled or skipped or slid away, as years do so inexorably. One day my husband and myself were talking to a friend—one of the broadest-minded, I believe, who ever sought Alaska. For our North has become " home " to many a man of deep refinement and wide culture, as well as to many simpler souls who asked of it only swift action and concrete material fortune. Our friend is a physician who has long since given up his active profession for the life of a philosophical hermit, alone upon an island in a great river. Out of a well-stored, well-trained mind, he spends his days propounding questions of the universe, seeking to find answers. His hale and ruddy three-score years and ten he carries with a healthy poise that many a far younger man might envy. Our doctor is no doddering graybeard but an active, fresh-faced man with shining gray-blue eyes and pink-toned cheeks that give the lie to birth dates.

He is a man of deep reticence; few know him, and he cares for few. He is no misanthrope, and gives generously of his deep-won knowledge when he can be of help; but he prefers to live alone and far away, and towns and folk and things are thought-distractions which he with sedulous care avoids. My husband and I both felt a deep respect for him, and both of us were honored by this wise man's seldom-given friendship. When I came to know him well, I too was an old-timer, and he called me by a name I treasured (though it amused me, too, for it is not so very apt, I can assure you!)—" Bitter-sweet

Sourdough." And I called him "Duns Scotus," because he had a twist of mind that suggested the subtle old schoolman. A tart critical bite crisped all the edges of his thought. But though his argument was often pulled in sharply, with whipping words and selvage of a tight-drawn terminology, this was at variance with a strangely shimmering peace, webbed deep beneath in mysticism.

We knew him only in the present then, not the past; for he spoke little of old days and gave no facile confidences. Our talk was usually on timeless, spaceless matters—a joy, for so few of our other, many, tried, Alaskan friends cared deeply to discuss the things our handsome gray-haired doctor was living with so closely. In his lone home above the flowing river, his loyal collie for a sole companion, his only intimates were thoughts: man's end and his beginning, the unsolved problems of man's will, and fate, and tangled earth-trails.

One day we were discussing something out of Hegel's *Phenomenology,* and our good doctor said, "I met a man once on the Chilkoot Trail, who had an argument for that. We spent a long night, talking, in a shelter there. His argument I well remember. His name was—humph! the years have stolen that. But I can cheat the years." As he said this, he carelessly reached out a hand and turned a key in a desk drawer, there by his elbow, and drew out from it two little leather-covered books, one red, one black. As he began to turn the pages of the red one, I think my heart stopped beating for a stroke! There was my long-sought journal, within a hand's reach of me. For one quick moment I knew a childish, cave-man instinct to snatch the precious bits of red and black—and run! But Dr. Jim's true friendship was dearer to me even than the precious journals. If I could only keep the one, and gain the others, too.

The bit of worn and crimson leather held the record of his coming to Alaska, in March of '98, at the very height of the

gold-rush into the Klondike. The black-bound journal was a day-by-day account of his winter spent in Dawson at its boomiest period and—what I'd never dared to dream to see—his journey all alone, in a small boat during the long summer of 1899, the full length of our mighty Yukon River from Dawson to St. Michael. In time, he generously gave me much more than those two little books; for, when he realized my almost delirious fever-heat of interest in them, a something longer locked up than that locked-up drawer was opened; and he spoke for hours and hours on end, we listening, of days long past, times changed and gone, yet living still in brought-back memories freshly reëvoked from those slow turning pages.

Men don't write very fully in their journals—most men do not. Rather they jot down little keys and codes which memory turns, interprets, and translates. He gave us all the accuracy of the day-by-day account; but he gave more, that had not been set down there with a pen but which had been deep written in his mind, and which the written words were keys to find and open once again—precious pieces of life.

"The fashion of the time has altered so," he said, "it is temptation to open and to tell—and temptations are very rare and pleasant things to oldsters such as I am. You've rubbed the rusty, dusty lamp, and from the dismal limbo of back numbers I see my own young manhood crawl out and stand here straight and tall once more. The bone and skeleton of that experience is here, under my hand. To put a living flesh and blood upon it is memory—too poignant ever to be lost. There is a certain ring of truth to all fresh-written records of experience that, with all possible soever shortcomings makes them at least of personal value.

"The story of the Chilkoot has been told a thousand times, as you well know, yet never has been, never can be, told; for each of all of us who saw it, saw it differently. It has been told in fiction, told in authentic story, told in prose and told

in verse, told by dreamers and by hard-boiled factish folk, as well as by hard-handed miners and in hard-documented government reports. Yet it is not told yet, and never can be. Whereas, to one who lived within it, all that happened on the Chilkoot and in Klondike days was inescapable but rather confounding at the time, now the real meanings are no longer elusive but are formed and clear. The human side was so much more remarkable than any physical peril or effort. Of that I'm certain. The North *is* what a man brings to it. So I am of a mind to let that lusty fellow, myself of thirty years or more ago, raise again his too presumptuous head, declining to be dead. He seems, as I turn pages on him here, not merely revivescent; but is, in fact, offensively alive!"

—What follows is his story.

One River Ran West

HESE little books, in which the youth of me still lives, are such a personal piece of things-that-have-been that I must introduce you to myself of yesterday.

You've never asked me why I came to Alaska, although I know you've often wondered. There is no secret here—nothing disgraceful, I assure you. I had not robbed a bank, nor fled a posse! There was no melodrama to my coming North, as in so many instances we've seen. Yet there was drama, for there was genuine conflict. It was an inner, personal conflict, though, which not even my most intimate friends (in those days I had many) could understand. Perhaps I did not understand, myself. I'll tell you of this young man, proper. I'm using proper in its old heraldic sense, you see, to mean " drawn in the natural colors."

I was born in India. Does that surprise you? No, I had never told you that. Perhaps because I was a very little boy when I was taken back to England. But the first language that I spoke was Hindustani, and the element of romance was forced into me because of my early nurture by Mother India. My parents were American, with ancestry on both sides running back long before the Revolution. My father had a B. A. from Washington and Jefferson College, in Pennsylvania, and was also a graduate of Princeton Theological. My mother was a graduate of Mount Holyoke at the time when Mary Lyon was its president. My sister, a brilliant woman, also graduated at South Hadley. Two brothers went to Princeton, and one of them received an M. D. from the University of Pennsylvania.

I was the youngest and they all have died long since. "Had" has a definite sadness to it. I had, but do not any longer have, my kinsmen.

My mother built up Woodstock, perhaps the finest school in India. She was really a great woman, so recognized by hosts of those of her own times. My father was a scholarly man, well versed in Hindustani and in Sanskrit, besides Greek and Latin. My parents lived all through the Indian mutiny. Futteguhr, where I was born, lies forty miles from Lucknow and about fifty from Agra.

Though just a wee slip of a boy, I remember so deeply and so well the long voyage in a sailing ship from Calcutta around the Cape of Good Hope to London. It was my first tremendous adventure. To this day, nothing smells so sweet to me as tarred rope. We stopped at St. Helena, where we got fresh fruits and a canary. That first stay together in London was pleasant and extended. I still remember London as I saw it then—the markets, the Crystal Palace. We stayed there about six months and then sailed for America, where everything again was new experience, but followed by the anguish of separation from my parents. Their Jamie was sent to attend Hastings Academy in Philadelphia, while they must return to India. At Hastings, the boys decided that I must row for Yale. That settled my goal for that period, and became my consuming ambition. I went to Yale, got my A. B. in 1884, and rowed on the Varsity crew. It was the hardest discipline that I had known; but old Bob Cook, the leading coach of his time, praised me in words I'll always treasure. Our crew broke the record—a record that has been surpassed only a little and only a few times, ever since. Boats—and rivers—have always been my friends. I won medals for the broad jump and the horizontal bar—in fact, was something of an athlete.

After graduation I had charge of the time department of the Yale Observatory, having to take time from the stars and send

out telegraphic signals of extreme accuracy, over a wide area. I held this post until leaving for Edinburgh, and it was a valuable experience. Here is a letter which Leonard Waldo the astronomer gave me when I left. It is another of the old treasures in my drawer of memories. Then I spent five years in Europe, receiving the degrees of M. B. and C. M. from Edinburgh University, and later my M. D. For three years I was a member of the Volunteer Medical Staff Corps of the British army, with training at Aldershot. During holidays I traveled very extensively all over the British Isles and came to regard myself—and be regarded—as a Briton. I suppose I looked the part. I was a rather tall, athletic, dark-mustached young blade. I fancy I thought rather well of myself! Then to Vienna, where I took postgraduate courses, working in the hospital wards there. I have traveled widely over Europe at this and other times, spending three years in Bermuda and a season in the British West Indies at Nassau. I didn't seem in those years to belong anywhere in particular, but felt myself a citizen of the world.

I came to Washington, D. C., and six months after settling there was placed in full charge of Columbia Hospital, where I remained two years. Soon I was elected vice-president of the Medical Society, though rather young for that honor. I wrote and published, on my medical specialty, a book which met with high approval from my profession, and others. It is still quoted, and by writers of repute. I was a "coming young man."

Coming—but where was I going? Out of the middest of all this perhaps too easy, perhaps too early success, a question began to raise and put itself. My life, to now, had been a flowing thing, no questioning. I had taken, I had accepted, all that America's and Europe's best could give. What did I actually possess? And what *was* I? Above all, what did I really ask of life? For some reason the "taffeta phrases and

the silken terms precise, three-piled hyperboles, spruce affectations, figures pedantical" of all my pleasant and successful (as the world said) social and professional life, began to taste dark-brown, to turn dull-colored. At the end of the road I was traveling, I saw a suave, distinguished, professional gentleman, starched and proper and with a silky bedside manner. Was that what I had asked of life, all I could make of it? Was this the thing I really wanted? Well enough to be a gentleman, and thought one. But was there a real man beneath the gentleman exterior? Did I know? Was I sure? Had I really found him?

That was, let's say, in 1896. An unknown prospector on the Canadian side of the Alaska-Yukon boundary line was out fishing one day that summer with his squaw wife, her brother Skookum Jim, and a cousin Tagish Charlie. More or less accidentally, they found gold upon a creek the Indians called *Ton-dac* or Hammerwater—because the rush of salmon through the weirs made such a racket there. But I didn't know that, then, and neither did the world. What I did know was this: Although I was not homesick for any particular place, I did want change. I had become restless for something that civilization did not afford.

I had always loved rivers, was considered expert with small craft. I craved an intimate, long season upon some great river. And it must be an American river; for, after all, the Americas were my birthright and heritage. I'd venture this my river, alone, from source to mouth. I'd learn its end and its beginning, its leisured way, its rapids, and its peaceful resting in the ultimate sea. Alone, away from fellows and from crowds, from cities and from percoct, epitonic living, I'd find perhaps the man I maybe was—or, if I did not find him, I could write off the books, in red, the years I'd so far wasted, and start afresh.

My first thought was the Amazon, and I considered it seri-

Yukon Regional Library
Whitehorse, Yukon

ously. If I'd gone there, most likely I'd have lost my way, not found it. What a gipsy bag of fortunes life is, from which we blindly draw our destinies! I sat for hours, cupping a blue-dun globe between two surgeon's hands, feeling the multi-rivers of the hemisphere stream through my fingers. Some one of them, of all these flowing rivers, I'd seek and find for my companion of long days, for my true master in the art of living. So many rivers, twisting thwarted to so many seas: which, of them all, would prove my river?

The greatest watercourses of the sister continents spread out their diverse and inviting ways, beneath my probing fingers. Each its own character, peculiar charm, or beauty: which—for my friend and study? Deeper and deeper grew that inner feeling, that there was something going on in life which one should recognize and know for real, but which had somehow, so far, eluded: things recognized as being, in some way, significant; but exactly what that significance might be, with all my getting of world knowledge, I did not know.

Then suddenly, one night, I found my river, made my irrevocable choice. I noticed that all the great rivers—with but one exception—ran sometimes north and sometimes south, but for the most part followed an eastward course, falling in line with the earth's ceaseless spinning toward its master sun. One of them only, on this hemisphere—though in its birth and its beginning, by nature and by earthy pressure and restraining, it also followed first the normal laid-out course—fought to reverse itself and ultimately seek a westward-facing sea. Though mountainy chains repelled it, a way was found to penetrate the unknown, glamour-yielding West after long wandering through uncertain ways and there at last it poured augmented waters—the only river here of greatest magnitude, to dare to flow, in the full span of its complete, maturer riverhood, against the turn of earth.

The fancy caught my brooding. I could not let it from me.

The Yukon was my river. I'd follow it. I began avidly to read all I could lay my hands upon of early explorations on the Yukon—Schwatka's initial journey, the work of miners in Alaska on the Fortymile and other Yukon diggings. I made up my mind to go there and all my plans were so converging, long months before the news of any gold strike leaked out to the world, long before the excitement of the actual gold-rush. When I had chosen Yukon for my own, it was a little-known and little-cared-for river of the North, mysterious to most, and shadow-haunted. Because my first love for it, as well as my first choice and turning to it, were so distinctly of this earlier period and long before so many made the venture, I never have been able to escape the feeling that I too belong to the chapter antedating the Argonauts, nor quiet my ever interest in that earlier story.

George Carmack and squaw Kate nearly spoiled my intimate project for me, though. While I was yet concerned adjusting my affairs, putting my personal and professional house in order so I could go to meet my river—go leisurely, perhaps to stay, no chains to pull me back into the noise of things until, or if, I wished it—gold in hitherto unbelievable quantity was discovered upon the Yukon's upper reaches and a whole world, which had not heard nor cared before about my river, turned eyes upon it.

In July of '97, when I was in the midmost of my plans for a solitary trip into that little-known and lonely subarctic section, the steamer *Portland* fetched a million and a half in gold from the Klondike; and in San Francisco a little crowd of brown and weather-beaten miners, crippled with scurvy, bearded with a year's growth, carried from the *Excelsior* that very week another two million dollars worth of gold—wrapped in crude, newspaper bundles, packed in coffee cans, jam pots, oil tins, or in moosehide pokes. Or so the rumor ran, though doubtless it was magnified. 'Ninety-seven was a year of hard

times, you may remember. So when this bright and yellow, hard and cold glitter was exhibited for all the world to see, at Selby's smelting works, it set the hearts of men elate and, as friend Service used to say, " To every man who could hold a pan, came the message, ' Up and Hike! ' "

That's how George Carmack nearly spoiled my river for me. I was annoyed, resentful. I very nearly gave it up. For months I said, " The Amazon will do as well. I'll try the Amazon instead." But still the Yukon ran west—uphill, as aviators say to-day—athwart the normal course of mighty rivers. As the time came when it was possible, honorably, for me to leave, I turned north, not south. This was one step I never have regretted. I had determined not to let the gold strike stay me. Though much was lost, all was not lost. The swarms of men were only interested there, I knew, in gold, upon the upper Yukon. I would be in the gold-rush, yet not of it. Perhaps, because I was not seeking gold is reason why I kept this journal. My mind was not at all upon the gold-seeker's quest, but quite another.

My friends frankly thought me insane. Some said that I was like to break my neck. Some were suspicious of some salty peccancy on my part, and queried if my orderly affairs ran kim-kam! Some accused me of adventure-seeking, and warned that one who looks for thrills sometimes gets creeps instead. Some spoke of a divinity that mis-shapes ends. Since I was born in Futteguhr, one friend in Washington now dubbed me " Klondike Jim, the Futteguhr Fakir." He meant it as a scornful taunt, no doubt—one that would make my hair curl and my skin creep. But if he too had been born in India, he would have known that there's a world of difference between the spellings *e* or *i*, in those two words that usually are spoken to sound so much alike—faker and fakir!

A fak*er* is a person who sells fakes, one who contrives to fake. In other words, a humbug. It derives from a Gaelic

verb meaning "to get." A fak*ir* is a Mohammedan ascetic, a religious mendicant, a Hindu Yogi. The word is Arabic noun, and means literally "a poor man." Fak*ir* is the exact opposite of fak*er*. A Fakir is a person who seeks, not gets. He is one who gives up all things of material value, in order to acquire certain spiritual values on which he sets far higher store. It's really a quite Christian doctrine, you can see: To give up your material all, to follow a spiritual truth or way. So—when my friend called me "Klondike Jim, the Futteguhr Fakir," I spelled the word with an *i*, and felt really flattered.

I started on my great adventure, to seek my river. What matter if the world was going, too? If it were really my river, it would give itself to me. The others could not take it from me. Even the mobs asearch for gold could not prevent me. I had heard of a River that ran West. Like Dante, when my life had only half-way run, I found myself in unexpected gloom, where the straight way ahead I could not see. God knows, I had not lived a sheltered life, cramped any way, nor cloistered. I had seen much, found little meaning. I had heard of a River that ran West. I would escape the care-free verdict of the world, drift down it, and seek there for something hidden—but not for gold.

Silver Flute and Faery Fjord

EATTLE, March 8, 1898. Got my license from officials of Northwest Territory to practice medicine. Paid $50 for it. Delay in receiving it caused by snow blockade on Canadian Pacific Railroad.

That early jotting in the red book may amuse you, my Bittersweet Sourdough. Are you smiling at *me,* or at human nature in general? Or at the too strong hold of a professional training, becoming second nature to a man, which can't be shaken off? I will admit it is amusing—I going to the Yukon with the set intent of being all alone, and now to find myself in the middle of the world's perhaps most feverish, violent mob-movement. And I had thought to cast off medicine, for a time at least. Yet when I realized what I was getting into, certainly for the first part of my journey—a mass of untrained, unprepared men setting out into a new country, where conditions might be we knew not what—I felt that I at least should be prepared to use what skill I had, if necessary. Knowing something from long experience of the formalities of British medical law, I decided to observe those formalities to the letter and be on the safe side, carrying in my pocket a physician's license to practice in Canadian territory.

I had been well advised, and so procured my outfit in rather tough but very bustling Seattle rather than in the East. Those who did otherwise were in a bad fix, when they found themselves actually upon the trail. The whole way of the Chilkoot was strewn with useless and sometimes ridiculous gear, cast aside when its weight and utter inutility were realized, too late. In Seattle I found many wise old-timers from Alaska

and the Yukon, glad to give me patient and valuable advice about what to get, and where. I had already learned from my reading that men had been taking out placer gold from the Upper Yukon for a generation or more, and that long before the Klondike strike there had been quite a colony of seasoned prospectors both wintering and summering in that section—especially on the Fortymile, a tributary just below the Klondike, on my river.

Upon the advice of one of these, a rough fellow in exterior but of utterly kind heart, I got my year's supply of provisions together, with tent, clothing, tools, and other requirements. A thousand times in the next year I had good cause to bless my first "Sourdough" friend. He told me that the early boats going North had been dangerously overcrowded, and that no food was provided on them. The *Rustler,* on which he himself had traveled, (I think it was in the fall of '96, he said) was but forty-five feet long, had a filthy deck, and the stench and noise aboard her must have been loathsome. The "captain" was said to be the former driver of a milk cart in San Francisco! She carried a license for twenty-five passengers and held—or was stuffed with—nearly seventy, most of them so drunk during the voyage North, however, that they cared little about the inadequate "accommodations." She must have been a wretched little cockboat, from his telling. He said that if half the passengers rushed to the port side to watch a passing *kanim* or native cedar boat of the Coast Indians, as once happened, she heeled over until seas washed the gunwale!

After listening to such tales, or the story of how the scows *A-jax* and *B-jax* had been towed to Skagway by the tug *Sea Lion* in '97, and the trip had taken full twenty-six days, I was glad indeed to find that much larger vessels were now on the run, including *The Cutch,* once the yacht of a certain Indian Rajah, which came half round the world to join the Klondike rush. I was very pleasantly surprised with the equipment of

the *City of Seattle,* on which I secured passage. *March 20, 1898. Left at 6 p. m. Very comfortable stateroom. Had five hours in Victoria. Lovely town. Flowers blooming. Saw primroses for first time since leaving Scotland. Met Symington whom I knew in Edinburgh. He showed me over town. The food provided on the "Seattle" seems to me luxurious. . . . March 22. Reached St. Mary's. Heavy snow and fog made us lie to. In evening, played flute to passengers with Townsend (violin) and Wright (cornet). Music appreciated. Beautiful scenery.*

That evening "concert" opened my eyes. The crowd—some of them—appeared rough, talked rough. They were all sorts and conditions, excited, taut, hilarious. Yet for hours they crowded the ship's saloon while we played—we three strangers, improvising a program as we went—old hymns, old songs, old airs of many lands and times. They would not let us stop, until we had to from complete exhaustion. The one real luxury I allowed myself on this journey was my silver flute, really a beautiful thing and an exceptional, sweet-voiced instrument. It was my closest comrade all the months to come and, I'm quite sure, my best friend maker. When I couldn't talk a language, as with Hawaiian trail mates or at Indian camp and Eskimo igloo, I took out my flute and its sweet silver voice spoke for me, in a dialect quite untranslatable but never once misunderstood.

In '98, many of the Coast Indians still used their native-built, superbly beautiful, carved and painted boats of straight-grained, highly durable cedar—"scented wood," the Russians called it. These surprised me by their seaworthiness and, although dugouts, their lines were a delight to the eye of any boat-lover. Some were seventy-five feet long and eight to ten feet wide, could carry a hundred men. Few such craft are on those waters now, I hear. At one port I had *hy-as wa-wa* or "big talk" with an old Native who bore himself with such

dignity I knew he must hold some position of importance with his people, though I did not learn his name. It amused me that he had the same trouble with our English *l* and *r* sounds as do the Japanese. I wondered if there might be some ancient oriental linguistic connection traceable here. My acquaintance transposed the sounds frequently, I noticed—and with the most entertaining results.

I was very much interested (there's a notation here about it) in the story one of my companions on the *City of Seattle* told me about *hooch*. It seems that this word, which has now come into common use for any domestic distillation of spirits, originated on this very coast. There is a village of Indians here called Hoochinoo, and a soldier deserting from the old barracks at Sitka settled among these Natives and taught the simple villagers the fatal secret of the "worm." He made a potent rum or whisky distilled from the fermentation of flour and molasses (this last was provided freely on the coast in early days by Yankee traders and whalers) or from anything else that would ferment. Because the first illicit drink of this kind on the coast leaked out, so to speak, from Hoochinoo village, the coastwise sailors called it "Hooch," and hooch it has remained to this day.

My boat acquaintance told me that he had seen Indians on these islands making hooch, using the long hollow stem of a species of seaweed, very common in these waters, for the condensing worm. Some old Native fellow, such as the chap I picked acquaintance with, would sit on his haunches for hours silently watching the slow distillation and, as the liquor dropped from the worm, would drink it just as fast as a good mouthful collected. Many an early settler in this section, so he said, lived a whole season on a diet of "hoochinoo and Alaska strawberries"—that is, whisky and beans.

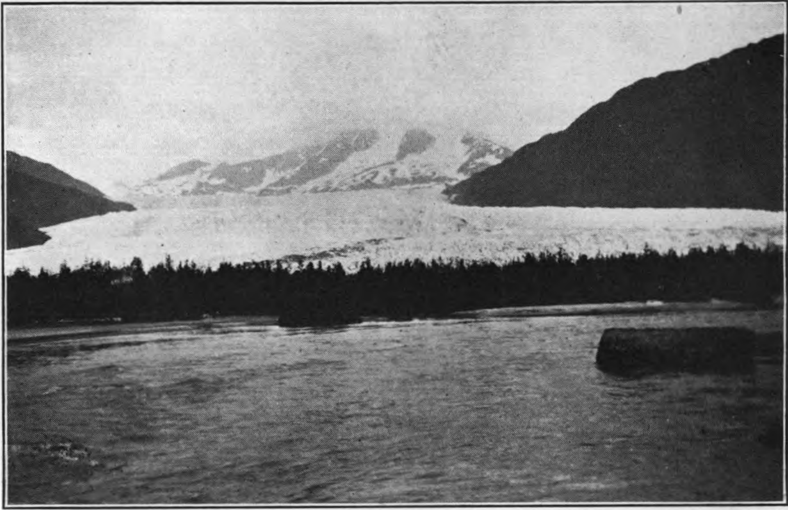
We met this pleasant fellow's partner in Juneau, where we put in for several hours. It was an Alpine village then, of

wooden houses that scrabbled up a steep hill to run away from water. The streets were to our knees in mud, it seemed, and the population was composed mainly of saloon-keepers. Perhaps that's an unfairly rough sketch of fair Juneau, in its cub days. But that's as I remember it.

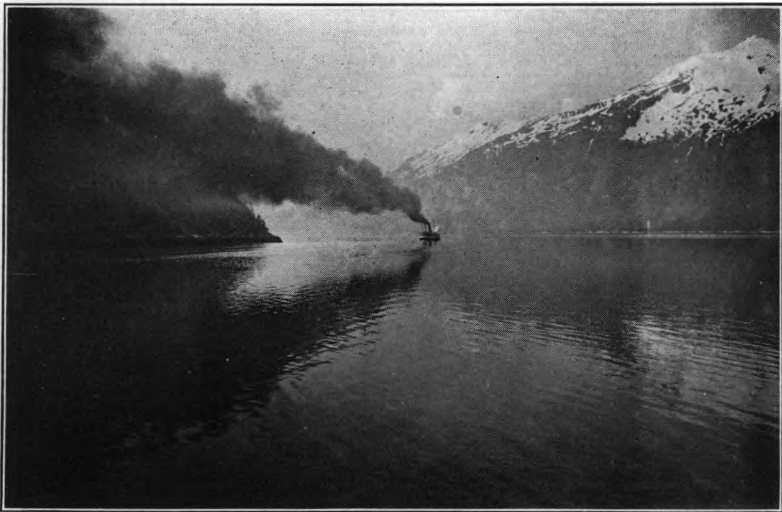
These two old pals (or tillicums, as of course they called each other) had a long argument in my presence over the noble subject of beans. The partner preferred rice as a "steady"; claimed it was easier to pack, was less attractive to vermin, and that a little weight of rice cooked up into a great bulk of hearty food. Also, he deposed, it blended better with any wild meat than did beans, and lent itself to more varieties of fancy camp cookery. But his clincher to the argument was a statement which, while it amused me vastly at the time, I came to appreciate in full force later, after I had my own months of experience in overcrowded cabins and with tight and unairable sleeping-bags. Rice, so he said, is non-gaseous as a human furnace fuel! As a practicing hygienist, this last appealed to me as a very practical argument.

However, my friend of the boat was unalterably strong for beans as a staple; and beans he would have first, last, and always—whether fried in prospector fashion, baked in the Yankee manner, or plain boiled à la gob. There was no turning his devotion to the bean. The argument was still hotly on as the *City of Seattle* drew away from the dock at Juneau. I never did hear how it ended.

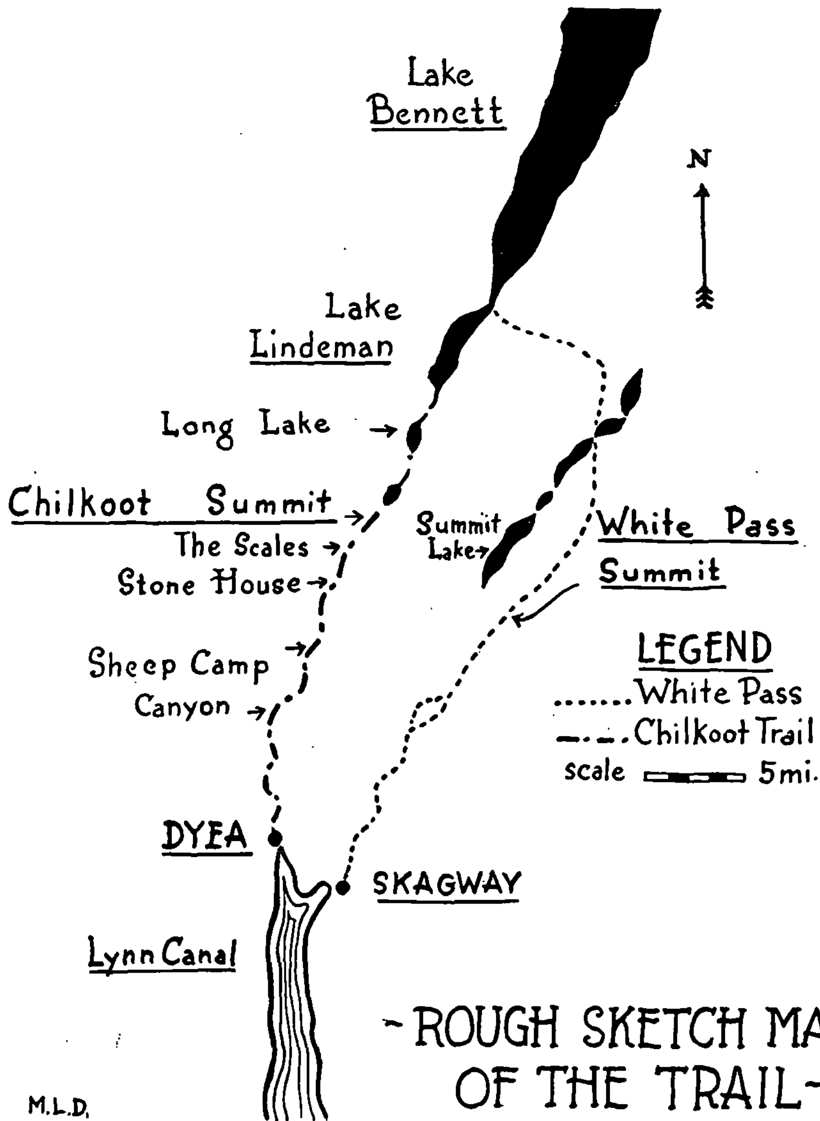
—Just look now at this page of the red book, and at this, and this! Do you see the ending of each one of these daily notations? The same two words, endlessly repeated: "Beautiful scenery." I'd like to shake that youngster. Why was he so lacking in vocabulary that he could only wear out those two trite, inadequate words, with constant repetition? To be sure, the Inside Passage is "old stuff" to us Alaskans, now. But can you remember how you felt when you first saw it? Had



"Crystal glaciers dropping to the fingering Sea"



"Majestic Lynn Canal."



Rough Sketch Map of the Trail.

you seen the coast of Norway—and did you, too, know this, our own sunken coast of our own floating continent, for something even finer? More superb? I was a young man then, it's true; but I had already known many of the ports of earth, and this was surely not the barren North as I had visioned it, but rather something " last, loneliest, loveliest, exquisite, apart " —although I didn't know my Kipling, then.

Our skipper told me that this Inside Passage was early known to navigators, but not used by steamers until fairly recent times. Few thought then of the Alaskan coast as tourist country, yet the tourist will inevitably follow beauty: The Scotchly humid air, soft and moist; the rich soil where horses and cattle fed on luxuriant knee-high grasses; the ports like Juneau, Wrangell, Sitka, open all the year. The sea with a thousand tongues licked into the serrated coast and, deep in the inmost recesses, dark forests rose. A moon of saffron was our masthead light, an undimmed glory. The glass surface of the fjords was smooth as Thames at Marlow.

But the play of clouds and atmospheric changes on the living glaciers which we passed became for me the final touch of magic. In dull weather, they were cloudy turquoise on the surface but in depth were sapphire. On bright days, with a full sun, the whole ice-stream showed crystal. Let a cloud move across the sun, or your position shift but a point, and in a twinkling all was changed again. And at late Northern dusk, when the upper sky was full of twilight color—well, small wonder then that youngster didn't find his words, even in rich Hindustani. The ice mass takes its color from the sky, deepens and intensifies that color in a lucent shift, enough to turn an artist mad. Gad, what effects!

And blues—did you ever know such blues as in those crystal glaciers dropping to the fingering sea, or hung aloft on crags? That beryl blue, that pale-green blue, that—well, it is not a pretty or poetic word, but sometimes it's a vitriol blue. In an

old traveler's sea book I read once, " Here ice is bleuest, the fairest bleu that can be, seen in the cracks of ice hills, curiously worked and carven by the sea. It is not like other ice, but of a perfect azure colour, like the skyes."

So we drove into the hard North, to soft accompaniment of silver flute and faery fjords.

Twice '49 Is '98

HIS is a crazy patchwork journal. One reason is, as you have seen, it's scribbled in a dozen different languages. I had a notion that I might be lost, sometime upon this journey, or my effects be lost. There were some thoughts I wanted to jot down, about myself or things in general or comments upon my companions, sometimes; yet I did not relish the idea that these jottings might later be found, and read, by strangers. That's why I used a Greek or Hindustani shorthand often—perfectly intelligible to me, but quite literally Greek to most of my trail mates.

For instance, this little muddle of Persian cat-scratches here —can you read it? Well, perhaps I couldn't, myself, if I didn't remember something I was thinking then. It had to do with those same silver flutes and faery fjords, I was speaking of. That's what made me recall it.

When we struck the Chilkoot Trail, and later in Dawson, certain groups of us often discussed the differences and parallels between our own hike and trek in '98, and the great quest of '49. To do so was natural, I suppose. These were the two great gold-rushes of historical time, certainly of American history; and the majority of us were Americans of some variety, although we were headed for a British territory. The fathers or uncles of many present Argonauts of '98 had been past Argonauts of '49. We sometimes made numerical puns, about '98 being the second generation of '49, or '98 being two times as hard as '49. Of course it wasn't, really, in spite of cold and snows and passes. The forty-niners had cold to en-

dure and passes to cross, no better scouted than our way. They had a many times longer journey to make beyond civilization, and they had problems of transport which the Yukon solved for us. Wagons are much more difficult to mend than boats; and every one knows that oxen and horses are not at all easy to handle and keep stout and well, over long distances and with many changes of fodder and water—not to mention foot problems or, rather, hoof problems. If you ever heard a genuine forty-niner tell about his trail, especially if it happened to be the overland way and not around the Horn, you'll remember as I do that every other sentence was something about wagon tires, broken axles or wagon trees, horses sick from alkali water, and oxen with torn hooves for which leather stockings or socks must somehow be fashioned, or iron shoes shaped like a figure eight.

Their edge on us was this, it seems to me: They weren't suddenly thrown into their experience by the scruff of their necks, as we were. When we were dumped upon the beach at Dyea, we had no preparation for the terrible Chilkoot that towered above us there, an absolute confronting. This was dramatic, it was sudden, it came without any warning; and most of us were totally unprepared for it, in mind, body, or estate. The forty-niners came, in good part, from farming communities in the East or in the Middle West. Some of them were already skilled plainsmen, and almost all of them had spent at least their boyhood in the good hard school of roughing it, as farmers' sons. They knew the ways of the land and soil, they were weather-wise and out-of-door-wise. In '49, American civilization, such as it was, was rural; and the gold-rush to California drew from a rural, hence a nature-wise and physically sturdy population. By '98 the population was becoming urban. Hard times and financial panic drew to the Klondike rush a group of men for the most part city-trained, city-whitened, and city-softened. Trails and rivers

and frosts and shoulder burdens were alike all untried mysteries to our generation. We were more skilled in bookkeeping and business than in the tricks of overcoming the stiff laws of gravity.

But—and a something even more vital—when men set out for California in '49 they eased gradually into their adventure as well as into their hard work. Most of them began their training for the western desert and the problems of Rocky passes, the very day they left their homes. And day by day, for months, they learned and hardened, were broken to it gradually, until by the time they reached the really testing climax they had become trained trailsmen. If they were not, by then, they had already fallen by the way or been turned back.

With us it was quite different and hence our trail seemed harder, although it really wasn't. There was, in fact, no physical obstacle upon the Chilkoot Trail so truly awful as a desert can be, waterless. We did not have to meet the test of unendurable heat. The river, not our own two feet, bore us the major distance of our way, direct to our destination, once we had built our boats. And any boy can build a boat, and thousands did so in '98 and lived to trust their gear and bodies to them and later tell the tale. The time of our great rush was in the spring, when (while there was a very real peril of avalanche and blizzard) there was no peril of an unendurable cold, such as might hang upon those summits in the winter. I'm not belittling the Klondike adventure nor the "terrible Chilkoot." God knows, any man who experienced it would be a liar or a fool to do so. It was no summer-day perambulation, and the pitiless Pass and the deep canyon of the Yukon took their cruel toll of living flesh and crushed and buried human sacrifices there, in plenty.

My point is merely that our deadliest peril lay inside ourselves and not in the natural forces to be overcome. And the

reason—one of the reasons—was that we had been lulled so, like a Ulysses crew, by easy approach to our Scylla and Charybdis, to the close danger of our Lorelei rock, by those very silver flutings and glassy fjords which seemed so beautiful and peaceful at the time but unprepared us for our test and vigil yet to come. More men were turned back, or destroyed, by Skagway gamblers such as the infamous Soapy Smith gang than by the Chilkoot's self, I'll warrant. And more men died or lost their chance through lack of suitable equipment, either of camp gear or of necessary mental luggage, than ever drowned in White Horse Rapids. The passage of the Chilkoot tested a man's guts rather than his legs, if you will please permit me that strong old Saxon word. I have to use it, *sauf votre respect,* for there is no true synonym in English for the word guts, just as there is no real substitute for them in a man's character and make-up.

We had been well fed on the *City of Seattle,* we had been comfortably cabined, and our every want attended to. No one had to lift a hand to serve or tend himself in any untoward way. And then, suddenly, another life began. We were dumped out at Dyea and it was every man for himself, with the Devil very close at hand to snatch the hindmost. To the unprepared, it was a hideous and trying experience.

Skagway and Dyea are approached through the grandest of fjords, the majestic narrow channel of Lynn Canal, two hundred miles long and arrow straight. It is a strange yet natural waterway, God-made and not a hand-digged arm of the sea, cut between jagged mountain faces vastly impressive and somber: "Waters between walls of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass"—black forest touching tree toes to blue water, and tipped with white snow on the heights. Locally it's said that all the winds of the world blow up Lynn Canal in summer and blow down in winter. At its very end, the estuary forks into two small indentations. On the right-hand tip lay Skag-

way, a sprawling, brawling, raw city, the port of entry for the White Pass Trail which was later to be spanned by a railroad.

March 25. Reached Skagway. Went through hospital and saw cases of cerebrospinal meningitis. Some call it spinal come-and-get-us, while others call it spinal come-to-Jesus. From an original concourse of tents in July, 1897, the town had grown to numerous frame buildings, stores, saloons, gambling-houses, dance halls, wharves, and well-laid-out streets. A certain Keelar's pawn-shop was, rather tragically I thought, the show place of the town by now. He had a whole tray of the most exquisite old cameos, heirlooms he had swapped for useful things, with cold-footed stampeders. His slogan: "I'll give a hundred dollars to any man I can't trade with, if he wants to trade." It all appeared to be a scene in a rather tawdry, modern version of John Bunyan's Vanity Fair. Surely this was no place for the ultrafastidious nor the unco guid. The town was as patently a drunken irruption on the fair land's face as is the pimple on a sot's chin. And it was quite as full of impurities—soon to be pricked.

I heard that there were eleven married women in Skagway that spring, three hundred and fifty "professional women," and more than ten thousand men, all fortune hunters, preying or preyed upon: Miners from California, Australia, and the Cœur d'Alenes, as well as the riffraff from the slums of the world and honest men whose savings had been swept away in the panic of '93 and who saw a gambler's chance to recoup. Here's a note in the journal: *Conditions at Skagway and Dyea are similar. The most prominent feature of the landscape is the activity of the shell-game men and their cappers. How any one can be deceived by these crooks is a mystery, but many are. They look evil, and are evil. Great numbers lose heavily and a good many have had to give up their journey and turn back, all funds being lost.* Later there's this entry: *Shell-game tables extend from Dyea to Sheep Camp and one comes across*

them every hundred yards or so. The U. S. soldiers here do not look like soldiers. They are slovenly. Too often they are seen watching the shell-games and never once have I seen them do anything in the nature of police work. They are inefficient and not respectable. No one has any respect for them. The " Mounties " are always respected and look neat and orderly. I never saw a shell-game after leaving Sheep Camp. The terrain up above was too rough for these tender creatures!

While guns popped so frequently at Skagway and Dyea that they caused no more comment than firecrackers on July Fourth, I never heard an exchange of shots after we crossed the Canadian line. But Skagway and Dyea were full of sharks of both sexes. The flashy ladies, mostly in bloomers, were not at all attractive, I assure you. I never saw a woman who looked handsome in bloomers, though that may be a crabbed bachelor prejudice! And '98 was not a time when slimth and pulchritude were synonyms, as now. Sounds of revelry by night were high and frequent. I've seen a North West Mounted Police report (the one for 1898, I think) written by Inspector Steel, which characterized the Skagway of that day officially as " little better than a hell on earth." Rowan, the first United States marshal at Dyea, was killed by a " barkeep " named Fay.

At the tip of the other finger of Lynn's sea arm lay Dyea, only four miles distant, separated by a rocky point but cut from the same piece of cloth as Skagway. Appropriately, since Dyea means " a carrying place," an Indian stalwart carried me ashore through knee-deep water, the long half mile or so of shelving beach. Our outfits were landed somehow, mostly dumped out wholesale. There's a good anchorage at Skagway but Dyea is an open roadstead. Here we were to leave salt water, for keeps. A sharp, March wind blew crisp upon the disordered camp, a camp that never seemed to sleep. One's first thought was that it must be an annex to some psychopathic

ward. Every one seemed out of his head, actually crazed. Such mad rushing, such disorder, such patent lack of any plan or thought! The real miners en route for the Klondike were steady and industrious men, quiet and busy; but the folk most seen and noisy and obvious were gamblers, sharps and brothel keepers, men and women of every variety and stripe. Robberies occurred frequently and in open daylight.

Although Dyea had a peaceful look in vista—lying snug in its valley, wooded hills about it, set there like a Swiss village upon an Alpine lake—almost the first step I took ashore, a man pulled a gun on me for "trespass." He had a little fence, about a foot and a half high, which I had inadvertently stepped over. I may have looked too green and dumb to be worthy of his valuable lead. It may have been my hand upon my gun, under my coat. At any rate, he did not shoot!

Up and Hike!

MY outfit of a ton and a half was unloaded on the Dyea side of the five-thousand-foot mountain dividing the two passes of '98. Some stampeders were going over White Pass from Skagway that spring and some over the hungry Chilkoot from Dyea. Leaving salt water at points four miles apart, the two trails swung roughly in a lens shape, on the map, converging again just above Lake Bennett. From Skagway to Bennett was about forty miles by trail, while it was about thirty miles by the Chilkoot.

The Chilkoot was the older, Indian trail, and before the gold-rush it had been called "The Grease Trail" by the Natives; for across it they had traded the precious oolakan fish-oil, which was one of their staples of barter with the tribes of the Interior. The Chilkoot was at first not only shorter but better marked, and at this time was preferable, so I had been advised. Also, it was called the Poor Man's Trail for you could either engage Indian packers here or do all your own packing, whereas from Skagway a new wagon road was building, with bridges fit for horses and a graded way up the hill at Liarsville. The backers of this project demanded heavy tolls, or so I heard. My only knowledge of the White Pass trail is hearsay. You could get your stuff packed from either Skagway or Dyea all the way to Lindeman, for a fancy price per pound; but I didn't see paying out such big money, for I had a back and two legs. A good many others felt the same way.

From my reading before I left Washington, I knew that in the early eighties a white man named Healy had established a trading-post at Dyea, to supply the Chilkats with goods to

trade into the Interior. The Chilkats themselves had long ago found and broken that trail over the Chilkoot pass, later used by us Yukoners. Ogilvie in Dawson later told me that in 1887 there were a hundred and thirty-eight Indians at Dyea, two white men and one woman—Mr. and Mrs. Healy and a man named Dickson. He said that as early as '95, there was a trading firm here called Healy and Wilson, who had organized a horse-packing service from the boat landing to Sheep Camp, though the rest of the way was too steep for horses. In 1896 the Canadian Government entered into a contract with Captain William Moore (whom every one here seemed to know as Old Bill Moore or Captain Billy) to carry three mails yearly into the Yukon.

All this was prior to any Klondike gold-rush, you see; but most of the thousands who came North seemed to believe (and later told, most of them) that they were going into the unknown. It wasn't any paved highway, I'll admit, but the Chilkoot was already an historic trail and already well fed with human sacrifices. In 1897, when the first rush came, Dyea consisted of the trading-post of Healy and Wilson and two saloons, while almost the only edifice near Skagway was Captain Billy Moore's log cabin.

I've heard Henry Crook telling (he was a shingle-weaver in Ballard and the champion at it for the State of Washington) that the story of gold got him in July, 1897, and he decided to go north for a bout with the fickle Goddess of Fortune. When he reached Skagway there was not a building on the beach. They landed their outfit in lighters and the next day began building the since-famous Pack Train Saloon, the first one in that camp. A tide of eighteen feet runs at Skagway, so the first comers lived in a line of tents at the edge of the woods and just above high water.

In winter, the trail was better over White Pass, the sourdoughs said, sleds going up the canyon on the ice or climbing

Porcupine Hill. But as soon as a touch of spring fell on the passes and the trail was soft during the day, Chilkoot was preferred and the actual pass was often scaled at night, when the soft deep snow was firmer. Sometimes the start was made as late as ten p. m. I decided to take the Chilkoot Trail and to be my own transport motor or human pack-mule, for the better part of the way at least; and as I had several times more freight than could be hauled in one trip, of course I had to double and triple back-trip to get the supplies and outfit forward.

From Dyea the old trail led first along the west bank of the Dyea River, a stream with swift current and about thirty yards wide. Then there's a ferry and later a ford, and very soon you reach the head of navigation on the Dyea, where it pours out of a canyon. The lower portion of the trail ran through swampy ground and mire, with many a slough of despond and many a glacial fed and swift icy stream to retard the weary pilgrim's progress. In timber and where there was enough earth cover over the bed-rock, to catch and hold water, it all worked into a bottomless muck into which flogged, staggering horses sank and must be shot, and others stampeding over them trampled down the bodies. This was even worse, they said, on the other pass. A gulch there was called Dead Horse, where thousands of pack-animals perished. It was bad enough on our Chilkoot side. But men either pushed on, discarding part of their outfit; or got cold feet and turned back to Dyea, discouraged beyond endurance at the first essay. Just listening to the tales of those who had turned back was enough to discourage some men, and they never even made the try. It was a trial of patience, I'll admit. Dr. Young said that it took him two weeks, in the fall of '97, to make the thirty miles from Dyea to Bennett and we ourselves were even longer at it, including our delays.

The summit of the Pass was fifteen miles from tide-water,

and better than two-thirds of a mile above it. After the canyon came the so-called Sheep Camp, a sheltered spot cut by a swift and shallow brook where the canyon of the Dyea opens out. Here was the place to rest and gather forces for the actual climb. The Camp lay at the forks of the Dyea, on an extended flat about a mile wide, then covered with a growth of spruce trees and hemlock, as I remember, and I think the last of timber on this side of the pass. It boasted a road-house of sorts. Sheep Camp Glacier insecurely poised above, between two granite knobs, and betrayed its presence through the night by loud tumult and gunshot roars when it "shoved" periodically with thundrous noises. This great frozen and suspended torrent had grand snow peaks behind it, long fingers of clear blue glacier ice reaching down the granite gulches. A living glacier is a noisy neighbor, and it makes many types of noises. There was the rending crack of ice, quite literally a splitting sound. Stones carried on its surface careened into the night with a mysterious percussion. Now pebbles fell with constant patter, or again a ton or more of boulder crashed, and now a cup of sand dripped over. But always something fell. The trail now rose more steeply up the slope of a glacial moraine, comparatively easy, Sheep Camp being the last good camping ground with fire-wood before the summit.

The next landmark was Stone House, two miles above Sheep Camp. We had been hearing for days of what we must do and what we must prepare for at Stone House, where each took a last hitch at his belt and shoulder-straps, before the frightful Scales ascent and Summit. I had visioned it as an Alpine shelter cabin. Not at all. The Stone House was a large boulder, shaped something like a one-story cabin in contour, which had rolled down the mountainside and rested at the bend of the valley. Here Scripture was modified: We asked for shelter and were given a stone. And yet we were glad enough to rest our weary bodies in the shadow of this great rock in a

dreary land. A rock ledge overhung the first of a half-dozen, lens-shaped, rough plateaus of icy snow, which must be crossed before the final pass was met, where the barrier of the Chilkoot fills the blind end of this so-slanting valley. Next came the scar of the steep pass itself—some parts of it so steep you have to scramble as up the face of a pyramid, and the last few hundred feet as boldly pitched as a fireman's ladder set against the wall of a building.

The Chilkoot is misnamed a pass. It is a peak—a grim peak, whose spectral wind-swept summit the Chilkat Indian packers watch with minute care, before they will attack it. Wind always harries it, it streams with mist or snow flurries, or is buried in impassable blizzards. Its very name is treachery. Groups often have to wait a week or more at Sheep Camp, before they catch good weather on the pass, and waiting is a weariness to the flesh. It's no fun to sit and twiddle your thumbs and merely eat and sleep the days away, with every ounce of your food supply more precious than gold.

Saturday, April 2, 1898. In evening a heavy fall of snow at Sheep Camp. The Thlingit packers call it hi-yu ice, hi-yu snow. A plenty of each certainly. April 3. Terrible avalanche. Historical accident. Dug for bodies, but my chief work was helping the survivors medically. Over 70 killed. . . . April 4. All travel stopped by verdict of the miners' meeting. The greatest avalanche was between Stone House and Scales. . . . April 5. Travel not allowed. Still digging for bodies.

Winter snows piled high on Chilkoot's peak and on its steeply shelving sides. Equinoctial March storms heaped up heavier drifts. When April suns and warm damp ocean air began to thaw the weakened bases of the snows, the over-piled-up drifts loosened their ice hold, slipped from beneath. By April 3, a heavy fall of damp snow had accumulated on the steep mountain slopes and nothing could induce the Indians to

attempt the Pass that day. But while we were waiting for a lull in the tempest, a large group of too daring souls, against advice, started for the Summit, impatient of delay. Without a whisper of warning, a truly awful avalanche came roaring down as though the very spirit of the violated god of Chilkoot broke in vengeance. The summers of my childhood had been spent among the Himalayan foot-hills, above which streams the menace of the white snow plume blowing from Everest's cone; and all my childhood had been fed with stories told by my nurse in India, of that great " Goddess Mother of the World," highest and holiest of mountains, who killed in quick and vengeful anger those who dared intrude upon the secrets of that home of snow. Here at the Chilkoot, on that April day, fifty-four bodies were unearthed—or, to be more exact, un-snowed—and seven more were found later in the season after the snows had somewhat melted. Some were never found, we heard. I do not know. But many of those we rescued had queer tales to tell.

We were near Sheep Camp, that Sunday of the third, waiting to make the dash, when we saw an old man, bent, groaning, waving his arms, staggering toward our camp in a most grotesque fashion—so much so that I thought him either clowning or wandering in his mind. He was so overcome with horror he could only jerk out random words to tell of the destruction he had witnessed. Hundreds of us, camped there, went up to dig. The first one I rescued was a woman—unharmed but hysterical, who had been buried head down. I found a decidedly upset female, but finally got her to the cabin where we were treating the rescued. Our treatment was nine-tenths for shock, as few who came out alive were really injured. The snow was packed around its victims almost as firmly as though a solution of plaster of Paris had been poured over them and " set," so that the strongest could not move a muscle in this gelation.

When the bodies were unpacked from this casting, a funnel in the snow ran from their mouths, shaped like a megaphone —a most curious phenomenon—where their warm breath had melted out a cone of snow. Most of those we found alive had slept, all or part of the time of their snow burial. I assume that the toxins generated in their prison-house had partially anesthetized the victims, so that they did not suffer but were in stupor merely. I also assume that those who died found euthanasia. One corpse was later found, frozen stiff in the position of running.

One young fellow of about twenty years, whom I saw, was rescued after being buried for twelve hours upside down. On the day following his rescue, beyond being still hysterical he was seemingly well. The general report of those rescued, after a burial of half a day or so in the snow, was that the sensation was not so unpleasant as might be supposed, the feeling of cold soon passing off and drowsiness, changing to sleep, supervening. There was no great difficulty in breathing, they said, and conversation was carried on between them for considerable distances. They could hear the rescuers, though we could not hear their attempted calls to us. Several of those finally set free reported that they heard one poor fellow alternately praying and cursing for hours, until his voice was finally hushed. I fancy that must have been a decidedly gruesome experience.

One company was using oxen for hauling on the lower trail. They drove them hitched by single yoke. I think it was one of their young black creatures which we found two days later contentedly chewing his cud in a snug stable of a snow cave, in which he was securely immured. Sleds bearing corpses were a constant sight for the next few days, and on one string of sleds I counted seventeen frozen bodies. The "morgue" was presided over by shell-game artists and gamblers—self-constituted officials from Dyea and Skagway—and report had it that much money and the valuables of victims were stolen.

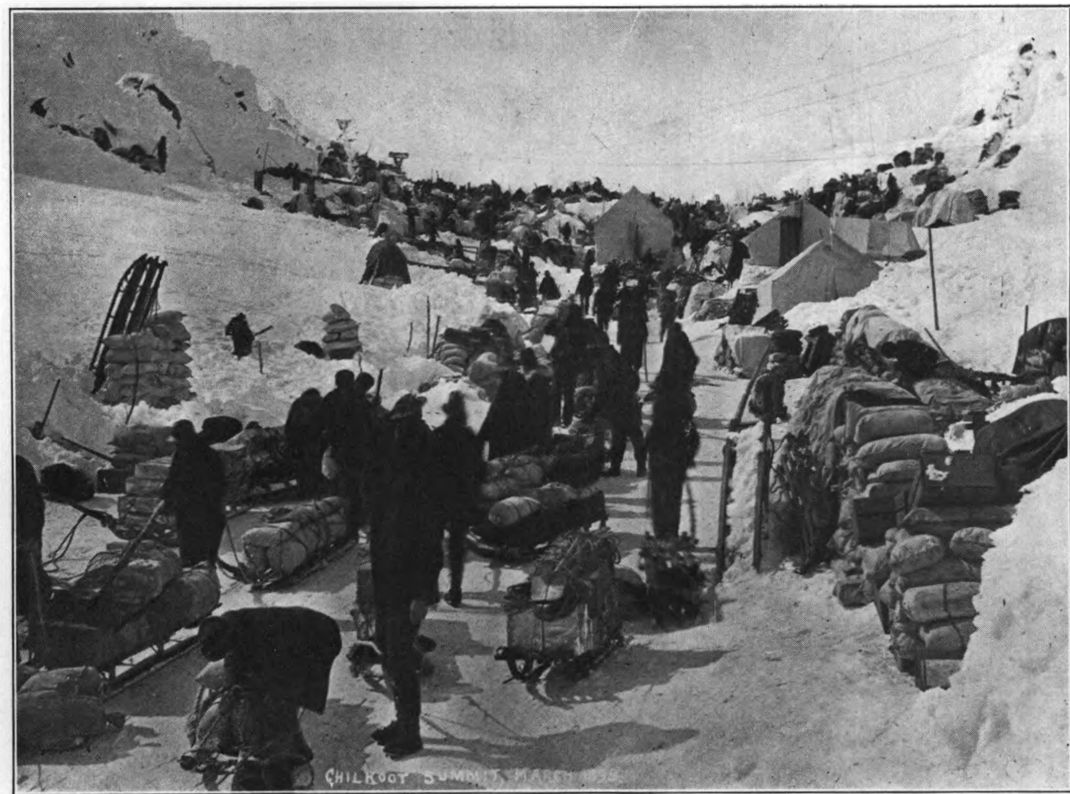
If the crooks didn't whisk their pockets, the "undys" did. There were some U. S. soldiers present but proved of no use whatever, as it was claimed that they had no constabulary powers—as they do in Canada and should have on Alaska soil. Many curious and dreadful things happened, of that there is no doubt. For one thing, the dead were buried in a little hollow, which later in the year became a lake (so rumor said) and was full of floating corpses when summer came.

At the foot of the Chilkoot a man named Archie Burns had set up a steelyard scales for the use of the professional packers, who made a business of toting freight to the summit. For this they got from three to ten cents a pound. From where the scales were hung on a tripod, to the first bench on Chilkoot, was a distance of some thousand feet. Some enterprising person or persons had cut steps three feet long in the ice of the glacic slope, and every twenty steps had cut a bench on the upper side of the trail, where mushers could sit and rest with their packs. There was room for four men to rest at one time, and we needed rest. One man said, "the last three hundred feet of that climb was like scaling the walls of a house." Another called it "heart-break," and I've heard our friend Bishop Rowe describe it as "hair-raising work." It wasn't child's play. When the steps and rest stations were cut, stakes were inserted which later froze into the lower side of the trail, and ropes were stretched from them the whole length of the climb. Each musher up these ice stairs was expected to pay toll his first trip up in the morning, but he could relay his stuff the rest of the day, as often as he had to, free of charge. Over these ice stairs went thousands of men (five thousand landed at the head of Lynn Canal in February of that year alone, the customs officer had told me) and each one packed an average of eighty-five pounds, though Skookum Jim earned his title by carrying two hundred and thirty pounds across in one load. I was told it was a piano-organ destined for a

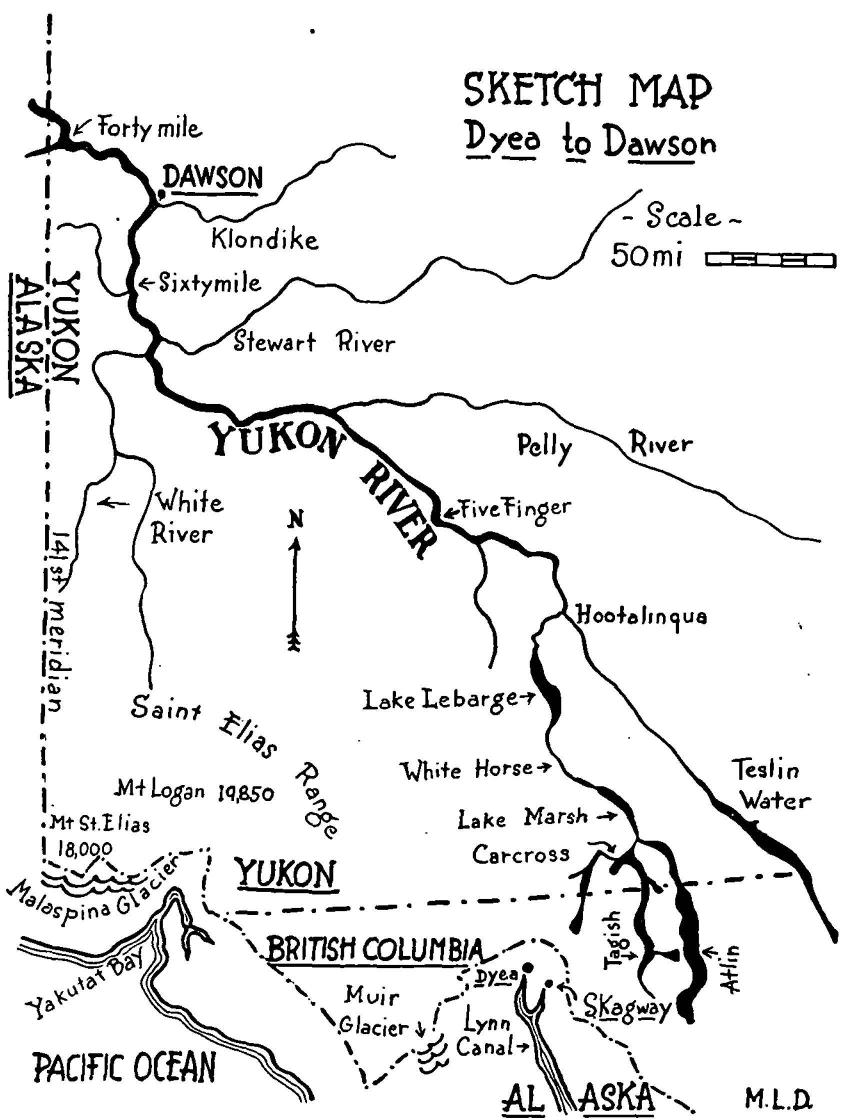
Dawson dance hall. This was the Native Skookum Jim, kinsman of George Carmack's Indian wife. Packs varied from fifty to one hundred and twenty pounds, the maximum being carried by the Thlingit professionals. Fish must be brawn as well as brain food, for these fellows lived almost entirely on a fish diet, dried!

Looking back, as you climbed, the line of straining men on the ascent looked like a string of black ants, rather than anything human. Perhaps we were not human. The wind cut through our clothes as though they were made of gauze, not wool and leather. You had to keep in line. The pace was slow, the pace of the weakest and laziest. When one rested, all must rest. One could not hurry, but neither could one get lost. The whole thing was such utter wintry confusion, the only lack was our not being in the uniforms of Napoleon's army. We surely looked the part of the retreat from Moscow —dogs and men, gear and sledges—an army and a rout.

The entry in the red book? Here it is, complete: *April 7, 1898. Came over Chilkoot Pass.*



The Summit of Chilkoot Pass, that spring of '98



Sketch Map from Dyea to Dawson.

Anybody's Gold

BEGAN my Northern story with an "I." Lately I *catch myself slipping into* "we." But there's a reason.

Until I reached Dyea, I was a lone traveler. I had formed no alliance back in the States, in the belief that better partners would be found, if partners should seem needful, when on the trail. And then at Dyea I had met two brothers—manly, efficient, and congenial men—to whom I drew at once, and they to me. These were my company, in close and pleasant fellowship, from that time on until the next winter.

We were not strictly partners for we drew no legal covenant, and surely wind-swept Dyea boasted no lairdly coven-tree beneath which we could sign our articles. Our compact was concluded, sealed, solely through the look of the eye, the clasp of the hand; yet it was one which bound, which steadily grew firmer with our better acquaintance. Provisions were equitably utilized, pro rata. Each used his own stuff as he pleased, each helped himself to his own limited supply of delicacies as he saw fit, just so long as he contributed fairly to the general mess. There was no friction, ever. We bore and forebore. I think our only rivalry was in a game, of sorts, we played together those next months, to see who could contribute most of work and pleasantness. They were fine lads. How I should like to see them once again! To all intents and purposes we were three brothers. Three is the best of numbers for such travel. Three fit a boat well. There's always one spare man

in case of accident or sickness. Four is a maximum. Don't mix too many temperaments!

My good companions were Earl and Leo Prince, whose early home had been a farmstead in Vermont. Earl was thirty-six years old, a graduate of Ann Arbor who had been in real-estate business in Chicago. He was an excellent carpenter, practical and skilled, a hustler and competent in many ways. Leo, aged twenty-five, had many a fine quirk of character, too; but the fact that he was undoubtedly a "natural-born" cook, stands out clearest in my memory to-day. "The man of it," you'll say! —The brothers were not tall men, were both of dark complexion. I'm sure I could have found no better-fitted partners, if I had combed the country. Both of them, being farm-bred, were "facultized," as New Englanders would say, and had the native Yankee mechanic genius for contriving. Earl could rig up anything. I had precious little mechanical wit, myself, at that time. I've learned some since, by practice. But I did know boats and I knew rivers, both of which were mysteries to the Prince boys for neither of them knew the slightest thing about a boat or the handling of it. Since the one biggest task ahead was to build a boat and navigate a dangerous stretch of river, I suppose they felt that I contributed my share of knowing how. They never filed any complaints. My comrades were true Princes and there was not the faintest trace of yellow in either of them.

Fair-weather friendships did not hold here. They stretched beyond the breaking or were shrunk to nothing. Parties formed in civilization, back East or even back West, buying their outfits in common, very often split up by quarrels and recriminations upon this trail. I heard and saw scores of authentic instances in Dawson, and earlier, of contentious partners who sawed boats in twain, smashed stoves and even split flour sacks in two, when it came to dividing the outfit and separating. There were fist fights and even an attempted murder or two, between

men who had left Dyea as happy bosom friends. Some got to Dawson with their boats unsawed but with their former friendships far from intact, no longer on speaking terms with one another.

A limited list of provisions, a supply of which must last at least a year and including a scanty proportion of delicacies, is really a great test of a man's character when you come down to it. You know, of course, that I mean by " delicacies " such simple things as sugar, butter, condensed milk, dried fruits, figs, and raisins. Every large party, even a group of twelve, has its one Judas, as well as some who are not really evil but who, as children, simply have not been brought up to respect the law of *meum* and *tuum*. In every larger group there are some greedy grabbers, undisciplined rather than vicious; and some of these fellows are going to be good to themselves and their own precious personal stomachs and gullets, at whatever cost to others—with a corresponding disappearance of so-called delicacies! Such delicacies were really just those articles of food important to the health in this climate where, as the saying went, grub may be worth from half its weight in silver to ten times its weight in gold. The frequent dissolution of partnerships in this region, at this time, was notorious; for here the intimacies of camp life extended through many months, and not the mere week or so of a sporting trip. Crooked little twists of character, therefore, got a far more serious testing.

So, in my John Bunyan pilgrim's progress with a pack upon my unaccustomed back, I was most fortunate to have for my companions now two honest men of admirable and wholesome qualities. Wasn't I setting out from the Cities of Destruction —which Dyea and Skagway surely seemed, when Soapy Smith's gang still ruled them—to the gold-streeted and celestial City of Paradise Fulfilled—which ninety-eighters falsely dreamed was Dawson?

In the human drama imminent about us, of which we had such tragic taste at the great slide near Sheep Camp, every race and nationality of the world seemed represented. Each separate rod of the Chilkoot Trail was dotted with its vivid, human unit. There were both men and women; but I never saw a woman quitter either on the trail or later in Dawson, though I watched plenty of my own "strong sex" break and snap under the press of accident or circumstance. And one thing we had in common, all of us, whether adventurers or adventuresses, saints or sinners, well men or sick: we were too busy getting on our own way to pay much attention either to clothing or to cleanliness.

We men were ambushed behind thickets of beards; and several times I ran across former boat companions from Seattle and did not know them nor did they know me, until we recognized each other's voices. Women were sometimes in their usual dress, but were more often in a motley of male and female costume, or frankly in men's work clothes. I saw fancy ladies in Parisian folderols, dressed loudly enough to literally beat the band, and being carried into Dawson by their owners as so much invoice of superprecious freight destined for the market. And I saw other women toiling with their husbands, shoulder to shoulder, bearing an equal physical load and proving, at the day's hard end when camp was reached, the gay and wholesome life of any gathering, at times when their men were often bitter tired and spiritually grim.

One plump little partridge of a woman, from St. Paul I think, we met at Lake Lindeman camped with her husband (a former Northern Pacific man) and their party of some twenty-five. Hers were the highest spirits of them all; and yet she packed and relayed her thirty-five pounds the whole distance, mushing her five miles forward, planting a pole and piling provisions at its foot, then going back for more, in relay. I remember that she said she laid down by-laws for her party,

one of which was orders to "wash and boil out" every other Sunday. "That is, when we can keep track of the Sundays!" We happened on them during wash-day, camped by a little creek where there were plenty of green willows to burn. Every mother's son was cutting wood or starting fires, and she was in the lead, singing as she cut brush. One of their party was a big stout fellow named Mahoney, or Maloney, who hailed from one of the seven corners of Ireland. He was sitting with his chin propped on his hand, glum and tired and mumbling, "God, what did I ever do to be served with a life like this?" But the brisk partridge-woman was singing as she worked.

I've hesitated ever since to use that rubber-stamp expression, "the weaker sex." If it has any meaning, it certainly doesn't refer to women.

This St. Paul crowd possessed a thirty-pound medicine chest, full of all manner of foolish powders and pills, which they had carefully fetched as far as Lindeman. Here they decided to abandon it, with numerous saws, axes, and an extra weight of clothing with which they found themselves burdened. Mahoney, however, declared that he was sick and needed something right away. He opened up the chest and found that all the drugs had broken loose and were hopelessly mixed together! "Well, it's all medicine," he grunted, scooped up a handful of the mixture and swallowed it. I can testify that his stomachache the next day was *not* imaginary!

After we crossed the Chilkoot I was more convinced than ever that this whole thing was becoming an adventure of the spirit, mainly. Bog and precipice might strain the leg muscles, but the men who essayed the passes, and were defeated by them, were those who lost their heads or, what was worse, lost heart. Sore legs alone never carried a man back home. In spite of initial unpreparedness, some of the most successful on the trail—because most cheerful, resourceful and courageous—

were pink-cheeked, slim young lads from school or soft-handed and dreamy-eyed clerks. I never, in all my life before or since, saw such a practical demonstration of the conquering power of spirit over matter. I suppose it came as something of a shock to my science-trained mind; but humor and imagination proved the winning cards in this game, and took all the tricks. The fellows who had brutes of bodies, but who were grouchers or mere know-it-alls, lost out. Men with great physical handicaps, who fell—but always rose—who got in awful jack-pots but could grin at their own desperate lot and come up joking; the men with nothing, who yet had time and patience to lend a hand or minute to some one else with less: these were the chaps who won through. This storm-swept Chilkoot seemed bare spiritual soil; but on that scanty heathland across the summit there grew in humble but in lowly, rich profusion the thymes and trefoils of a certain kindly grace, indifferent as heathwort to soil, temperature, or weather.

These men were set upon a costly butterfly chase. They were just so many thousand gold-mad, crazy people. Doctor, lawyer, Indian chief—as well as rich man, poor man, beggar man, and thief—all were following the same hard trail. We did not know—most of us—a single rudiment of gold mining, the thing that we ostensibly were come to do. This fact, the common madness, and the common and inescapable daily and hourly accidents and adventures of the way, quickly made for a notable egalitarianism. If I had wanted to lose a certain suave professional gentleman of Washington and Vienna, whom I had come to mistrust somewhat, I was in a fine way to do so! By the time I had reached Lake Lindeman, he was irrevocably gone. I looked for him in a pool of melted snow-water across the summit. But I could not see him there. The Chilkoot worked a wonderful change in the personal appearance of most men, but the transformation went deeper.

The sudden change from luxury to rough, from social re-

straint to every man on his own, brought to the surface more than hairy beards on faces. It brought out contrasts in the personal attitudes toward life, of all these diverse pilgrims. In some it brought out selfishness and disregard for the due rights of others—all manner of unsocial nastiness, including greed and sudden and unreasoning anger, with falling out of lifelong friends. Faltering, fear, or suspicion turned out to be poor trail mates; and so did either arrogance or inferiority, envy or exclusiveness. It also brought out a great charity—in unexpected places, sometimes from men whose talons never knew the ministrations of a manicurist, or sleeky men whose freight was a roulette-wheel or a bundle of theatrical blondes. Indomitable cheerfulness began to prove itself the most indispensable luggage a man could pack across the pass. Although we surely looked a mob, and in some ways we were indeed a mob, yet in one vital aspect we were decidedly unmobbish. You know Gustave le Bon's thesis, that mob action is governed by a collective brain-form lower than that of its lowest units. "A man, isolated, may be a cultivated individual; in a crowd he is a barbarian." On the Chilkoot Trail, no matter how brutish in action to defend his own a man might be, in common council for the common good nearly all of the group proved wise, played manly parts. Even madness has its own peculiar logic. John Muir called our stampede "a horde of fools." We were—when we started.

I saw one man who probably remained a fool and he was also the only person for whom we all had utter scorn, as we passed by. Over the pass, along the further trail, we came upon an English milord, fastidiously dressed in tailored tweeds, seated in state under a net marquee to protect his precious epidermis from the pestering mosquito swarm. And he was being fed delicious morsels, and by a man servant! If the collective snorts of all of us who saw him so could be assembled, the sum would be a thunderclap. He wasn't travel-

ing the trail but being freighted, like so much beef. He had not touched a little finger to the real experience of the trail, to transmute what he saw into his own feeling and energy. "'E might as well be carried in a bloomin' palanquin," one ex-British Tommy commented.

Although there was a sprinkling here of old-timers from the gold-fields of Colorado, California, Australia, and South Africa, most of us were tenderfeet of many sedentary trades and professions. Our outfits were all wrong, in most cases: soft leather, even "toothpick," shoes unsuitable for climbing icy rocks and wading swamps; tents that weighed scores of pounds; great massive stoves and huge iron pots; whole sheaves of picks and shovels; superfluous cases of instruments. What could be expected of drug-store or of dry-goods clerks, lawyers, and other people who had never had any experience on water, and who had never seen a wilderness before? "We heard the call and we staked our all; we were plungers playing blind." The rugged trail was so crowded that no one of the bewildered gold-seekers could well get lost, for we hopefuls actually trod in one another's footsteps most of the way to Bennett. No man looked behind. And there remained always the uncovenanted mercy of Providence toward children, drunken men, and fools —*homo* of the genus *semi-sapiens.*

There's something quaintly hydrostatic about such a life, for we dealt with the pressures and the equilibria of the practically incompressible—men in a flow, like water or like quicksilver. While we mere human atoms were overcoming gravity and painfully climbing our Pass, we were even more busy—although we did not sense it then—testing out our own spirit level. We were cheered by what the Indian packers told us, that it might be fine weather on the other side of Chilkoot even when a howling blizzard held the summit. These Indians were neither the brute savages of certain stories, I discovered, nor yet the idealized beau-ideal Red Men of Romance; but just

other humans like ourselves, with all those little faults and virtues which, like the imperceptible facets in a lustrous surface, make clear reflection of the broken human lights. We were cheered too by the lacquered politeness of certain Japanese and Maori trail mates. The latter built a wattle cabin for themselves upon the trail, in their own manner—as curious in its way and quite as inappropriate as was the Boston-bought aluminum shelter fetched here in sections by a fellow physician. This latter did keep out the wind, but it proved a veritable oven in warm weather and hung deep with caked ice inside when the mercury dropped! The moment you lighted any fire in the thing, frost melted and dripped from its ceiling like a sprinkler system.

—And we were cheered by many friendly eyes with puckered draw-strings at the corners, with laughing and lovable lines drawn at their corners from friendly smilings. I myself was mightily cheered by the good russet yeas and honest kersey nays of my two Princes of companions. Surely there is no place under the wide sun where friendship is so real a thing to men as on such trails, where we must fight together to conquer overpowering natural forces. Strangers meet under such circumstances and are instantly friends. We knew no form of courtly introduction. A shared blanket, a shared pound of food, is brotherly cement that can endure even subarctic blizzards.

We had crossed the troublesome Pass. More manful, more hopeful, more happy, we headed downward toward the rivers and the chain of lakes which lead to the Yukon. The whole surface of the region was a limitless expanse of white from recent snows, through which upstuck the rocky shapes of hills. Dark forms of men and dark bundles of luggage stood out in vivid dots against the sheeted background. In long line, and single file, we set our faces toward that far-off goal where lay the pot at rainbow's foot, containing " anybody's gold."

Beds of Alaska Feathers

THE top of Chilkoot is poised thirty-six hundred feet above the nearby sea, and lies forever in the drifting fog that hangs above vast ice-fields. Having achieved it, our next very necessary step was downward fifteen hundred feet in riser, nine miles in tread, pulling a heavy sled-load to Lake Lindeman.

The descent from the Pass is very rapid and in ordinary weather a man can coast down the steep snows as far as Crater Lake, one of the Yukon's sources, and so on to Happy Camp. But this day a blizzard suddenly sprang up, the trail was rapidly obliterated. In a whirling moment, there were no humans near me, no landmarks to be seen. Through the blind drive of snow I realized that this was dangerous, and knew that if I found no shelter soon, I should be lost. Moreover, I was wet through and through. I was near the end of my strength when at last I found the rough bunk-house kept by a man named Parker, I think, and called with some optimism Long Lake Hotel. It was already occupied by far too many sick tired men as well as by an immense number of blattiform and anopluriform insects, with their entire families!

Here I, with many others who had been caught in the storm and so missed finding Happy Camp, spent more than a week, suffering acutely with diarrhea, which we got from eating bad food and drinking snow-water—very ill and vomiting. Men were dying down at Skagway and Dyea from this trouble, as well as along the trail. The only food I could use here, being away from my own cache of grub, was rice, corn-meal, and tea. Pork and beans, with doubtful surrogates of coffee, were the

only other choices. Prices were very high. While here, however, Captain Patrick Henry Ray came in and I presented a letter of introduction which a friend in Washington had given me. Ray had a wealth of story about his life at highest north Point Barrow, the years of '81 to '83, where he had been in charge of an international polar expedition sent to gather meteorological data. That had been the first of "polar years," you remember, charting the earth's magnetic field. He also knew my Yukon well—had wintered there. Because of him, perhaps, the memory of the bleakness of that camp, the week of storm, is yet somehow precious to me in spite of my then debility. I remember my weakness but seem to have forgotten most of the discomforts. However, I was not able to pull my sled to Lindeman alone, and had to hire two men to help.

From now on, we were in timber again. As the spring sun began to climb, the trail became soft with snow-slush and icy water. Lindeman is the smallest of that group of lakes which must be traversed before we reach the actual Yukon. It is only about six miles long and one mile wide, with low shores, though set in towering mountains. We were told that it remained frozen from November to May. By early April, as now, there is enough thaw to pack down the snow on the lakes and in the early morning their surface was a glare of ice over which one sledges easily. But we had to paint our faces with charcoal to avoid a blistering sunburn. By ten or eleven comes the daily thaw, and after that it is a different story. The surrounding woods were a jungle, their deep moss floor a sponge under the softened snow; and the little streams were neither frozen nor open, while rotting snow hid the treachery of logs and bog holes.

In our relay of freight to Lake Bennett, where we had decided to build our boat, we dripped with rain and sweat. Every inch of the way was water-soaked and our boots were often as full as buckets. We rarely turned in at night other than

soaking wet, and we ached all over, one foot scarcely dragging after the other. Our clothes dried on us, but the sun came out warm and we caught no ill effects. Although we were wet to the skin all day long and at night slept on the snow with only a few spruce boughs or "Alaska feathers" beneath us, we had no rheumatism, coughs, or colds, nor did others so far as we knew, for colds are caught in cities. Our immunity here was one of the blessings of the country; another is the absence of snakes! Most of the mushers, however, had packed along plenty of "snake-bite cure." Around our little fires at night, "our backs sizzled and our bellies froze," as Leo put it.

We back-packed our freight in relays of seven, eight, and ten miles, past Lindeman and past the mile or so of rapids and cascades forming the cataract connecting Lindeman with the larger, long and shallow lake to the north of it named Bennett. There were plenty of others who were doing the same thing and "driving every kind of dog but a pug or a spaniel," as one fellow said. We had no dogs ourselves but did our own packing. *April 15, 1898. On Lake Lindeman. Met Odell of the 1897 Cornell crew.*

The stampeders were mostly in small parties, from two to six or seven, each with a tent, stove and cooking gear, a year's supply of provisions and tools. Camp would be made where wood and water were handy, the "outfit" divided into weights for back-packing or hauling on hand-sleds. Each man's outfit weighed from fifteen hundred to two thousand pounds, so a good deal of relay work was necessary. These thousands of tons of outfit were piled in hundreds of caches, all along the trail, and were being moved down the trail slowly, pack by pack, to a point from which a return to camp could be made before dark. Here a cache would be established by simply piling the goods by the trail side. When all the goods had been moved down, the camp gear would be shifted to them and the maneuver repeated.

Heaps of provisions were scattered all along the trail without a guard but were almost as safe as in a triple-locked bank vault. In the first place, after we left the Cities of Destruction on the coast the class of men was superior, with practically no vagabonds. Then, too, every man knew that the law of mine and thine was always and strictly enforced, with the severest discipline. In that desolate stretch of country, at that time of year, a man's very life depended on his outfit and theft became a capital offense, as serious as murder. A couple of fellows had been caught pilfering about the time we were at Sheep Camp, and a miners' meeting promptly condemned them to death. Fortunately for them, a Portia who was wife to one of the members of this Vigilance Committee, a highly respected lady, begged for less harsh measures and that for once the swift, sure justice of the miners' law be tempered with mercy. She put it on the grounds that food was plentiful here, at that time, and no one was in actual danger of starvation. Without further ado, the convicts were stripped to the waist in the bitter weather, roped to a stump, and then most properly horsewhipped. Tied together, they were marched down to the seacoast and blue-ticketed home. Every man of us on the trail heard about this, inwardly digested the fact, and governed himself accordingly thereafter. Wherever a musher deposited his cache of relayed goods, he knew that whenever he returned they would be exactly where he had placed them. Upon this principle depended the success of this wonderful expedition. Although we gave the appearance of a rout, ours was in fact an absolutely orderly advance of a multitude of real men, with very few exceptions.

At another time, when a few cheechakos were stealing from caches scattered along the Dyea trail, two of them were caught making a desperate getaway and one of them fired a shot from a forty-five into the middle of his forehead, rather than face the music. Justice was spelled with capitals, that season.

The cruelty of teamsters to their dogs and horses was heart-rending; but again, every man knew that he must attend strictly to his own business and that if he were to attempt the Don Quixote rôle of reproving every teamster who abused his beast, he would have a tremendous load on his hands. The transport of our outfits was exceedingly difficult most of the time, while at others it was correspondingly easy. Day after day we waded in slush, with ice-water pouring in over the tops of our rubber arctics, carrying packs on our backs and hauling harder sledge-loads than the Humane Society would permit to any beast of burden in a well-ordered city. Our common jest was that we all belonged to the A. P. A.—the Alaska Pack Asses!

Although the haul of three or four hundredweight through slush and snow was tremendous labor, only to be realized by those who made the great trek, yet on many days by getting an early start before the thaw we took advantage of the always-prevailing southerly winds, hoisted tarpaulins for sails upon the sleds, and spun along with three large sleds and two bobs hitched in tandem and loaded with about twelve hundred pounds a trip. Often one of us would ride while the other ran alongside steering with the gee-pole, going for miles on the dead run. Those were the days when we laughed, and became small boys again.

Late in the month of April we got all our stuff together in camp near the tip of Lake Bennett, where we spent five full weeks. This lake is about twenty-six miles long and six miles wide. Steep cliffs of rock surround it, high peaks stretch into the background, and the most sudden storms sometimes sweep across its surface. Here a little city of encircling tents sprang up, of amateur boat builders preparing for the passage of the Yukon; and here we growing sourdoughs camped. The wild trail flowered during those weeks. Strange blooms of yellow and of purple flamed on the green spring slopes, deciduous

trees were daily putting on fresh summer frocks. The days were joyous. With each new dawn, new flaring camp fires rose beside our own, and the sweet odor of bacon and coffee blended with the smell of new-cut spruce. This camp, set amidst the grandest scenery, was the pleasantest and most thoroughly comfortable in all my experience. We cooked and ate in one tent while in the other we made ourselves luxurious beds of soft spruce-tips which, laid thickly on the ground with our blankets and large wolf-robes topping them, afforded the acme of sleeping comfort and the most delightful bed on which I ever slept. One of my most precious dream memories is the recollection of our camp at Bennett, where clear hills rose heavenward and pierced as deeply the clear lake below.

The never-ceasing southern winds increased in strength with the increasing length of day—cool, fresh, and bracing, the ideal weather for hard outdoor work. Great ice-fields capped the darkly timbered mountains and the bold ranges were dull-red against a glowing sky-line. The south wind whispered through the groves of spruce, breathing a cool delicious air as the night climbed. The world was new and fresh and marvelously beautiful. The evenings were growing rapidly longer, with twilights lingering until after ten; while if we rose at four a. m. the day was already well advanced and we but lazy and ungracious loafers, to lie abed so long.

We had selected a camp site on Lake Bennett among a fine stand of trees. Our next move was to go out into the spruce and balsam forest and convert its trees into boats. To tell of this is simple, but laboring men think almost any work is easier than the business end of a whip-saw. It's no snap for a novice, but the only way to get the lumber out was by what we called "The Armstrong Sawmill." My shoulders are inclined to ache yet, when I think of it!

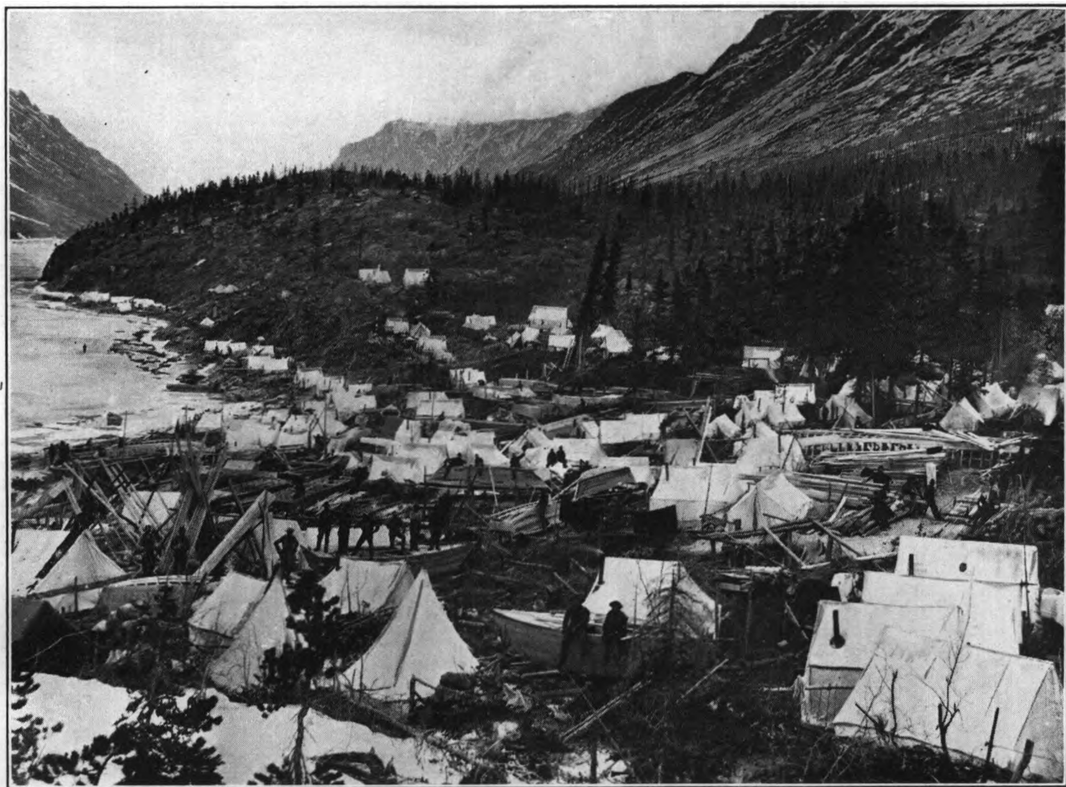
First we felled heavy logs, large enough for boards. These we rolled up above a saw-pit, deeper than our heads. We

marked lines on the logs with charcoal snap-strings, to guide the saw. Then one of us mounted on top with a two-man ripping saw, to pull it up while another had the lower berth in the saw-pit and pulled it down. It took many days to rip the long lengths of these logs, to get our necessary boards—six, eight, or ten to a log. Then we planed straight edges on our planks and were ready to build our boats.

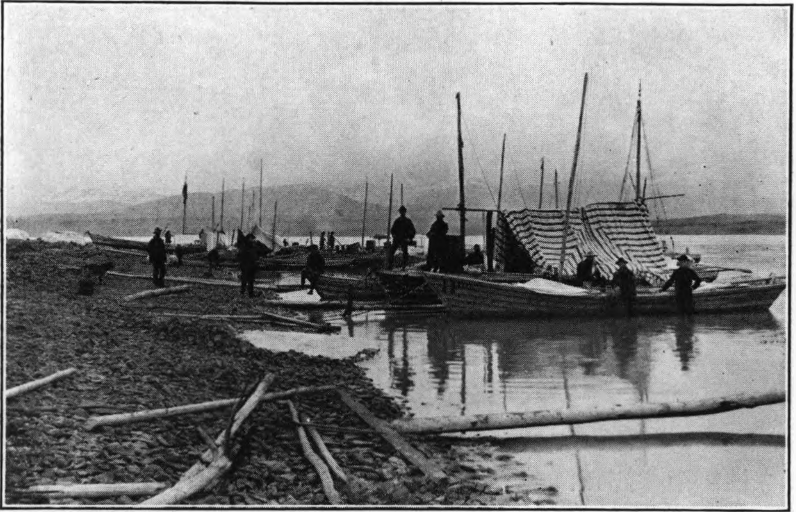
The large boat had to carry over three tons of luggage. We designed a single-sticker with a pointed prow, twenty-eight feet over all and three feet deep. She was twenty-six feet at the water-line and about six feet at the waist. We joked and said she was a true child of Bennett, for her dimensions equaled in feet just what his were in miles! A smaller boat, *The Kid,* was the counterpart of the other, except for a few evolutionary improvements in the way of making it lighter and narrower. *The Kid* was designed as a trailer and for short prospecting trips, and was only eighteen feet long.

With great pains, and with an auger, we bored out all the knot-holes in our lumber, made plugs, and soaked them well in hot pitch. Thus they remained drum-tight and our boats never leaked. The seams were carefully calked with oakum, over which we poured hot tar mixed with tallow. Both proved excellent boats.

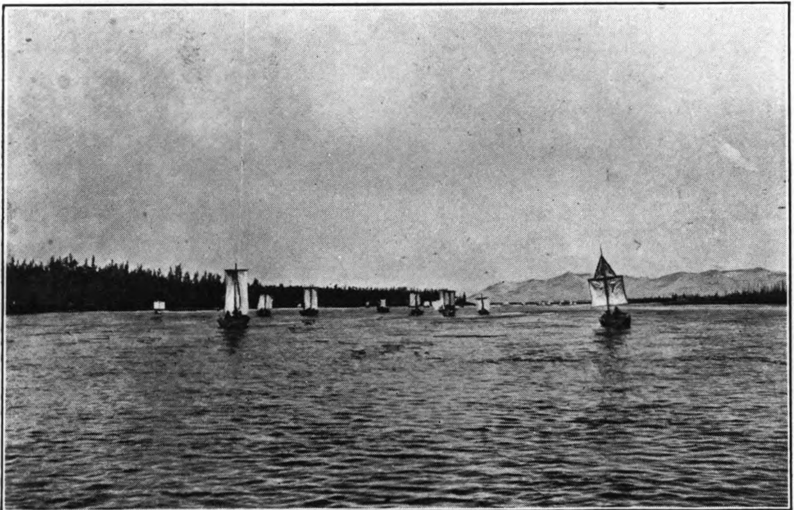
Our good health during all this heavy labor was almost painful! Yet to snake huge logs out through the woods with block and tackle, peel and mark them with the charcoal snap-strings, hoist them on high saw-pits and then cut them with the heavy rip-saw into twenty- or thirty-foot boards—to saw and plane straight edges on the planks, place them so they would not warp, carry them in the long distance to our camp, build, calk, and launch two boats neither of them small, rig masts and sails and make a half dozen good oars—was all hard work. And yet, somehow, it all seemed sport, and every little cove was a baby shipyard.



"A little city of amateur boat builders at Lake Bennett"



Waiting at the Lake Camp for the ice to move.



"The motley fleet which followed the ice down the Lake."

We were hard at it from five in the morning until late evening, living on oatmeal, beans, biscuits, pancakes, evaporated potatoes and eggs, tea and coffee, with an occasional Yankee pie of dried fruits. The nights were light as were our spirits. Song-birds, newcomers from the south, provided constant orchestration. We were breathing deeply the most wonderful spruce-laden and balsamic air, working hard in the open, and having the time of our lives.

Eventually we finished our boats, but Bennett still lay full of ice. And so we climbed the neighbor mountains and always brought back ptarmigan or "fool-hens." Our living was rich. The well-seasoned spruce-gum was better than a Wrigley chewing, the flesh of ptarmigan and blue grouse was dainty sweet; our muscles were hard, our nerves steady, our hearts light and hopeful.

Water appeared one day on the lake but the opening into the river was still closed, so we launched our boats and went exploring. We put down lines and to our surprise brought up a huge whitefish that had been living cosily all winter under the thick ice and proved to have a firm sweet flesh. We caught many more before we left Bennett and they were all good eating. Though the lake was still jammed with ice at its outlet, nevertheless its greater expanse was now open and its surface was quickly covered with the developing larvæ of insects, so thickly that in places one could hardly put his finger in the water without touching them. Many, many boats and barges of all descriptions were now afloat, from graceful Peterboroughs to twenty-ton scows—boats triangular and boats circular, square-bottomed boats and boats shaped like coffins. Some, indeed, proved truly coffins to their unfortunate builders, in the swift waters of the Canyon. I was told later that the Mounties at Tagish made an actual count of seven thousand and eighty boats that passed their station during that summer of 1898, and that the average was four men to each craft,

making over twenty-eight thousand persons who sought the Klondike in that one season, by that one of many possible routes. Big boats, small boats, scows, and rafts were all alike piled high with beans and bacon and flour as well as curious human freight. White sails went flitting on our mountain lake of clear jade green, a spring swarm of butterflies.

One day we saw a boat approaching ours, across the sparkling lake, and in it appeared several ladies wearing beautiful veils. Having been out of the view of women for a long time, our imaginations were fertile and we at once pictured these veiled creatures as lovely and lovable young females. Alas! On nearer approach we found that our lovely females were hideous men, wearing nets about their hats to keep off the mosquitoes!

Before leaving our Lake Bennett camp, we had a chance to witness an amusing symptom of the gold craze. Numbers of men were reporting the presence of free gold, readily visible to the naked eye in the stones and rocks on the margin of the lake. Several were so wild over these finds that they remained behind to prospect. The explanation soon came out, however. The colors were caused by brass sled-runners scraping on the stones. Some innocent travelers had thus inwittingly salted miles of trail, with their brass-bound sleds. Really it was astonishing how much like gold these splashes of brass appeared to an inexperienced eye.

On June 5 we regretfully broke our homelike camp, setting sail to the north with a fair stiff breeze. Lake Bennett sparkled in the sun and wound its way through purple hills and deepening vistas of peaks half-hidden, deep-blue valleys. The motley fleet which followed the ice down the lakes was a sight that may never again be fully duplicated. Many partners had beautifully constructed boats, with fine lines; some had crazy farmers' models, many had large scows, and a very few set out on rafts. Most reached their destination safely, but many had close-call experiences to tell later. Down the coiling linked

loop of lake and riverway they lumbered, dipping to the blue chop, slipping through the mirror of still water where islands made a lee, lifting to the slant of wind and straining to their makeshift sails, laden down like logs awash, heavy in the newly ice-free waters.

The weather was now warm and pleasant, with only a few trifling thunder-storms. Wild roses in a great profusion crowded the slopes where we made passage—as well as strawberry blossoms, daisies, violets, whortleberries, cranberries, budding currants. Birds by the million had come north upon their wedding trips. Geese honked, ducks quacked—and for ourselves, we fitted well into the rugged landscape, with our unkempt hair and khaki clothes that had seen such rough service. As we sailed along, we trolled and caught a few large whitefish. In some of the little streamlets, we either shot with our revolvers or caught with hooks fine messes of grayling which, next to ptarmigan, proved our finest eating.

These mountain lakes knew frequent storms, as we could tell from the character of their shores; and we experienced gales and squalls at times, when the waves of the lakes became white and rolling, when seething breakers shattered upon the granite beach. However we advanced briskly, clapping on sail when there was any wind and rowing when it was too calm. Nightly we pitched camp on the shore, cooking our meals in the boat as we journeyed. Thus we floated on and on, becoming gradually accustomed to a life—the recollection of which now seems a dream.

Riding White Horses

ARIBOU CROSSING ties Lakes Bennett and Tagish together. The name is shortened now to Carcross, so they tell me. You've been that way since I have—but by train and steamboat. I can't imagine a railroad over the Pass. Later in that year we came, Heney began to build that White Pass and Yukon railroad, though. We heard they planned it, some hundred miles or so up from Skagway to tap the Yukon just below the White Horse Rapids, so that to-day the trail of Argonauts may be ridden with luxurious ease. —Caribou Crossing was a limited stream, marshy and slow-flowing, three miles and a half in length, with a sand bar at its mouth. The Indians named it The-Place-Where-Caribou-Cross, for at certain seasons of the year thousands of migrating animals ford its wide, shallow current at the northern end of Lake Bennett.

On the next lake our course lay east, so here our constant friend the south wind was of small service. In fact the cross wind blew so, men called this part the Windy Arm and I had heard about its angry roughness as far afield as Seattle. The country now began to open wider, the hills to shift and draw away from the lake chain. Such lovely lakes, nesting so softly in their notches of the northern hills! Here for the first time, many level spaces could be seen. Snow, too, was disappearing from the higher crests. The nearer slopes, less steep now, rose in symmetric terraces, often as much as seven tiers, betraying the more ancient lake-levels. I wonder if one day, long after we are part of earth again, the linkéd lakes will be all

filled with silt and a true river, noble in proportions, left to meander through this valley floor.

Sometimes the riverets that joined concatenated lakes were but a hundred yards or so in length, and then we'd open on another eight- or nine-mile water basin. Some of the enchained lakelets trended east, while some turned toward the north; but our general course was always bending northward, swinging by the foot-hills of the jagged range which ridged the coast. The lakes were water which the least of wind disordered and unsmoothed and there was little current in them, so we would hoist our tarpaulins for sails and scud along. Upon the rivers, we always slept in the boat most comfortably. Many of our stopping places were indescribably beautiful. I have kept memory after memory of scenes so lovely that they hurt.

Lake Marsh had been named for a well-known naturalist, but it was marshy in both fact and name. The Yukoners called it Mud Lake. Thirty miles long and broader than the others we had threaded, it boasted no fine gravelly beaches like our Bennett. In fact, we tried to make a camp and found it quite impossible to get much nearer than a hundred yards inshore because of the immense deposits of old glacial mud, pulverized from distant mountains and laid down here by many entering streams. The terraces of hills were lower and —something we had noticed all the way from Bennett—the strong south wind had bent the trees until they all inclined northward: sign-posts we could not miss, and thousands of them, pointing the sure way to Argonauts. The lowered terraces were spread with fields of last year's grasses, yellowed now; and though it was already June, the new green had not yet pushed through. If you had not known better, you might have thought them waving fields of cultivated wheat, so golden was the color.

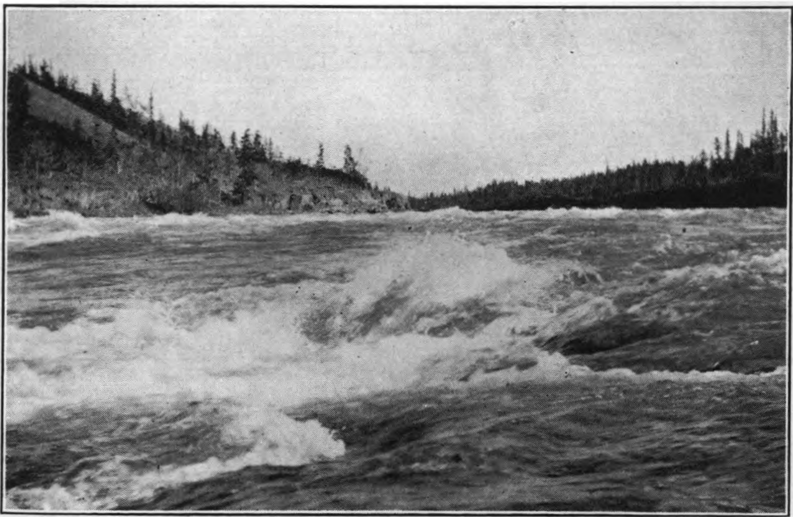
A largish river comes in from the east, where Marsh's outlet runs. Here, after poling through the shallow reeds, we came

on other banks of glacial mud. But the main river which we entered was picturesque beyond description, the rising hillsides darkly hemlock-covered, with spruce and pine as alternates—the dark trees thrusting forth their spiky heads while lighter-colored cottonwoods and willows stepped to the water's edge and all the little valleys, which often opened into grass-grown glades, were pied with violets and matted wild-rose blooms. We found a welcome change of diet here in salads of wild-onion tops, for vegetables had been a minus quantity for months. It makes me hungry just remembering that grateful acrid taste! *June 12. Slept at foot of Lake Marsh. Had fish for breakfast.* There are fine grayling to be caught in ripples just along the bank—gamy and delicious. It was only a few moments' work to catch a mess of them, and they would leap to almost anything.

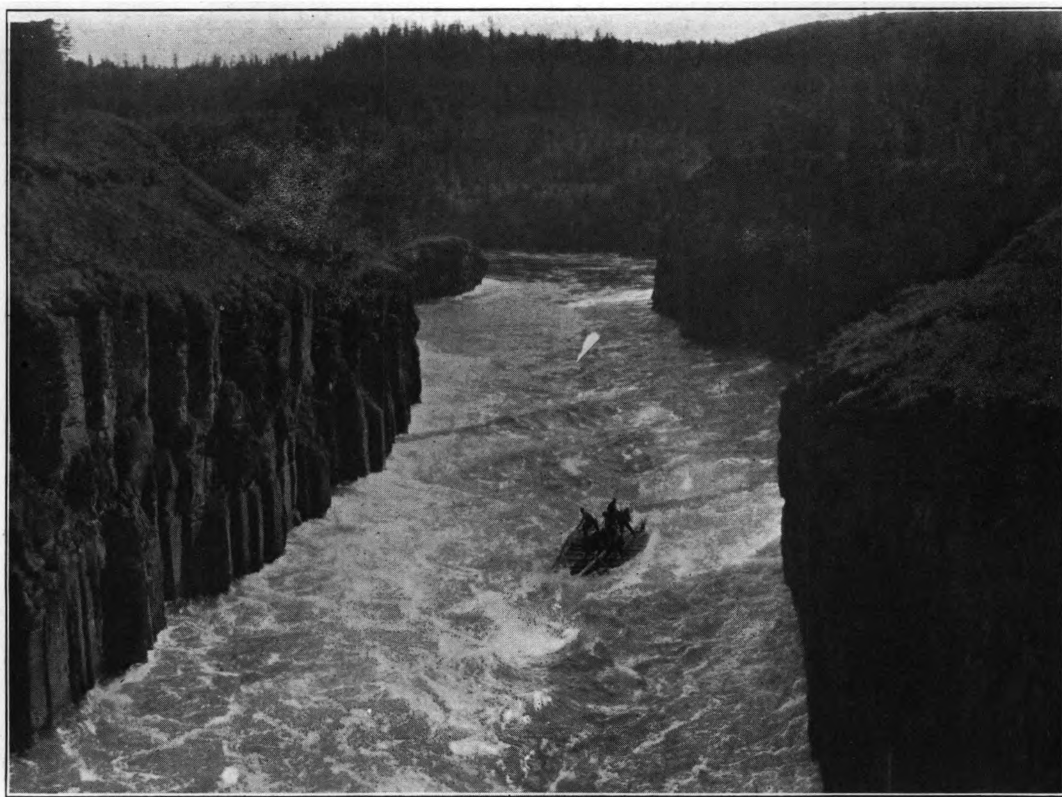
But the quiet alternation of lake and river was soon to know swift change. Sweeping down the steep and ten-mile current of the Lewes, we soon came to the dreaded, often-talked-about Miles Canyon, only thirty miles below Lake Marsh. You have no warning of its nearness, save the accelerated swiftness of the stream. The canyon is not seen until you are full on it, for there's a sharp bend just above, a high bold bluff. The river swerves here swiftly as a frightened horse. Even the roar of rapids breaks upon you suddenly; but of course the river-wise will long before have felt and seen the increased pull of waters, as well as many a telltale riffle. We thought it wise to spend the rest of all that day here, above the dreaded canyon, making a careful survey of it as well as of the Squaw and of the lower and most perilous stretch called White Horse Rapids, a few miles further down.

This raging water named itself, I think; for surely no white man could look down on those galloping tossed waves and not imagine a stampeding herd of wild and cream-white horses delighting in their strength, racing through the rock-walled

"The quiet alternation of lake and river"



—"Was soon to know swift change!"



"A quarter mile of vertical rock wall."

chute of the grand canyon of the Yukon, milling madly in the treacherous corral of the whirlpool, and pouring out at last into the full-pastured Yukon valley lying beyond. The Indian name for it was *Klik-has,* " very bad." But the Indians did not know horses.

Just above the head of Miles Canyon, the river had been running some two hundred feet wide. Here it narrows sharply to not more than seventy, and pours through a quarter mile of vertical rock walls formed by red basaltic columns. About half-way, this dark and narrow corridor opens out in a volcanic chamber filled with the swirl of the dread seething whirlpool where, as we had often been forewarned, so many lost their lives in gurges of the curling eddies. Scouting from above, you could see that for the next third of a mile or so the whitened water boils foaming through another darkly shadowed gorge, as through a funnel. It's forced up in a central sloping crest that rises for at least four feet above the outer level. In shooting it, we must of course ride on that crest for every fraction of the way. Inspection of the canyon showed that if one's boat once slid down from that pitching crest, in a split second it would dash to nothing on the rocky walls and not even the most hardy swimmer would have even a momentary chance.

Men who were " white-water-wise " were making huge sums of money that season, acting as pilots for tenderfeet, steering their crazy boats down the steep water stairs. But the Prince boys flattered me by a willingness to risk it alone, I to steer and they to man the oars. Although the rapids were not pleasant to look down upon and the cry of the imprisoned water rose in the prodigious stillness like the scream of stallions, I knew that with good luck they were quite manageable.

A wild unbroken horse may seem a vain thing for safety, be truly fearsome, to the man who is not saddle-wise. To a horseman, he is merely a fine sporting challenge. There is a

limited known number of things a wild horse can and probably will do, to throw you. If you know these from long experience, and if you know your gear is stout and strong, you do not hesitate to mount him. Do you? You are a horsewoman, my Bitter-sweet friend. I am a man of the rivers. A stretch of rapids is nothing but a bucking river. He plunges with his head down. He humps up in the middle like a bucking horse. And you must ride that hump, and not grab leather. Above all, horseman or riverman must keep his head, as well as be stout-muscled. In fact, it's three parts head-work, in both cases. You horsemen sense the thing the beast beneath you will do next, and are prepared to thwart or meet it. The foaming crest of water as it entered the too full and narrow channel tossed like a white horse's mane, it's true, clothing his neck with thunder "where he paweth in the valley." Impounded water flung here, leaping, and the racing hooves drummed thunder that reëchoed in the nearby forests. The river gathered, folded fiercely underneath him, all his steely muscled flow of powerful current. And then he plunged, swallowed the very ground with rage. —Yet this could never be my river, if another rode him for me, when he bucked.

On the evening of the twelfth we lowered the mast and covered our boat snugly with a large tarpaulin, disposing the cargo with great care so that it could not shift. After breakfast the next morning we removed our boots, for we must at least be unimpeded if we should upset. Then we cast off our moorings and swung slowly out into the current, well above the canyon head. You must have good way on entering, to keep her steady. Just before we reached the tumultuous waters of the canyon itself, we cast loose the painter of *The Kid,* leaving the little fellow to go down by himself if he could. The drag would interfere in steering the larger boat. Then, like a shot arrow we were riding the crest at twenty miles an hour.

To belittle this series of rapids would merely prove, to

any one who knows, that you had never steered this strange and dangerous voyage. The water is very swift and rough; many bold rocks, fearful whirlpools, and numberless eddies confront one. Very many accidents occurred. I had been told that two hundred men during one week, in the early rush of '97, had lost their lives here. Later in the season of 1898, the Canadian police would not allow any one to make the trip without a licensed pilot. Some called this a safety measure, some called it plain graft. But we shot through the columnar walls of the darkly beautiful canyon without mishap, and in less than two minutes the worst of it was over. I can't boast that we did not ship a cupful of water, but I can say truthfully that there were only a few buckets. Our boat rode like a duck and kept her head. The ride was one of intense, high-strung enjoyment and lasting satisfaction, for tons and tons of stuff had been swamped here by less fortunate adventurers, and far too many lives lost. As we hung for a split second on the middle of the foam, out of the corner of an eye I saw a score of wrecks impaled there. The manes of the white horses had proved the *manes* of so many forlorn hopes—lost spirits of the dead. It's strange what quirks the mind has, to think a Latin pun at such a time. But it's the truth. The day ends with this entry: *June 13, 1898. Shot White Horse Rapids without a pilot.*

Even after the canyon is passed, the current continues to be a torrent of confused waters, spreading out into more shallow rapids bouncing over hideous rocks. We did not attempt to tie up to the bank until fully half a mile below, as the few available landing-places were already occupied by other boats. And here I had an accident.

Soon after riding the White Horse, our boat struck hard upon one of the many gravel bars and we must put on our hip-boots again to shove her off. Then, as we were about to run in to the loose sandy bank, an eddy in the too swift current whirled us inshore, bearing us down with a tremendous force

upon a scow, which we might well have smashed as well as our own boat. To meet the inevitable collision, I ran forward and, with one leg extended, managed so to weaken the blow that it was harmless. But as the boats thrust apart, I lost my balance from the force of that push and fell in—managing, though, to grasp the gunwale of the scow as I struck water.

The current was a torrent and, as my heavy hip-boots quickly filled with water, I could hardly have saved myself. But men on the scow rushed to help me and, strangely enough, my life-saver proved to be a fellow townsman from Washington, Colonel Hunter.

It was five miles by land—I think somewhat longer by water, though God knows we sped swiftly enough through the white racing spume—to the camp below White Horse. We got back the lost *Kid* with some difficulty for the youngster, left all to his small self, had come to grief. Our stove and most of our tools were lashed inside it, so its safe recovery was a matter of great moment. While at that camp we saw a poor drowned fellow who—by appearances, though I did not examine the body closely—had been in the water a fortnight or so. A scrap of paper identified him; his money, thirty-two dollars, was taken in charge by a committee; and we buried his body near some other cross-marked graves. I could not help wondering how many years must pass before these corpses buried in the frost will disintegrate; for, though the upper inches of the soil were now sun-warmed and fertile, only a little way below lay perpetual frost, where heavy moss insulated the ice-cold earth. Our hearts melted as we looked on these many crosses, lining the upper and the lower rapids. What mute-lipped but pathetic symbols of homes and loved ones lost, and shattered hopes! And how did these poor fellows' partners feel? Perhaps some brooding Northman had named that water, beside a comrade's grave—remembering how the specter of white horses always betokened death, in

sagas of the Norse. Perhaps he'd seen the Fourth Seal opened in a Revelation, beheld the pale horse and his name that sat on him. Were we to share a like fate, too, at some near treacherous twisting of our river? Or worse, remain unburied?

We knew a sobering salutary pause after the breathless rushing of the perilous canyon, escaping by scant inches those jagged rocks to graze whose edge meant death. The white manes of the racing horses had snapped wet spume across our faces—adventuring, but close, so close, to Death. And yet, out of this nettle, danger, we had plucked this flower, safety.

Thus with hard work of various kinds, a few near hardships, fresh incident in plenty, sobering reminders, and a good share of merriment as well, we passed from tenderfoot to pioneer. We made our reloading and pushed on, in waters swift but safe, to Lake Lebarge, across whose lovely thirty miles we sailed due north by so-called night but with bright daylight, through waters roughened by the angry mountain wind. With a prow riding high, we spanked the wavelets and bright jewels of spray blew back upon our gladdened faces, no longer tense. Steep mountains wall the lake, wooded heavily from shore to timber-line, while above rise strangely castled summits. But near the outlet of the lake the mountains give away to meadows, valleys, stately cliffs, and islands.

At the foot of Lake Lebarge we came to Thirtymile River. We had often been warned about those other perils of the way but no one had taken pains to tell us that Thirtymile races like a mill stream, is rapid and is full of countless snags and riffles; so we came on its dangers unaware, lulled into thinking that our perils were all past. Yet in this short stretch of stream, the Lorelei established a veritable colony of dangerous mermaids and one disports herself on every rock, on both banks, and in the very middle of the torrent. These flirts lured many to their deaths here, ruined many a ton of gear, and gave us all an anxious time of it. A nine-mile current

chases through a crazy jig-saw channel. It is so steep that the steersman looks downhill at the stretch of river before him. The swirl of eddies is frightful, so that when a boat is caught in one of them it may require an hour or more of hardest work to force her out into the stream again. Often an enormous bubble would break by the boat side with a deep " chug," as though caused by some huge aquatic monster, and the seething waters sometimes hissed, like soda. What with the rapid current, whirlpools, eddies, outcropping rocks, and undermined and overhanging trees dragging from the banks with their tips snatching at us from beneath the water in devilish pranks to drag us down and under, real danger was about us all the time. The strew of wreckage we saw everywhere was evidence enough. What's more, we had sailed Lake Lebarge all the preceding night in a rough wind. So, after an anxious day of the hardest kind of work negotiating the Thirtymile, no wonder we were much fatigued when we reached smoother water, where the Hootalinqua drains down from Lake Teslin and joins Thirtymile River. Ogilvie told me that Teslin is the Native word for a large fish found plentifully in Teslin Water, the largest lake of this basin. Mountains about it are the famous Cassiar Range, where so many rich mines have been located.

We camped here near the inflow of the Hootalinqua, at the end of the so-called Teslin Trail. This is another route in from the coast to the Klondike, that was and had been trod by many a pioneer—running up the Stikine River from Wrangell to Glenora, following the earlier Western Union Telegraph survey north to Teslin Water, and so on down the Hootalinqua and the Yukon. During the spring and summer of 1898, the Teslin Trail was crowded with men. Comparing notes with some we met here who had come that way, and learning of their hardships, we almost forgot any that we had suffered. We heard of one man who had started in the fall with fifteen

hundred pounds of outfit and reached Telegraph Creek the next August with only his shirt, a pair of overalls, and a bad case of scurvy.

Then, too, there were the Edmonton and Ashcroft Trails, both "all-Canadian," of which we later learned in Dawson. Some Argonauts whom we were yet to meet had gone to St. Michael by boat from San Francisco and so on up the Yukon, the "all-water trail." Others had tried to break their way through the mountains from Yakutat Bay, and got hopelessly lost wandering upon the glaciers. Perhaps two thousand reached the Yukon by the Copper River or by Valdez—the "all-American" trails, and ways of great hardship then. By a dozen half-broken passes, the thousands streamed that year into the upper Yukon Valley, and would not be denied a way. They waded rivers, wallowed in the treacheries of bog, scaled the rock-walled passes, built their crazy craft and launched them on the mighty river, or scrambled through dark canyons and across the crashing glaciers. Each way was different, each was costly in back-breaking human toil, each took its toll of life and luggage—in death by avalanche or flood or death by spinal meningitis—to disenthrall those disensane. There was no royal road into the Klondike, but "never was average man, his soul, more energetic, more like a god."

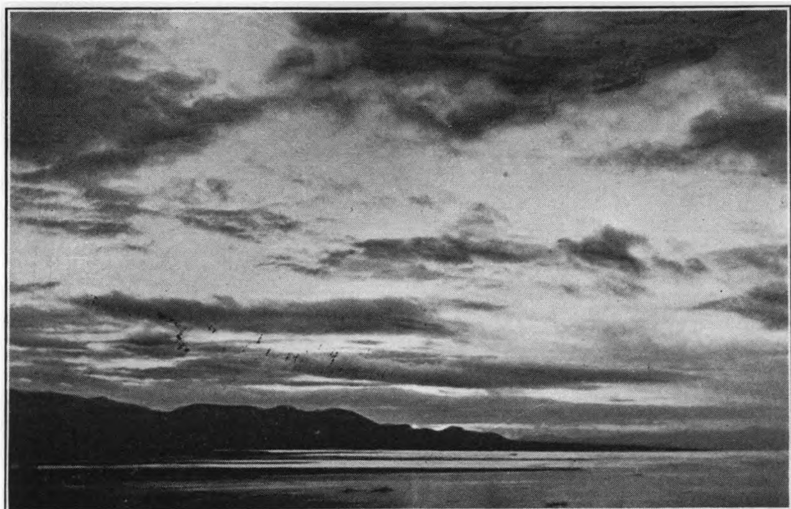
So far on our trip, the water had been as clear as crystal; but the slow current of the yellow Hootalinqua pours in a large injection of mud, as do most of the tributaries, and hereafter the Yukon remains discolored, even after it debouches into Bering Sea more than two thousand miles further on. As we float along, day after day, forest fires continually mark the stopping places of careless campers, who would be severely punished if caught; but, unfortunately, they seldom are. The conifers grow densely here and fire takes awful toll of their resin, making their bark a blackened crust. Then with the first south gale the weakened roots pull out and all the trees

are prone, forming a barricade of half-dead crisscrossed trunks and limbs, that is impassable. A new growth springs up, somehow, in between and chaparral of cottonwood varies the disorder—trail breaker's madness and a task for Tantalus, in any cross-country trek here.

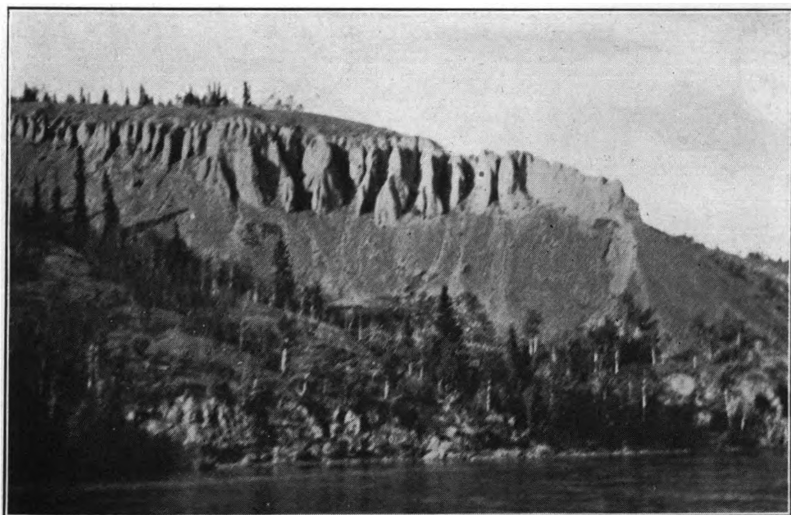
But we progressed gently through the rivered land, borne by the widening Yukon. It was but lazy travel, for the most part, after the adventures passed; and once again I found a time for fluting, to the delight of my good comrades. The lipping current lapped and curled, and every twist of our now rapidly augmented river offered new lovely vistas. White birches and slim cottonwoods were frequent now, the spruces greener. A great crag rose ahead, crowned by an eagle's nest. Black forests climbed to snow-streaked peaks, wild flowers in an incredible profusion were landscaped by Dame Nature's self on slopes of tiny islands, low banks of limy sandstone were pocketed and patterned with countless martin nests. Salmon streams ran in from east and west as we bore north, their mouths marked by log jams or by marshy dark-green reeds. One such inflow was known by a beautiful name, which we learned one night beside an Indian camp fire; they called the stream "We-hope-to-meet-here." Yet we ourselves met surprisingly few Natives in all this stretch of valley—three hundred miles afloat from Hootalinqua to Stewart River.

The long voyage had its perfect contrasts. We sang, we jested, and we told gay tales. Thus we progressed through the mountainous land, passing successfully through Five Finger and Rink Rapids—dangerous perhaps if proper channels are not chosen; but we hugged the right bank and spun through. At the first, rough masses of red rock split the Yukon into narrow fingers where the waters curl unpleasantly, while The Rink is a rock reef stretching half across the river current.

June 21, 1898. Reached the mouth of Stewart River. Here we met a party who had come up with us on the steamer from

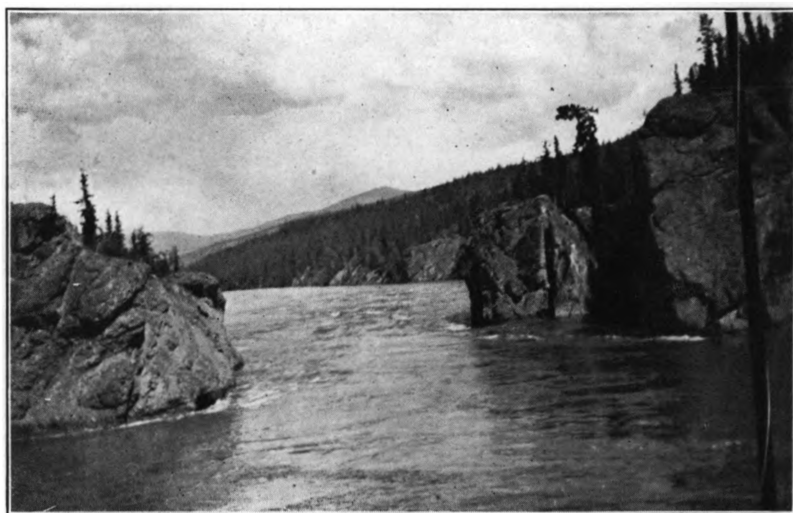


"We crossed lovely Lake Lebarge by night"



"Limy sandstone pocketed and patterned."

"Black forests rose."



Five Finger Rapids.

Seattle, and we simply howled with laughter at the transformation in our looks which, before, while constantly in the company of our partners, we had not realized. Here we made preparations for a protracted prospecting trip. There was a great enthusiasm, just then, over the Stewart River diggings. The Prince boys were keen for it—and why should I say " no"?

The Knight's Move

OUR Stewart River expedition was but one step forward and two sideways—the Knight's move. In chess, a Knight or Springer is, you know, a valuable major piece and used to obtain certain objectives. His virtue lies in his mobility of swing, his flanking quality. A knightly chessman is the equivalent of three pawns; and what were we but three stray pawns, upon this checkered chess-board of adventure? United, we were knighted, and increased our Springer radius. Our side swing up the Stewart was, though it slanted, yet part of an attack upon our major objective.

June 22–25, 1898. Building log cabin at the foot of Stewart River. Most of the parties who stopped here to prospect cached their outfits on high platforms, out of the reach of dogs and wolves. We chose to build a rude but strong log cabin, which would serve the purpose of both cache and shelter, should we need one there. This occupied three days, on two of which we experienced heavy thunder-storms. Before leaving, we felled trees in a wide radius around our cabin and cleared off the underbrush, to prevent the spread of fire. While doing so, I found an unexpected, large and active, hornet's nest! On the twenty-third, I discovered a young frog an inch and a half long, which rather surprised me here. *June 26. Calked "The Kid" for prospecting trip.* And, loading up with three months' provisions and a small mosquito-proof tent, on June 27 we started up the Stewart River.

But *The Kid* was overloaded and we had to return to our cache and build up the boat's sides with weather-strips. Even

at that, we nearly swamped several times. To those unfamiliar with swift water, the difficulties of this trip would be quite unimaginable. The river was a perfect torrent, with caving banks cutting the thickly wooded, spacious valley. These banks are covered with a mat of trees and brush which, falling with the ever-breaking bank, form most exasperating snags. Travel was exceedingly difficult, both against the swift water and against and through and over the overhanging, dragging trees or sweepers. Here and there were gravel bars where progress was much easier, but here and there were also driftwood riffles forming barriers hard to compass.

No one can row against such a swift stream, and so it is a question either of poling or hauling the boat by main strength. Land travel is no merry picnic here. As the tree falls, so it lies—and so has lain in undisturbed peace for many a change of season. You put your foot down, all your weight upon a sturdy looking log, hoary with moss—and suddenly it pulverizes under you and suddenly you are thrown, and prone! We had to line the boat along, one steering while the other two towed it, wearing heavy hip-boots and wading almost all the time in ice-cold water which often filled our boots. If, by working strenuously twelve or sixteen hours a day, we made what we could estimate as something near ten miles, then we were jubilant. In places where there were particularly nasty snags and log jams, our progress was distressingly slow. The ratio up-stream and down was a day to an hour. That is, on coming back down the Stewart, we traversed easily in an hour the distance it had taken a long hard full day to track or pole up-stream. We thought that we had known hard work in the saw-pit at Bennett. Looking back, that toil now seemed mere setting-up exercise.

On June 28, Earl Prince stepped into a dangerous quicksand; but we threw boughs and large pieces of tree to him, as well as a stout rope, and got him out safely. Earl was naturally

a hustler, and on this occasion his hustling was a study! Sometimes we had to bail furiously with the fry-pan. And yet it was somehow altogether glorious, this Stewart adventure, and our hearts expanded with the close approach to Nature. The shaggy god peopled these tangled forests. Pan piped here. At night we pitched our small mosquito-proof tent—a great comfort so long as we could carry it—upon the gravel bars, in the steely twilight; and though the day's work had been irksome, fighting the violent stream, we stewed wild onions with our fresh-killed meat and feasted for supper on wild currants, salads of onion tips, and pan-roasted grouse. For grouse abounded everywhere, and the little broods were met with frequently, the wee ones scattering away into the brush when mother saw our heavy feet come tramping. Then she would play her brave and foolish rôle of leading us away from her fledgy babies, clucking with anxiety and warning all the while. Of course we were not murderers. We never killed a mother.

The tent was rather a glove fit but yet a great protection, and we missed it sorely when we had to leave it. For the mosquito census knew no falling off, and we could never seek the higher ground where these *bêtes noires* were fewer. Their stings could scarcely be endured. At night, an oily rag burned slowly under a cover of damp moss would make a smudge that helped; or you could keep a pan of smoldering ashes at the tent door. But during the warm days those venomous pests arose in sickening, dense swarms from every marshy rim or pool and they bit straight through our blankets, or indeed through anything but leather. Yet in the tent at night we enjoyed a golden sleep, in spite of their provocative and thwarted humming—in spite, too, of sharp rocks on which we lay.

We saw cave-swallows' nests on rocks, by the thousand—the wonderful bottle-necked nests of cliff-swallows. There

were the leagues of brilliant flowers, forests of aromatic fir, and over all a clean-swept Northern sky. Sometimes, in our evening camps, we knew good fellowship with other travelers, explorers, hunters, miners. Some were more ignorant than we, and some were wise and shared their wisdom generously. One of them told us that the Stewart was first discovered in 1849 and that an early prospector, 'way back in 1886, when about a hundred miners were rocking on the bars here, had prophesied that the Stewart would never amount to much as a gold producer because " the wrong kind of trees grow on the bars, and gold is never found where wild onions or leeks are found in such abundance "! However, Chapman's bar, about ninety miles up, had averaged a hundred dollars per man per day, even though worked with slow and crude rocker methods, and the season had panned thirty-five thousand dollars. He said the Stewart had been pretty well prospected, up to the Falls, but had been deserted when coarse gold—great desideratum of all miners—was discovered on the Fortymile just where the international boundary crosses it, and made a great excitement there in 1887. We came on one party recalking a leaky boat with flour sacks and spruce-gum. We came on one old sea-captain who had made a fearful mess of navigating the treacherous Stewart. It was no place for any deep-sea sailorman. This was a river job. But he was one of those unfortunates who would not, could not, learn. His tragedy was that he knew it all. This Northland wilderness is a place for humble people. One must learn from the land, or be broken by it. The sniffish and the uppity soon meet come-uppance here, and the inelastic and unpliant mind proves much more of a disadvantage than stiff-bound flexor or extensor.

One day we came across a ptarmigan with her brood of eighteen to twenty young chicks, all in their summer suits of khaki, as pretty a sight as one could wish to see. Although

perfectly safe at our hands, she anticipated danger, and almost flew in our faces in her fury of mother-love, to give her young time to find cover. Fresh meat would have been delicious at that time, for the larder was indeed bare; but we had no heart for feathery matricide. On different occasions we found any number of large ant-hills, as well as bumblebees, grasshoppers, and spiders. We gathered and stewed huckleberries and cranberries, as well as the delicious wild currants.

About forty miles up the Stewart we reached the mouth of a stream called Black Hills Creek, and heard there were rich claims to be staked there. So we made a subsidiary cache and left our tent here, from which we drew short rations for the camp later established. Heavily lading ourselves with packs of grub, guns, a pickax, rope, and bucket, we set forth at about two a. m., wading through an overflooded bog and continuing a rough journey about fifteen miles up the creek, to stake those claims we hoped would prove bonanzas.

That night of July 3, the heavens opened in a torrent and we were truly miserable, camped shelterless upon a gravel bar, with no cover but thin saturated blankets. We lay on the bare stones, while countless mosquitoes assembled to torment us. The next day we celebrated a most inglorious Fourth by building a crude shack of trees and boughs; for it still rained, and there were quite as many mosquitoes as raindrops. Walking through the thick underbrush in such weather might be possible, but it was impracticable. We built a fire, shot a good mess of grayling with our revolvers, and lived well and happily here for the remainder of the wet spell. We also shot many squirrels, for we needed them. We scared up a bear but it got away, though we heard that one Stewart River party that summer killed five.

When the rain at last subsided, we resolved to prospect an attractive-looking "pup" of Black Hills Creek. I had already learned this miners' term, you see, for a subsidiary gulch. As

one old fellow most carefully explained to me, "a pup is a tributary of a tributary of a tributary!" There is a gap in my diary here but I think you'll grant it is excusable, considering how we lived for that next period, from hand to mouth. Packing our outfit two or three miles up this gully, far removed now from any haunt of man, we first built another shack, open in front and almost a perfect water-shed, before which we kept a glorious fire burning when we were not actually at work upon our prospect holes.

Next, by a great combined effort of our brain centers, we selected the place where we three innocents reasoned or imagined the heavy gold dust should have gravitated, during that prehistoric period when our gulch was being shaped. Here we worked—as day-laborers at home would never think of doing—not limiting ourselves to a paltry eight or ten hours of toil, wet most of the time, poorly fed, worried constantly by the mosquito swarms and pests of black flies, and little refreshed by sleep because of the intolerable itching of our insect bites.

Removing the moss, we came at once to earth frozen as hard as flint, about twelve or fourteen inches from the surface. Day after day we picked our way through this frozen soil until we had two holes, one eighteen and one fourteen feet deep. Part of the time we thawed the soil by building fires in the pit, or we heated stones and threw in large numbers of them to melt the hard earth. All stones thrown in had later to be removed, of course. To lower and raise ourselves and our buckets into and out of the shaft, we rigged a rough windlass out of the nearby woods, and it worked perfectly. It was difficult work, but interesting.

One day while I was doing my trick down in the eighteen-foot hole, I spied a beautiful little nugget of pure gold. Imagine my great joy! I shouted and looked up at the mouth of the shaft, all excitement. I saw two widely grinning faces of the Prince boys there, but something was wrong about their

wide smiles. They were quite obviously laughing at me and not with me. I took a second and more careful look at the golden treasure in my hand, and then I too saw the joke. Leaning over, Earl had inadvertently dropped a large loose filling from a front tooth. Alas! I had traveled across a continent to be rewarded by such a trick. And yet it was a golden find, for the "nugget" gave us all a laugh and we had rare need of laughter, then. We had good sport over that nugget and rightfully boasted that we tenderfeet had found more gold in that immediate region than had all the seasoned prospectors, for no one met with any success in this locality. I learned a new code here, however—the stern miner's code of space and gravity and back-break. Five and one-half pans of gravel equal one cubic foot; one pan equals twenty to twenty-five pounds; and one cubic yard of hard-fought gravel, one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and thirty-five pans, will weigh three thousand pounds—a ton and a half of gold-less "dirt."

Although our holes proved barren of results, we spent a month or more here and the section was all our own. It was a great country, the trees much larger than those near Dawson. We replenished our larder daily with from six to eight squirrels which, with rice, made excellent broth. We shot them with revolvers, which we learned to use with considerable accuracy. One day we tried a couple of camp-robbers, for variety, but the tough birds proved as unpalatable as crow.

When we at last abandoned our "mining" venture and reached again our little cache at the mouth of Black Hills Creek, we three men were sights to behold. Working all day in mud and dirt, unable to bathe because of the energetic insects, and with no change of clothing, we became frankly dirty. This we soon remedied, however, on the broad reaches of the Stewart River; and here too we packed up speedily for our return to the main cache at the confluence of the Stewart

and the Yukon. For we were now determined to head straight for Dawson.

We rode luxuriously down the rapid Stewart, borne by our faithful *Kid;* and that journey, which had taken five days of the hardest work, was now retraversed in as many hours. The Stewart River country, wholly within Canada, seemed to me the most attractive of all the regions in that part of the continent—now that I had time and opportunity really to look upon it! Immense forests of fine spruce abound everywhere, grass is abundant on the river-flats, game is plentiful, and the scenery truly grand. On reaching our main cache again, we reloaded our large boat, abandoned our neat log cabin and disentailed it for some other fellow's use, and then fell downstream upon the welcome Yukon. In pleasant and restful peace we accomplished the sixty intervening miles to Dawson, at the now world-famous inrun of the golden Klondike. We had packed, we had mushed, we had toiled—and at last we had come to the end of the gold-mad trail.

II

The Dusts of Her Streets Were Gold

The Hub of the Klondike

BOUT six miles above old Fort Reliance, which had been one of the historic outposts of the Canadian northwest frontier, a little river enters the Yukon from the east. Schwatka in his early voyage of exploration down the Yukon named this Deer River, but the Indians called it *Ton-dac* or *Thron-Duik.* Their rolled sounds are so hard to reproduce in our thin Latin letters that no two white men ever pronounced the word just the same, until at last it was deep graved in gold as Klondike. The stream is only about forty yards wide, shallow and swift at its mouth, the water naturally clear and a transparent blue. The Indians used to occupy one of their seasonal fishing villages here, which they called " Plenty-fish " ; but the men of the gold-rush, rafting logs down the Klondike, destroyed their fish-weirs. This old salmon-catch village (called Lousetown in our day!) was across from the present town site of " Dawson City," which lies north of the Klondike River and upon the right bank of the Yukon.

The first white man's house in Dawson was the shanty of Joe Ladue, begun September first of '96. I heard much of Ladue that winter from many old-timers, and he must have been something of a character. Some said he had come over Dyea pass in '82 with Captain Billy Moore and ten others who prospected the nearby Fortymile and Sixtymile Creeks in 1883. Most of these left for other quests and diggings, but " smiling Joe Ladue " remained.

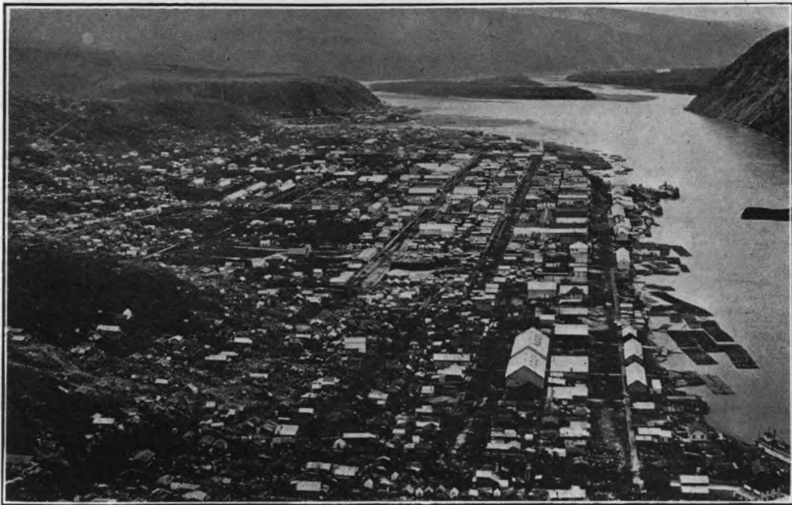
He was of French-Canadian descent, though born in New York State. When he made a failure of prospecting in the

Yukon Regional Library
Whitehorse, Yukon

North, he worked as storekeeper for Harper and McQuesten, holding their lonely trading-post near the international line. His health must have been wrecked by many a hard winter journey and the lack of even the simplest necessities or comforts, for like the Irish Harper, his friend and partner, he became a victim of tuberculosis and died soon after the great Klondike discovery justified so richly this land of his rich smiling faith. A rather pathetic story, as Ogilvie and others told it. Ladue moved his trading-post to the mouth of the Klondike, built a sawmill, and staked out land here, the moment word came of Carmack's strike—and such news flies swiftly under the electric arc of the Circle! Ladue held one hundred and seventy-eight acres where Dawson City now stands, bought from the Dominion Government at ten dollars an acre, and town lots soon were selling from a hundred to ten thousand dollars each. Stores and hotels and restaurants and saloons sprang up and by June, 1897, Dawson City held five hundred houses and four thousand people. The Klondike diggings were fifteen miles or more away, but Dawson was the Hub of the Klondike.

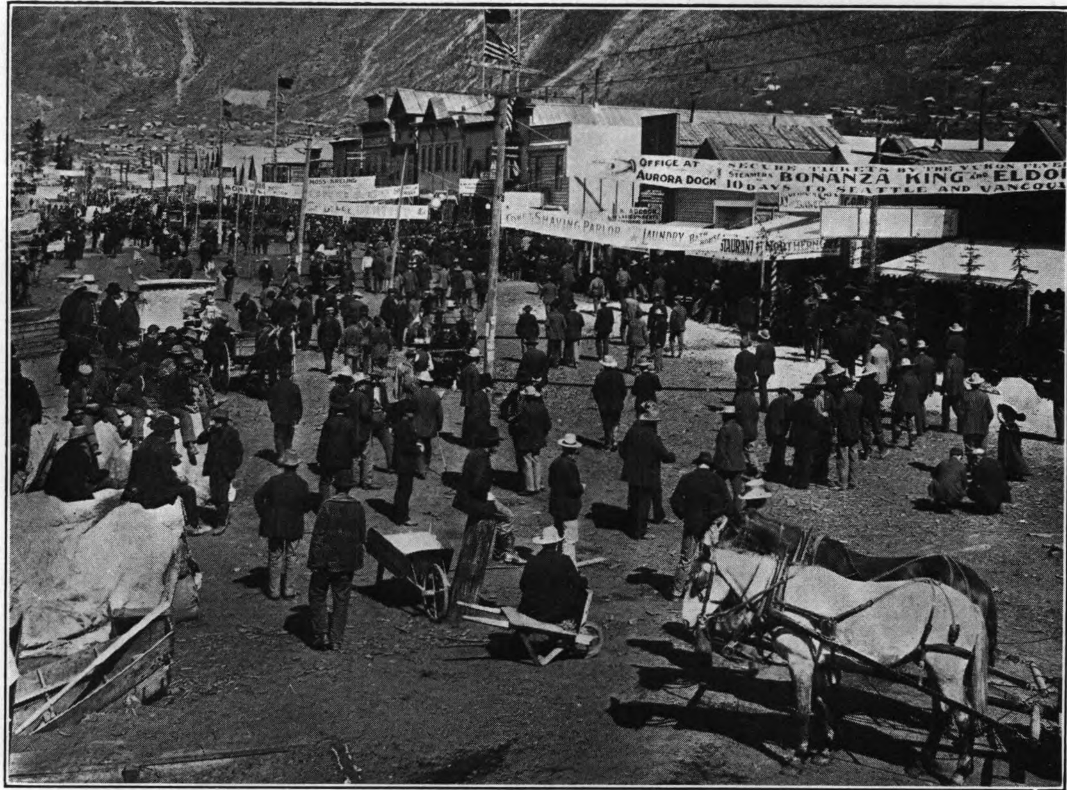
"Jack" McQuesten, another old-timer of whom we often heard in Dawson, was the real father of the Yukon, however. Born in Maine, his parents early moved to Illinois. Napoleon Leroy McQuesten had come first to the Northwest Territory in 1873, was soon joined there by Arthur Harper and Captain Al Mayo. I've often heard that Captain Mayo is the original of one of the characters in Rex Beach's novel, *The Barrier;* but this is merely hearsay. Ogilvie told me that by '97 Joe Ladue had built a big log saloon in Dawson City and there were many others here of canvas or of cotton drilling. Two of these saloon tents were very large, one made of blue stuff and one of white; so they were known as the White and the Blue Elephants.

By the time we came to Dawson, late in the summer of



Dawson City, looking up-river to the mouth of the Klondike

"The Dawson Waterworks"



Dawson's crowded streets, in '98.

1898, the crowd of newcomers in the " city " proper had increased to a vast army of twenty thousand. Some of these were bona fide gold-seekers and others were traders, packers, business and professional men, with a goodly but ungodly scattering of crooks and camp-followers. Thousands of tents and hastily built cabins crowded the muskeg-swamp ground and the river-flats of both the Klondike and the Yukon and climbed up the steep-pitched hillsides below the Great Slide scar on Moosehide Mountain. Others were constantly arriving, both by overland trails and by steamboat up the Yukon from St. Michael. At about this time the population of the whole Dawson district was estimated to be forty or fifty thousand souls. The streets of Dawson City, which began quite grandly at the water's edge with Front and Main and various numbered "Avenues," petered off into stump-filled colloid quagmires of deep muddy lanes, and at last into mere " squirrel tracks." And then, as one fellow put it, " the squirrel ran up a tree, and even that track was lost! " But the business streets were too crowded for comfort, with men, dogs, wagons, pack-trains, and a great bustle and hustle everywhere.

Thousands of boats—literally thousands—were tied up at the busy water-front when we arrived at the Golden City—nearly two solid miles of boats in tiers six, eight, and ten deep, and made fast to one another because all the shore was occupied, along both the Yukon and the Klondike fronts. We had thoughtfully loaded our *Kid* to the gunwales with firewood, cut in proper lengths; for we had heard up-river that while these flats had once, in Joe Ladue's day, been heavily wooded, now every stick of possible fire-wood or building material for miles around had been commandeered. For a month or so we were able to live quite comfortably aboard our large boat, under the shelter of a tent rigged over it; and during this interval we made frequent trips of observation and explora-

tion, the Prince boys looking for possible claim locations. Every one was on the rush, but no one seemed to know which new stampede was the best.

Late in the summer, with the help of my two chums, I built a fine log cabin for my own use, sixteen by eighteen feet, in "an excellent residential section" of Dawson City. We also built a private hospital—another log cabin, twenty by twenty-four, in the rear of the first. At the time we arrived, Dawson was suffering from an epidemic of fever, allied to typhoid and often confounded with it, yet so distinct from the type seen at home that we doctors provisionally named it "Yukon fever." From three to nine men a day were dying from it, so I heard. Everybody told me it was too late now to complete my Yukon voyage alone, that season; and I had arrived at an epidemic-ridden community where a physician's work seemed needed, so I decided to winter in Dawson. The few public hospitals were crowded with patients and all could not be cared for. More accommodations were evidently needed and eight or ten private hospitals, such as mine, were hurriedly put up. Just as we had them nicely completed, a sharp cold snap struck the town and sickness vanished overnight! Thereafter, for all winter, Dawson City remained remarkably healthy.

Dawson was a mad and freakish place at that time. Even the prices were mad and freakish. Because our stay in the Stewart country had made us late, we had not time to get out our logs before cold weather, so I had to buy logs for a hundred and seventy-five dollars. Lumber was two hundred and fifty dollars per thousand feet. I got a man with a team of horses to haul the logs from the river for me, and his charge was ten dollars an hour. The bill came to ninety dollars for his day's work! But when you consider that there was no hay in Dawson then and horses were being fed on flour (at six dollars per fifty-pound sack) added to packing-case straw for roughage, his charge was not exorbitant. Then, too, I got a

rebate on that bill, for professional services of my own! His daughter was ill and I attended her. For this service I was paid in gold-dust, my first experience of that nature. In common with other charges, medical fees were correspondingly high; but there was a very large amount of charity work to do, because a large number of the newcomers were practically penniless. These were the first men, of course, to lose their health.

But to go back to my own snug little home. It was built on the outskirts of the town, away from the business district; and was an excellent building, better than the average. I was as fussy about my cabin as an old-world remittance-man with highfalutin ideas! Logs eight or ten inches thick were sawed on three sides and the cracks were well filled with moss. Under the cabin we put three feet of sawdust, making it so snug that you could lie on the floor with comfort. The bottom of a building here needs insulation, as does its top. If you haven't a good floor, wet clothes hung to dry overnight will steam with heat next the ridge-pole, where the air is heated to sixty-five degrees Fahrenheit, and freeze stiff as boards near the floor where it may register close to zero. For two small *single-sash* window-frames, minus putty, I paid seventeen dollars apiece. An ordinary ten-cent hinge cost a dollar and a half. The two cabins, together, cost over a thousand dollars to build, but I sold my living cabin for five hundred dollars when I left Dawson.

The roofs were made of boards stripped from our dismantled boats and over them we threw a thick layer of earth. Snow began to fall while we were yet at work and made another weather-proof blanket. *October 16. The Yukon begins to fill with ice. . . . November 3. The river has stopped flowing.* A cabin must be air-tight, made of straight spruce logs hewn smooth on the lower and upper sides—and on the inside, too, if you wish a bit of swank and fewer insect occu-

pants for company! You fit the logs closely together, and you drive in the native moss, found everywhere, with your boat's calking-iron. It's well to have a storm-shed over your front door, and to use a listing of felt strips or torn old flannel shirt for door-and-window cracks. And you bank your cabin well in the fall, of course, using Nature's own earth and snow to protect yourself against the entry of winter wind. Where the red-hot stovepipe pokes its nose through the wooden roof, you guard it with a sheet-iron sheath so that you have a saving air-space; and you make holes for air-vents.

All the cabins were not well built. One lazy old-timer named Robinson merely dug into a bank of earth in the hill-side and filled the entrance with logs. He lived there all winter in unspeakable squalor. His cave was not a habitation but a beast's den, a dog's hole, a vixen's earth. So far as I know, however, he had no imitators.

But there were some queer houses in Dawson that winter. I told you about the Maoris, on the trail. Two of them bought a town lot near my cabin and proceeded to construct their winter home. They spent a few days in collecting long poles and saplings. The ends of the poles were inserted in the ground, making a circle about twelve feet in diameter. Then the tops were drawn together into a peak. The poles nearly touched each other, so that there were only narrow interstices. The whole was then covered with a foot-or-so-thick layer of earth. This would freeze and stay secure. There was only one exceedingly small window. The consensus of opinion was that it would not be practical as a dwelling in a subarctic winter, and opinion proved correct. The Maoris never occupied it; they disappeared, and I never saw them again. They were nice friendly fellows, too, and would have proved good neighbors.

Yes, there were several Hawaiians—Kanakas—and Chinamen, too, in the great gold-rush. Some came from California.

Your true " John Chinaman " is an adaptable Celestial. He often made good in the North. I met one who had come to the upper Fraser River, at the mouth of the Quesnel, in the sixties. They were often skilled miners, trained in the California tradition of the old placers. They attended strictly to business—their *own* business.

Speaking of China reminds me of the Dawson waterworks. At that time, water was not sold on the streets from sleds or wagons, but we carried it for ourselves. There were three principal places where it was got. One was a spring in the side of the mountain that towers over Dawson City—a spring which flowed freely until the weather got really cold. Long lines of men were always there, and it was irksome to wait one's turn. Yet all were good natured, the jolly, typically American crowd. In winter there were two water-holes in the Yukon, one at either end of the town. The muddy river, of course, became perfectly clear when the ice locked up its tributaries. These water-holes were in constant use, night and day, and so did not freeze up badly. I never had any trouble in breaking the rather thin ice that formed. Men usually carried two buckets in their hands but I had a Chinese water-yoke which fitted over my shoulders, making it easier to balance the full loads.

Another method was attempted, though. A man got the idea that water should be piped throughout the town. He got up a small company, and they dug trenches near my cabin and laid logs through which holes had been bored. The supply came from a good spring on the hillside. So far as I know, this plan never amounted to anything, however, and I think it was a failure. It's obvious that water will freeze in sixty-below weather, unless there's a companion steam-pipe to keep it thawed and warm, or unless it is wasted or " bled " to keep it flowing. That winter of '98–'99, every man was his own water-wagon. Here is a picture, though, taken in 1900,

down in front of Larss and Duclos's photograph shop, which shows how conditions improved with time—and ingenuity! You see five bearded men (we were all bearded those days, more or less) clad in furry Klondike caps with ear-tabs dangling, thick Mackinaws, heavy woolen trousers, high socks, and shoe-pacs, standing in front of as many dog-drawn, icicle-fringed sleds that are loaded with ten square five-gallon tins of water each. Others chopped their water out in chunks; they cut ice cubes on the river after the deep cold fell, drew them home on sleds, piled them in an outer shed, and melted them as needed.

Milk? Well, the first milk cow to arrive in Dawson had reached town early in July that year, while we were fighting mosquitoes on the Stewart. I heard that she was not very well pleased with her surroundings and did not give much milk at first. But that first gallon fetched just thirty dollars flat, in good Klondike "dust." She did better as the days grew shorter, sometimes a hundred dollars a milking! She came of a good family, was a perfect lady, and never did anything to make her bovine ancestors turn over in their graves —or, as the *Klondike Nugget* put it, "in the stomachs of their ultimate consumers." H. I. Miller was the man who brought her into the country, with nineteen male companions. This gentleman became known as "Cow Miller," and Cow Miller he remains to this day.

The lack of hay in Dawson City was, of course, simply another of those paradoxical and whimsical, crazy and foolish symptoms of the gold-rush fever. It was just another of those many, many instances, so common during the abnormal mutual madness of the stampede, proving that unreasoning or unpreparedness or a twisted sense of values in the minds of men—not any peril of the climate, any lack of resources of the land —were the essential factors of failure, or terrific cost, or loss of faith or fortune. Haven't I been telling you how, along the

whole stretch of the Upper Yukon, we came upon constant hillsides of wild native hay—on valleys and on glades innumerable, knee-deep in grasses? Moose are but cattle, in a sense, and countless moose and other grass eaters lived high and throve in the High North. And as early as '96, "Long Shorty" Willis Thorp and others brought ninety head of cattle and some seventy horses to the Interior, well fed en route. I think they came from Pyramid Harbor, over Jack Dalton's trail. Yet in the winter of '97–'98, hay sold at four hundred dollars a ton in Dawson and to hire a saddle horse cost sixty dollars per diem! To-day, when men have settled down to *live* within the North, not merely rape her riches and depart, dairy-farms flourish in the neighborhood of Dawson; and old Yukoners and the sons and daughters of these same Klondike stampeders raise hay and grain upon the Tánana and study animal husbandry at the Alaska Agricultural College. Amusing, isn't it?

But in the general insanity of a get-rich-quick gold-rush, who would be so patient—or so sanely mad—as to cut and cure hay? The early pioneers did not think hay, and so for them the native hay did not exist. They looked only for gold at the grass roots, and could not see potential hay above—although in fact the knee-high grasses rippled to every summer-blowing wind. So horses starved for lack of roughage in a land that waved with welcoming grass, and humans by the hundreds agonized and starved themselves of necessary vitamins in a land abounding with a saving meat and rich in native and wild-animal fatness. Again, as hygienist, I thought this a significant incident in our northern tragi-comedy.

The background of that picture of the Dawson waterworks is a social index of Dawson at the turn of the century. Next to the photographers' shop is a dressmaking establishment—"all kinds of sewing." Next to that is *Ford's Club Bath & Gymnasium* and, next beyond, the office of the *Dawson Daily News*. A metropolitan business block! Every third building

on Main and Front streets those days seemed to be either a saloon, restaurant, or a dance hall: *California Saloon, Morgan & Horn; City Auction Mart & Labor Bureau; The Northern; Combination Theatre; Dr. Lee, Dentist; The Palace; Louis Pond & Co., Manufacturing Jewellers; Pioneer Bakery and Café; Hegg, Photos and Views; Northwest Trading and Commission Co.; Dr. Merchant, Dentist; Turner & Co., Auctioneers; Campbell's Drug Store; Bank of British North America; Dawson Laundry; Mrs. McDonald, Fancy Dressmaking & Ladies' Tailoring; Saint Louis Beer.* For fancy ladies must have fancy frocks, and thirsty men must wet dry whistles!

Even a house-cat was expensive. The first to reach Dawson came in August when we did, and her kittens sold for ten dollars apiece. But any one who packed a cat and kittens over the Chilkoot earned that money! Prices were high, living was poor and luxuries were scarce. And yet we had our dudes and white shirts, diamonds and patent-leather shoes. Never was there a place where the apparel did so proclaim the man—or woman! One can almost say that to be well dressed in Dawson in '98–'99 was a moral disgrace. It was the one town in the world, perhaps, where to be well dressed was the badge of a "sport." A plain flannel shirt and rough clothes were the garb of respectability. Of thirty thousand or so, here at the close of navigation in 1898, about five hundred were women. Dawson City was indeed a lively mining town, those days, its population exceedingly mixed and including all races and all phases of human experience, in a picturesque jumble. Here was another world, no longer full of tidy smug relationships and expected happenings, but noisy with the drums of drama.

The streets of Dawson? Piles of winter wood, waiting to be sawed, formed a barricade in front of many a shop; lumber for new buildings crowded upon the upraised wooden sidewalks; sawhorses and a million chips from thousands of slain

trees were strewn upon the right of way; stumps of trees still made a devious detour for teamsters in the outer " Avenues." In rainy weather the whole open space was jelly or was soup, from sidewalk back to sidewalk; precarious duck-boards rode the wavelets and grinning groups of men watched ladies with long trailing dresses, sailor hats, and puffy sleeves splash muddily but daintily across, with modest uplift only to an ankle. Yet those same streets were generously and spaciously as wide as any city's most impressive boulevard, were straight and lined with friendly telephone poles. Some buildings were of two or three stories and the elegant new *Regina Hotel,* then building, was a towering four. Though boiled shirts might be at a decided premium and white collars rare as fresh-laid eggs, the " city " was beginning to take on both decencies and conveniences.

Wrapping-paper wasn't one of the luxuries on hand, however. When I went to a butcher to buy meat, one day that fall, I had my choice of native caribou or moose, which had been killed by a corps of professional hunters and fetched into town piled high on sledges. I bought my steak, but the butcher ran a sharp stake through said steak and politely handed me one end of this meaty lollypop! I walked home carrying my frozen steak at the far end of that stick, valiantly warding off scores and battalions of hungry dogs with the other arm—and with both feet!

When Mercury Froze

ROCKWELL KENT is an artist—an artist in two media, of pictured line and color-shaping word. Years after my adventurous strange journey, he too sought out the North and flopped here many a flapjack for his morning meal. He learned much from the North, as his rich journal signifies. One line of it I often think about: "To love the cold is a sign of youth—and we do love it, The Awakener."

Too many tales of arctic and subarctic travel or sojourning are overloaded with description of peril and disaster due to cold—but forget to call it The Awakener! No man ever finds in the North exactly the thing he expected to find; but if his eyes and heart are open he will surely find here more of beauty, less of peril, than his dreams predicted. Every Yukoner is amused by the avid readiness of outsiders to believe extravagant lies concerning this region, while rejecting truth. Thrilling escapes from mastodons are more easily credited than many of our matter-of-fact phenomena. Nature, of course, does not change any of her laws, as she holds court in a more northern circuit. She merely stiffens the penalties. The laws themselves are irrevocable, are the same here as elsewhere.

Any seeming strangeness of life in the subarctic is not, of necessity, synonymous with danger. On the contrary, many of the most successful even deep-arctic explorations have been almost devoid of sensational events—due to good sense and to adequate preparedness for known conditions. It's the un-

known that terrifies, appalls the imagination. Folk sitting quietly at home in armchairs like to read of hair-raising arctic thrills. The man who knows the North avoids the thrills—except when he steps into them through accident.

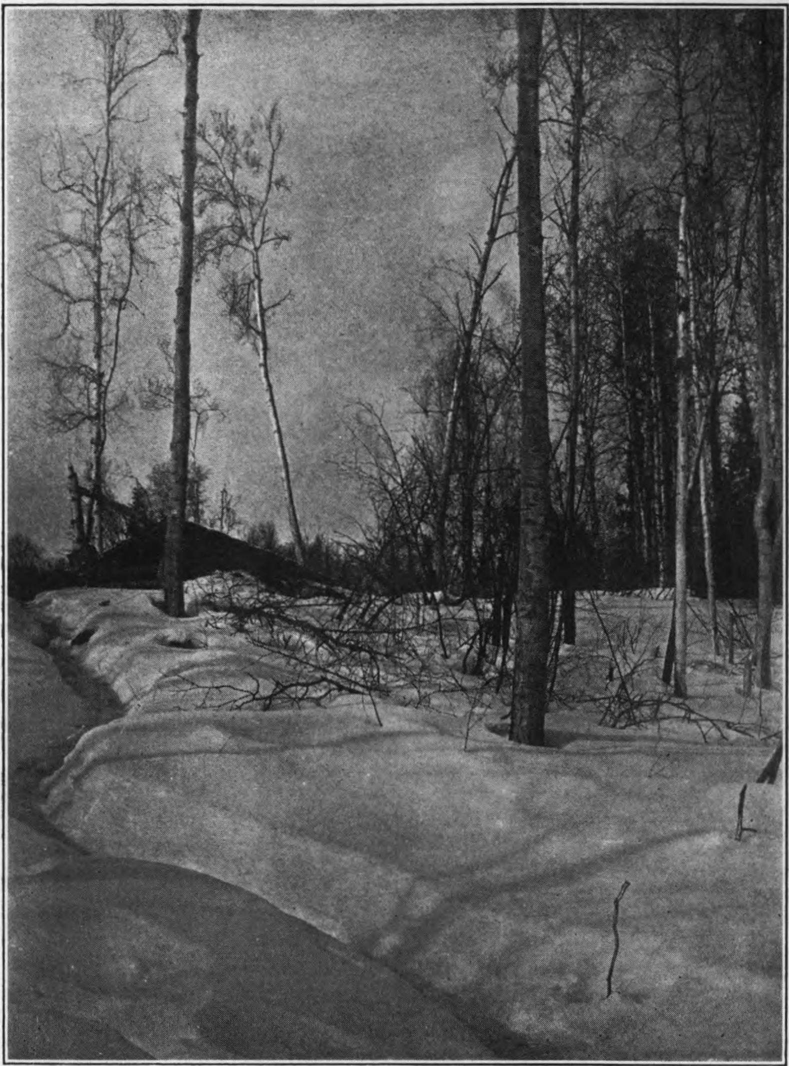
I remember good words, comfortable words, about this matter of the cold from that wise Jesuit, Father Judge, of St. Mary's Hospital in Dawson. "The severity of our winters has frightened some," he said, "especially those who have never before wintered where cold is really severe. But cold has no terror for those who have lived intimately with it. In fact, there seems to be a something about our Northern winter that fascinates all those who come here. 'All the earth sitteth still and is at rest.' I have yet to meet a man, even of those many who have come here merely to make fortunes, who wished to leave the North so long as he could support himself decently. The thermometer outside my door there may read one hundred degrees colder, this minute, than in our two home cities of Washington or Baltimore. But are we terrified? Not at all. Here we sit cosily over a friendly chess-board. We chop wood in our shirt sleeves out of doors, at minus forty or more, and are most comfortable. And I have known men who have wintered on the Yukon with nothing more for shelter than a canvas tent."

Travelers unfamiliar with the Arctic and sub-Arctic are sure to experience many surprises; but from my own experience I'd say strongly that most of those surprises will prove pleasant. Many people associate the North with little but snow and icicles. On the contrary, with so much more sunshine, for many months, than is enjoyed in temperate zones, Nature is very prolific of Life; after the gates of Spring are opened, no snow is seen here except upon the lofty ridge-pole of the Rocky Mountains; air, earth, and water are instant with active life, and even the piercing cold of Winter does not entirely hold this animation in check. That winter in Dawson, my

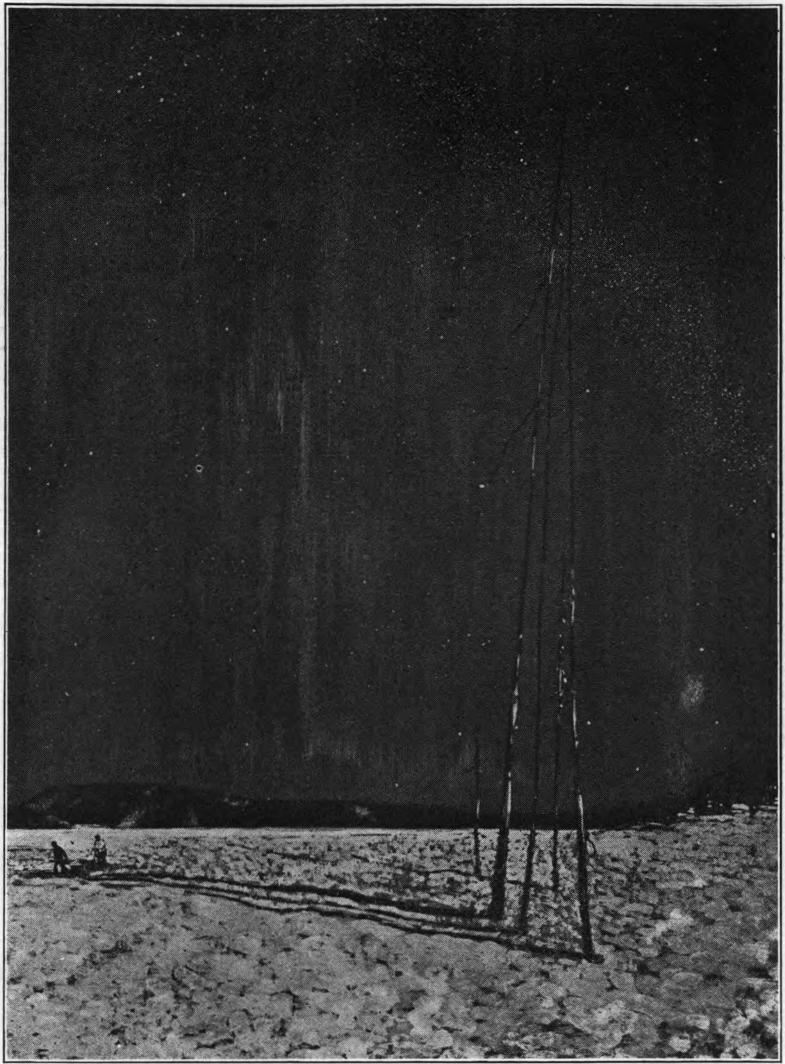
thermometer (a spirit-thermometer, of course, since mercury freezes at minus forty, Fahrenheit) fell sometimes as low as minus sixty-two, yet everything was not frozen. Even under these conditions there was some open water.

Many springs, sometimes highly alkaline, break forth even in the coldest weather, menacing the traveler with wet feet. In fact, we soon found that occasional open water was one of the principal risks in winter travel; for when you break through the thin shell-ice and the moccasins are accidentally wet by hidden springs or overflows, usually concealed under a light coating of snow, it is imperative to dry the feet immediately at a fire, to avoid freezing. A great river like the Yukon does not freeze solidly to the bottom, except in very shallow places. True, at times you may find ice that's ten feet thick upon it, but that hasn't happened through natural freezing. What I mean is, that one natural ice-layer several inches thick is often forced up by pressure or breakage upon another ice-surface, so they may pile up and freeze together and later become firmly and deeply "jelled" there. Both the flowing current below and the blanket of relatively warm snow above, keep the Yukon's ice from *deep* freezing. The Indians fish through the ice all winter, on all these lakes and streams, catching whitefish and a rich oily black fish.

Air-holes remain open here and there in the swift-running rivers and at the rapids, sending up clouds of vapor in cold weather that look like jets of steam. The temperature of ice, as of air and solid bodies, varies with the degree of cold; but fresh water the world over can not be at a lower temperature than thirty-two degrees above zero; and this is a medium quite warm enough for the development of various larval forms of life. In midwinter—February of '99, with the thermometer standing at forty-five below zero—while filling my buckets from water-holes in the Yukon I have dipped out the larvæ of mosquitoes and other insects, which developed wings when



"All the earth sitteth still and is at rest"



"The Northern Lights dropped silver, jade and amber curtains."

brought into the warmth of my cabin. For some reason, these schools of larvæ only came to the water-holes after dark, and were not noticed earlier than February.

A simple experiment proved to me that they can not endure low temperatures. I fished out a dozen or so of the larvæ from the bucket and put them in a bottle of water, setting this outside my window until it froze solid. When I thawed the bottle out slowly in my cabin, every one of the insects was dead. In the spring, toward May, it is not unusual to see mosquitoes even in a snow-storm; but they seldom bite so early in the season. As early as April 4, referring to my diary here, I see that I noted numbers of jet-black insects about a quarter inch in length, hopping about on the snow.

We did not pity the non-migratory animals that winter—we envied them—feeling ourselves at a grave disadvantage in comparison with our wild brothers who were the native inmates of Winter's household. The moose, caribou, mountain-sheep, bears, squirrels, ravens, ptarmigans, owls, snow-buntings, beavers, wolves, lynxes, and porcupines excited no sympathy for their all-winter out-of-doors existence, because they were beautifully adapted to it with their long teeth or claws, feathery soft robes, and furry frost-shedding skins. Saucy, chattering red squirrels were very common about Klondike creeks; but it was always a source of wonderment to me, how the graceful and delicate little arctic mice prevented their small tissue-paper ears from freezing.

After the middle of September, ice could be seen in the gulches back of town. *November 7, 1898. Began custom of rubbing noses. Thermometer minus 35°, F. . . . November 8. Ice holes on the Yukon steaming so that it looks as though one could get hot drinks there. Ice on window-panes very thick. . . . November 13. Warm spell. Clouds. Plus 20°, F. . . . November 17. Cabin logs cracking because of frost. . . . November 18. Letters sent out by dog*

team. . . . November 21. Thermometer minus 58°. Many cases of frost-bite. . . . December 6. Remarkable hot wind called Chinook. Not seen here in recent years. Wind comes from south and roars over the rough ice on Yukon. Weather is exceedingly dangerous for those who have to travel. Father Judge, the Jesuit priest at St. Mary's Hospital, told me that one year they had a light rain on Christmas Day. . . . December 30. Got hair cut in evening for $1.00. Thermometer minus 57°. Misty, as it always seems to be when very cold. Smoke rises straight up. . . . January 7, 1899. The sun rose gloriously above a hill to the south. This is the first time I have seen it since some time before the middle of December. It just came up to set again below the rim of the hill. The sun indulges in a thirty-day hibernation here! I can assure you it was a genuine pleasure to see old Sol peep up again over the mountains, turning the pale-blue snow to pink and casting purple shadows.

January 24, 1899. Met men on trail from Eagle City. One had large frozen patch on chin and other said his toes were frozen. One's nose, especially, freezes quickly and often. We would be going along the trail, gay as could be, and meet some fellow musher with a leper-white nose—a true danger-signal in the center of a pink face. We'd say, "Friend, your nose is frozen." "Thanks," he'd answer. "So's yours!" And then we'd both of us snatch up a double mittenful of snow and rub briskly, until the whiteness disappeared and we could give one another a clean bill of health again. A red, and not a green, "go" sign, unlike your cities! No great harm results from such misadventure, if you notice the discoloration of the skin in time to "rub it out."

February 19, '99. Koschnick and I made a trip to a bunk house about 16 miles from Dawson. Two men came in to sleep in the men's quarters. In the morning, one proved to be a woman, and she must have heard the vile talk which those

fellows so capably poured forth. It was rather comical. We got up at 6 a. m., and returned to Dawson. The thermometer was only 16° below zero, though a very high wind was blowing up the Klondike against us. Koschnick froze his nose and cheek and I froze my chin, cheek, and neck. We had bandanna handkerchiefs over our faces to protect us, and the wind went under them without our knowing it. The frozen places were as hard as stone, and without sensation until they thawed out. We neither of us had the slightest idea we were freezing. Dawson had a severe wind-storm, with cold, during our absence and we got the tail-end of it.

That was the day we learned always to use our Klondike caps, "invented by Necessity." They were mostly of fur, with a heavy piece across the forehead, for that is where the cold strikes sharpest. They have thick flaps of fur that fold down over your ears and around your neck and chin. It's amazing how very searching that arctic wind can be! It stabs like a driven nail. It finds out slits or tears in your clothes, more skilfully than any mending tailor. Your ears, and other outstanding appanages and angles, are the first sufferers. Your breath congeals on mustache and on eyebrows—small beads of ice form on your lashes, and even upon the little hairs in your nose. Whiskers become a nuisance, and a man can nearly suffocate from ice that freezes on a beard and glues his nose and mouth up tight! Many who wore beards in summer for mosquito protection, shaved them in winter to avoid these much too intimate icicles, which otherwise would hang like tusks with gathered frost.

When a man is warm from exercise, he chills very quickly in any wind; and I think it was the universal testimony of Yukoners that comparatively moderate cold, *with wind,* was much more dangerous than a deep but quiet cold. We soon found that one great and unexpected blessing of the Klondike was this: Always, during our minus-sixty weather, the air was

still; minus fifteen with a wind blowing was much harder to bear. Sweat is the dread and paradoxical ally of deep pure cold, in hostility to man. If any moisture touches your skin in such temperatures, that part will freeze.

The cold affected our tools, too, in curious ways. Axes and other cutting tools lose edge so quickly, when used in frozen ground or on frozen wood. The very metal cracks and splits, as though bewitched into disintegration by the cold. Molasses, or "long-tailed sugar" as we called it, became a viscous black paste. Dried apples were no longer fruit but stones, to be smashed only with axes. There is no knife, however keen, can slice a frozen ham; but on the other hand you need not fear that any game, killed in such weather, will ever get too "high."

I found Father Judge especially interested in these quaint problems and blessings of the cold. I often talked with him about them. "Once I bent to pick up a tin plate," he said. "I touched it with my bare hand, but dropped it quickly as if the metal were red-hot. Wherever my fingers had touched that plate they were white, for the careless feel of a bit of tin burns like a red-hot coal, at sixty or so below. But the injury is more quickly cured—that is, if you can drop the metal before the frost peels your skin off with it, too!"

Old-timers told me that the Northern Lights that winter were not so wonderful as in some other years, but to me they were indeed a marvel: The cosmic pulsation of the Aurora, seemingly so near—in genesis and in continuance a symbol of the beat of life celestial—an evidence of things not generally seen, a throb of the etherial pulse. The Northern Lights dropped silver, jade, and amber curtains of unearthly flaring light that crossed the entire transit of the heavens—and then withdrew, as though they had been snatched away by some divine Stage-manager. No mortal eye but must watch, hypnotized, this heavenly display. No mortal mind but must be

somehow, in his soul, impressed with sense of untold power and mystery. What the deep-burning stars, set in a velvet blue, are to the desert dweller, this swift-drawn curtain of a multicolored and electric flame is to the Northman watcher of the skies: a challenge to his thought upon eternal verities. Some winter nights I seemed to sit and wait, within the dark and silent testing-room of a divine Physician-Oculist, to whom I'd gone in doubt to have a trial made of my spiritual vision, through mystery of blackened day and flaming night. The quiet voice of a hidden questioner seemed to be searching out my soul for truth:

"Now, do you see? Can you read better, now, this clearly written page of verity?"—as light was given now, now light denied, and the swift slide of upper heaven drawn and withdrawn, in patient testing of a mortal insight. Long sheets of a siderial flame would shoot and melt and form again. Stars and a faint sun often showed together, in midwinter. At times the world was all of white. At other times the sky was weirdly lit an indescribable bronze-green by an anemic dodderd moon, and mountains crouched in circle like old chiefs in council. Scientists may tell us that the Northern Lights are caused by electric discharge in the upper atmosphere when the pressure is low, that their height is some three hundred miles, and that no living person has been closer to the bottom of this sky phenomenon than fifty miles. But no science can betray their marvel, nor make the optical illusion of Aurora seem any less mysteriously divine, nor any less mysteriously near.

There is a thought-rune, too, about this mystery—a magic that we never guessed those thirty years ago, but have been learning since. Above the troubled atmosphere of earth floats a celestial ceiling, a wondrous great smithing deftly hung "by the All-Father, first and eldest of the gods," as the Icelandic Edda would tell the story. "He smithied heaven and earth. And what is most, he made man and gave him a soul that shall

live and never perish. Before the earth, in the morning of time, when yet naught was, nor sand nor sea was there, nor cooling streams, earth was not found, nor heaven above. A Yawning-gap there was, but grass nowhere. The Yawning-gap, which looked toward the north parts, was filled with thick and heavy ice and rime, and everywhere within were fogs and gusts—ere the races were yet mingled or the folk of man grew."

When man was born, he turned his eyes up to that ceiling hung above earth's floor, and saw much god-craft that was mystery. But seldom did he use his ear as well as eye, to hear a hidden whisper running through those upper currents. Only a wise man once, who caught a music in the spinning spheres: only that master-poet of the Hebrews, who listened lonely in a desert place and heard the song of morning stars together.

Then, in our own day, Science reached a hand and drew and shewed a marvel. In stratosphere, above the earthy air, the searching ear of man caught and laid bare a layer electric and conducting, whence spoken messages reflect—upon which, somehow, the auroras play. Man lifts his voice—man who can be wise as Bragi in tongue-wit, and cunning speech, and song-craft—and tells his fellow men of chewing-gum and tooth-paste! God is not mocked. Across that sometimes-desecrated word-path of aerial glory, He shakes the darting flame-light of His Borealis, pounding upon earth's ceiling from above to taunt the foolish ears of men with broken broadcast and telegraphy.

We know now that this ceiling lies highest at earth's middle, is lowest—very much so—near the poles. Dawson should be a place strategic, to catch those surges from the polar roof. Dawson may dance, to-day, to music in the air. I wonder, are the hearts of men still lifted there, as ours were in that silence and that winter glory? We have observed much, since then, of our magnetic earth's behavior. What do we know of cause?

The winter passed so quickly, and at last the sun grew bolder and showed himself for longer and more joyous days —each day a little longer in the sky and setting more reluctantly each glowing evening. I was not impatient for the spring, for Cold and Winter had proved worthy tried companions, and Darkness both a friend and teacher. "When it gets dark enough you see the stars." I felt I knew at last a little of that hidden land behind the North Wind, which has lured men into the North from the first voyage of Pytheas of Massilia to the last flight of a Graf Zeppelin. And then the snow began to melt upon the southern-facing slopes about Dawson City, warm trickles began to run from under the edges of the brush. Small creeks began to creep at midday and small cracks appeared beneath the diamond crust. By mid-April the flats were clear of snow. And then came Spring herself, the good ship *Primavera* sailing in on the moist South Wind, and landing most dramatically at Dawson.

May 17, 1899. Yukon broke at 4:30 p. m. Great excitement. Strange to see the trail to West Dawson going down the river with the ice. This trail has been lined on both sides all winter long with boxes of frozen human excrement from Dawson privies. The River and the Cold are our strange gods of medicine and hygiene here, our Æsculapius and Hygeia! Ice jammed soon an' the flow behind crunched and crashed into the jam with tremendous force. Some boats were crushed. Trees waved in air and rolled over and over. Ice piled layer on layer, thundering and roaring, and occasionally some pieces plunging under the water. Mud and gravel banks were deeply ploughed up. A friend, who was three miles from the river, said that he could hear the great roar. . . . May 18. Ice thick in river and still going out. . . . May 20. Warm day. Saw bumblebee, many flies, a few mosquitoes, many flowers.

Consider this great river of the North, its many tributaries, its mountain birth in steepness and cut basalt gorges—snow-

covered through the winter long, from source to mouth, more than two thousand miles of unlimited white frozen grandeur. The whole land is so snow-bound, you'd think no summer could be long enough to melt it. Then come the warming rains of spring, water flows upon the surface here and there, long days of ever-growing suns add to the patient work of dissolution. The cold holds its own until mid-April; but as soon as the severe cold cracks, the strong sun melts and swells the river until it writhes beneath the ice and lifts it bodily, forcing loose its iron-bound hold upon the banks. As soon as anchor ice is broken, the tremendous growing force of the great current rushes it off to sea. Some of the sea-borne ice is crystal clear, some half-sodden and honeycombed and soft, some black and full of dirt, some thickly bedded with trees. The whole goes roaring, rolling past our Dawson, rising when it strikes a bar or any obstacle and splintering into a million glassy fragments in a smash and crumbled roar like the boom of great siege-guns. The river fills its banks and overflows upon the flats, now deserted, their tenants racing to the heights in panic. And with good reason, for in the spring of 1898 the whole lower part of Dawson was flooded and boatmen carried passengers down that street for fifty cents a head. So it rages for two full days, then quiets to normal spate of spring. Now, boats may follow ice down closely from the upper river, fetching our longed-for fruit and meat and eggs. Mercury, the god of commerce, is unloosed again—no longer frozen in his minus-forty cup.

Father Judge and I had spoken laughingly, as winter fell that year, of Mercury the messenger of gods; Mercury, the subtle thief for tricking gold and silver from their ores; of Mercury, the sire of a corrosive sublimate and also of a salutary calomel; of Mercury, the bearer of the symbolled twisted snakes; of Mercury, the god of eloquence and thieves; of Mercury, the conductor of our souls to some far other world. I

said that Mercury must be the planet under whose aspect we men of Northland lived.

He twinkled behind his thick eye-glasses and replied, " No, my good doctor, and for two reasons."

" You Jesuits are skilful casuists. I wait upon your logic."

" One reason is that Mercury, the planet, lies next the Sun. Here we, to-day, are sunless. The heathen deity can not be worshipped here. He is too various a god, too variable an element. The second is: at forty minus, as to-day, the tricky god is frozen in his little cell down at the bottom of the mercury tube and plays us false. The silver-quick turns to a seeming lead. He hibernates, upon the Yukon. And there's another reason, too. When winter comes, as you have seen, sickness departs. The winged-of-foot, the serpent-bearer, can now no longer lead our fevered men down to dark Pluto's realm. No, no, my doubting doctor! Look further, deeper, higher than to Mercury, for Godhead of the North. Hermes is not He. Look closer there, behind the flame-drawn curtain of the Northern Lights, for light. Mercury is a thief, and Mercury lies frozen."

—Yet one day in that winter, some god touched Father Judge with his flaming wand, and led him from us while the days were darkest. No lack of sunlight ever darkened Dawson, as did his going.

The Saint of Saint Mary's

WISH that you had known Father Judge. I wish that I myself had known him better. Even our short acquaintance gave me a reverence for the man I've never lost. To me, he seemed the noblest type of pioneer I met in all that winter. He did a great piece of work in Dawson. Even rival clerics of protesting faith there called him "The Saint of the Northwest."

Our first contact was professional, for he had built and was the friendly ruling spirit of the pioneer hospital of St. Mary's. Soon I discovered we had many mutual friends and bits of background, which made us doubly neighbors. Father Judge was born in Baltimore in 1850, and when twenty-five years old was admitted to the Jesuit novitiate at Frederick, Maryland. He had spent three years at Gonzaga College, in my own city of Washington, and a year as student of philosophy at Woodstock, Maryland. For another season, he had been prefect and teacher at Georgetown University. In 1883 he returned to Woodstock, to the College of the Sacred Heart that lies so pleasantly above the winding Patapsco. Cardinal Gibbons—then archbishop, his friend and my acquaintance—himself ordained the young man in the beautiful little chapel there. To one who, like myself, had been at home in that delightful section of the earth, this philosophic charming Baltimorean seemed a true neighbor and a home-town man. His one eager relaxation, chess, proved a further bond, while his deep thoughtfulness and wide-bound interest in humanities and verities were foils and openings for my incessant questioning about the North.

Before I met this man, I heard him spoken of as "the old father" or "the old priest." I was surprised to find that he was only in his forties—a man with a saint's face, it's true, eyes widely spaced and most unusually illuminated, a forehead high, chin firm, mouth straight but full. If ever character was written on a countenance, the writing here was clear. Although his wide-set eyes could truly blaze, the whole man fuse at times with passionate energy, his aspect in repose was serious and sad—due, I imagine, to the constant pain he suffered. His health had been impaired by all the far too arduous work his athletic spirit drove that frail body to accomplish. I don't believe he'd known a true night's rest for years. He merely snatched at sleep, in broken pieces—never actually relaxed. Yet his friendly sense of humor was flowing and fine, and he could jest with scholar or with roughest miner, each in his own phrase. I remember his telling, with a chuckle, that one season on the Lower River he had eaten so many rabbits—other food being minus—he felt his ears each morning, when he woke, to see if they weren't growing longer!

I suppose that to any gently reared person, Dawson in '98 and '99 would seem a city horribly wicked and depraved, probably more so than any spot on earth inhabited by white men at that moment. Morality was set at defiance and shame was generally lacking. It's true that shooting, fighting, stealing, and rowdyism were not tolerated, even where there were no officers of the law; but the governing powers had set their seal of approval upon vice. And yet religion flourished side by side with vice, almost every denomination being represented. The Roman Catholics had a really splendid log church, lined inside with snow-white canvas, with well-made pews and altar, and with a chime of bells, an organ, and a good choir. The Presbyterians, Church of England, Methodists, and Salvation Army were also comfortably housed in log-cabin structures. The Salvation Army were a fine lot of men. I knew their cap-

tain and esteemed him highly. Their main work was in being charitable, and they seemed never to rest from their labors. I never heard them adversely criticized and they were praised by the whole community. They were even welcome at the saloons and often knelt for prayer in the coldest weather, out in the open. They provided work for the needy, food for the destitute. They had no ulterior motives and won a tribute of high commendation from a crowd of men in whom sympathy for good works might not have been expected.

Dawson was a Gomorrah, and yet it held much good in solution and had its quota of ten righteous men to save it from complete destruction. Egg shortages were frequent here, but you could never catch these people short on heart. The " city " had its social and its moral good points, too; gossip was unpopular, people attended strictly to their own affairs, snobbishness was uncommon, and an open generosity was expected. In a crowd like this, one finds the grandest, finest sort of human gems uncut—men one is proud to know, who teach manhood by their simple, brave lives. Among the women, too, pluck was wonderfully shown, time over, and some of the highest types of genuine ladyhood accentuated by contrast the general debasement. You can see that any man who could live in the very midst of all this various life, this drama of confusion—be of it and yet not tainted, be friend and known to all yet called a saint—was a man very much worth knowing, a man yet unforgotten.

Father Judge had come to the North long years before the Great Stampede and had worked hard upon the Lower Yukon, at St. Michael and at Holy Cross and other places—including Circle City and the Fortymile. The great river running west was his, from its sea ending upward, long before I tried to make it mine. He had worked up-stream in his knowledge, patiently, whilst I had merely floated down, *vis a fronte* against *vis a tergo.* That's why, perhaps, he was the wiser mortal.

He had been disciplined. He was a soldier of the Church at War, a scout upon the frontier fringes.

I have a copy here of a very precious letter—precious because it so betrays the man in little incidents which take on magnitude. He wrote it to his sister, also a religious, when he was yet stationed at Fortymile. I've treasured it as an unposed spiritual snap-shot of the man, caught at his daily work.

"There are only about one hundred and fifty people living here now but there are about five hundred in the neighborhood who have to come here for their provisions. There are two trading companies, with large stores, a hardware shop, a barber shop, and a number of saloons. The English Government has a post with twenty soldiers or police, customs collector, etc. The officers have their families with them and are very nice people. They belong to the Church of England but are very kind to me and have invited me to dinner several times. The gentleman who keeps the hardware store is a good Catholic. He and his wife come to Mass every morning. . . . Last week they gave me a nice carpet for the Sanctuary. . . . On January 8, I started to visit the miners living on Fortymile Creek. I had a sleigh and only one dog, for dogs are scarce here and sell for fifty to seventy-five dollars apiece. The first day I made twenty-five miles and stopped at night with an old man who makes a good living by cultivating potatoes and turnips which he sells like hot cakes to the miners, for vegetables are scarce. . . . After leaving his place I found a cabin about every five miles and the inmates all Catholics, so I stayed one night at each house and said Mass every day. Having traveled thus for four or five days, I came to a stretch of about forty miles throughout which there were no more inhabited cabins, but there were two vacant ones, with stoves in them, used by those who made a business of hauling provisions for the miners.

"At about two o'clock on the 16th of January, I started . . .

to go to the first of the vacant cabins, distant only about six or seven miles. . . . I do not know how cold it was; but the quicksilver was frozen, so it was at least forty below zero. I had never been over the road. . . . All went well for about three miles when I came to a place where the water had overflowed the ice. Although the surface was frozen, the new ice was not strong enough to bear the sleigh; it broke, and I had to walk in the water, almost up to my knees, for about two hundred yards; and as I was not prepared to find water, my boots were not suitable and my feet got wet. I did not know how far I was from the cabin, but I thought it was not far; so I pushed on, trying to keep my feet from freezing by walking as fast as I could. But the sleigh was made much heavier by the ice that formed on it, and the snow that stuck to it after it had passed through the water; so I could not go as fast as I ought to have gone, and thought I would never get to the cabin. About two hours after I got my feet wet, I felt so tired that I was about to stop . . . for it was so dark that I could not see well, and I was afraid that I might have passed the cabin without knowing it. But just when I was about to stop, my dog took a sudden start; so I thought that perhaps he saw the cabin, and sure enough, in a few minutes we came to it.

"It was on a high bank, which I had some difficulty to climb. When I got to it, I found a log cabin with no floor, no window, and no hinges to the door; but there was a stove, and at once I tried to start a fire, after making some shavings with my knife. The wood was so cold I could not succeed with matches, and I had to go back to the sleigh to get a piece of candle; but my gloves also had gotten wet, in coming through the water; and when I took them off to make the fire, they froze so hard that I could not get them on again, and I had to go down and get up the bank without using my hands, which was not easy, especially the coming up.

"I did not forget that it was the thirtieth anniversary of Mother's death and I thought that it might be God's will to take me on the same day. But, with some difficulty, I got up again, crawling and using my elbows instead of hands, and with the help of the candle I soon got a fire started. As soon as I started to thaw the ice off my boots, I felt a pain shoot through my right foot so I knew that it must be frozen. At once I went out and filled a box that I had found in the cabin with snow, then took off my boot and found that all the front part of my right foot was frozen as hard as stone. . . . I could not mark it with my thumb nail. So I had to go away from the fire and rub the foot with that awfully cold snow, which is more like ground glass than anything else, until I got the blood back to the surface, which took at least half an hour. After that I held my foot to the red-hot stove for about an hour before it was completely thawed out. With such treatment, no harm follows from the freezing; but if you go into a warm room or put the frozen part to the fire before rubbing it with snow till it becomes red, it will decay at once and you can not save it. It was the first time I had been frozen, but I have doctored others and knew just what was necessary; and so, thank God, I escaped.

"Three days later I got to the end of my journey, about a hundred miles from here (Fortymile), and I was just in time, for that very evening the most severe spell we have had began, and for ten days the temperature remained between sixty and seventy below zero. I stopped with an Irishman and his wife and was very comfortable. I said Mass every day and had six or seven present each time. . . . As soon as the quicksilver thawed, which showed that it was less than forty below zero, I started to return. . . . It took me seven days to come back. . . .

"So you see I am happy. . . . I am very well and feel as young as I did when you last saw me, but no doubt time is

doing its work on all of us. . . . God bless you and all your good Sisters in religion!

"Your affectionate brother,

"WM. H. JUDGE, S. J."

Though slight in body and a man in broken health, he never would admit this and his good cheer was contagion. Even in controversy he proved unfailingly good-natured, neither begging nor shirking issues, using no hazy rhetoric to cover up loose argument. Like all good Jesuits, he was an unworldly citizen of the world, taking no thought of script, not bound by any local ties. The Jesuit has no home, the world is his parish. Yet in the fiber of my friend's heart were roots that ran back into the soil of Maryland, and that word Maryland was vibrant as he spoke it. He was the type of man who dignified rough labor by the doing, a man who could never descend to pomposity as I've seen certain clerics do; and yet a man whose character was so compact and whole and integrated that dignity covered him as with a robe, frocking him more completely than his priesthood. He loved his Church, his sacred Order, with fanatic zeal; yet I, an alien, never felt outside his interested care. Nor did any other that I ever heard, of all the score of thousand souls in Dawson. Most of us were not of his fold, yet all of us were of his friendship. And he had the rare gift of being able to meet violence and roughness without fear; meet "Klondike Kings" of fabulous wealth, in threadbare spiritual mastery; meet wantonness and degradation and corruption without a rubbed-off taint, yet somehow purify them in that Magdalenian touch. He labored for high ends with clean simplicity; his straight directness was a something really native, not anything put on, and so his soul was clear and unaffected: A gallant, very noble soul, our Dawson Saint of Saint Mary's—friend of the friendless, learner of the Wilderness.

Father Judge happened to be one of the very first to send

out authentic news about the Klondike strike, which he did in December, 1896. He also prophesied that " when the news gets outside, no doubt there will be a great rush for these parts." With the Jesuit's living energy and keen eye for public business, he took steps to secure three acres in Dawson as a site for church and hospital, long before the rest of the world realized that a new gold camp even existed. Also, he sent out to his superior a request for nursing Sisters, before a log of the new hospital was laid or he himself had been to the new town. He had a vision and he saw the need. He realized from the reports coming through Fortymile that a very rich new gold-field would mean a large and permanent town, and he intended that a church and hospital should grow up with it from the start.

Sometime in mid-March of 1897, Father Judge packed his sled and started for the Klondike. Stampeders from the Fortymile remember overtaking a solitary and feeble old man (or so they thought, and told) with a sled-rope over his patient shoulder, gee-pole in hand, a single dog in front of him to help the pull. He spent a month in Dawson that spring, starting men to work at getting out logs from the upper river and clearing ground for his new hospital. Then, after Easter, he returned to Fortymile for provisions. By the end of May he was back again and took up permanent residence here. At the foot of the Dome and not far from the great river, where he had located the site for hospital and church, he spent long summer days cooking for the workmen and builders, checking the arrival of his logs as they were rafted down. He learned to turn his hand to anything, those days. No mattresses for the new hospital? He dried out grass and moss, and stuffed them neatly into ticking cases. No paper and no paint? " What matter? We can use muslin and sizing."

The original St. Mary's Hospital stretched fifty by twenty, was two stories high. The wooden ceilings rose nine feet for light and airiness, the floors were lumber, and the walls were

neatly lined with muslin coated over with a dressing of white lead. Curtains were used at first for doors. He cared for as many as fifty patients at a time in that small building, that first winter, about half of them being scurvy cases.

A church that could seat two hundred people rose as by magic—the magic of his single energy—to the left of the hospital. It was fifty by twenty-four. At first there was no glass for the windows, so he stretched heavy muslin to the frames. By the next Easter they were glassed. Candles for his altar cost a dollar and a half, then, he told me. Two large stoves heated the building comfortably that winter; but in June of 1898 this precious church burned to the ground, early on the morning of Trinity Sunday. The tired man had been at prayer there in the church, alone, late in the night, a single candle burning. Word came that some one of his many patients was dying in the hospital next door; and so the good priest hurried there but forgot to snuff the guttering candle, which burned down in its wooden socket and soon the whole church was a mass of flames. In a town of tents and resinous log cabins, you can guess the danger. Every soul grabbed pails and blankets, and rushed to the rescue. By some miracle, the hospital adjoining did not catch, for it was swiftly covered with tarpaulins, kept wet by a thousand helpers. The good priest's only comment was, in all the hurly-burly and dismay, "It is a judgment on me. I built the church too small. I had too little faith."

A collection was started at once, while the fire still smoldered, to rebuild a larger and a finer church. But Alexander McDonald, stout, crop-haired, pompadoured "King of the Klondike," assumed the whole expense and the new building cost twenty-five thousand dollars. "Big Alec" McDonald was a swart and canny, close-mouthed Scotchman, one of the notable figures in Dawson those days. He had mined in Colorado and came to the Fortymile in 1895. He owned part interest in

many richest Klondike claims. The joint collection that had been made by Catholics and Protestants alike, was given over to the up-keep of the hospital, and in ten weeks the new church was ready—much better built, three times as spacious. The first Presbyterian building in Dawson burned in the same way, from a forgotten candle.

In the late summer of 1898, when the Prince boys and I came drifting in to Dawson, Father Judge was busy again building an addition to St. Mary's Hospital, three stories high, seventy by twenty, with an extra wing twenty-eight by twenty-eight. This was the time of the great "typhoid" epidemic, you remember; and as fast as one story was finished, the patients were being moved in. That epidemic lasted about three months. Even as late as October 6, Father Judge had a hundred and thirty-five patients, mostly "typhoid." That August, the church itself had been turned over to the Oblates of Mary, the territory being Canadian and Father Judge an American; and in July, the long-delayed nursing Sisters of St. Anne had arrived to carry on the hospital work, Father Judge staying on as chaplain. Until then he had worked with no trained organization at all, often himself attending those who were stronger and who suffered less than he.

January 16, 1899. Father Judge died. Pneumonia. It was the anniversary of his mother's death which, three years previously, he forethought might be the date of his own, frozen upon the trail. The funeral was held at eleven on the morning of Friday the twentieth, and long before that hour the church —his church—was crowded to overflowing. All government offices and all stores were closed, all prominent citizens were present, all flags hung at half-mast. The church was draped in mourning black and white, the light of countless waxen tapers from tall standards fell on that pale and serene face, where he lay resting before his altar. *Requiem æternam dona ei, Domine!* Surely his sleep will be the softer now, than on

that hard couch in the cold, poor little office by the front entrance of the hospital—where he spent the scant hours he allowed himself for sleep, ready to leap up any moment, tensely smiling, eager, if called at any time, by any person. Even to-day, my throat chokes as I think of him: a truly consecrated man, a zealous and untiring priest of God, a devoted and a born missionary of his Order.

No one hates hollow ritual as I do. To a non-Catholic, the Mass has little meaning. But as I bowed head with the others there within his church, my mind went wandering through all the centuries since that day in 1133 when Monk Rahere, once Jester to the Court of Henry, built the first hospital in London Town beside the new gate of the city, " in recreation of poor men and to them so there gathered could minister after his powers "—" Barts," ministering still unto the sick and poor. And I wondered, in real reverence there, did ever priestly servant so fulfil injunction: " Not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

He never took, he gave. He was not one of those who were content merely to find the North. He made it—made it most truly his—re-made it nearer to his dream and vision. And the Eternal Bookkeeper never once played him false. Father Judge had staked his life upon the Heavenly promise, " Give, and it shall be given unto you." And he was paid, pressed down and running over, in coin of his own choosing, his own evaluation. He died, undoubtedly the richest man in all of gold-mad Dawson; for there was not a soul within the Valley of the Yukon, not made the richer for the heritage he left us. He saw a vision and he blazed a trail. It's joy to follow lonely trails but it's a greater joy to blaze them. The new way is creation and creation is adventure. This man had known that joy: You saw it in his eyes, you felt it tingle through his frail-built body. He had found actual gold upon the Yukon—true Sourdough Gold of highest test in precious-won experience.

Vis Medicatrix

DO not wonder that you ask, "What were you doing that winter in Dawson?" Well, I had my little private hospital, and after healing frost dismissed our "typhoid" patients, a few maladies lingered on through the winter. Where twenty thousand men and more are at work, and rough work, there will always be accidents and fractures.

Scurvy, frost-bites, a few cases of cerebrospinal meningitis, catarrhal afflictions, and the residue of diseases brought over from civilization, formed the bulk of these maladies. Because of faulty nutrition, recovery was more tardy than at home. As a rule, the men nursed their partners through these illnesses with as much tenderness as women. The Agincourt tradition held—

> "None from his fellow starts,
> But like true English hearts
> Stuck close together."

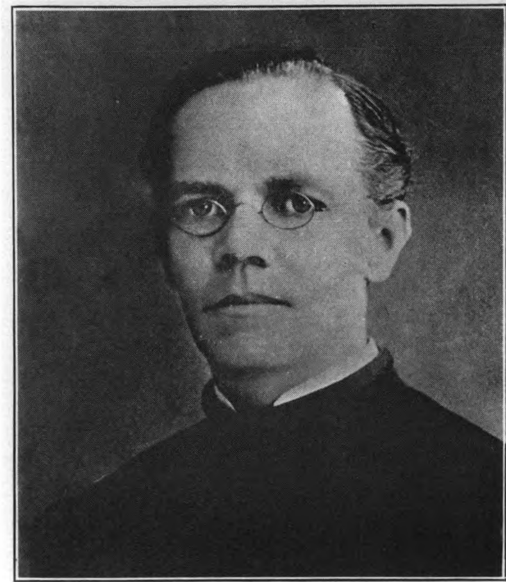
Very occasionally we heard tales of roughness and of brutal apathy, though I myself never saw one instance of any callousness. For a time the undertakers did well, some of them even being equipped with embalming implements. But usually the dead were simply carried to the graveyard on a dog-drawn sled; and a weird sight it was to see the partners thawing out new graves with bonfires, at mid-afternoon of black winter, the ghostly Aurora weaving its spirit dance above their spectral silhouetted figures. The flare of man-made flame below, the flare of sky-built flame above, wigwagged and semaphored a

code of passing souls, mysterious and rather ghastly. "I shivered where the eternal shadows sleep."

Of course, when the cold falls below the freezing-point of mercury, digging out six feet of earth that is resistant as well-set concrete becomes a task utterly impossible—without thawing. Pick and crowbar are no better than a shovel or a spade. No tool is any service without fire, under such circumstances, to build some poor partner's last home for him.

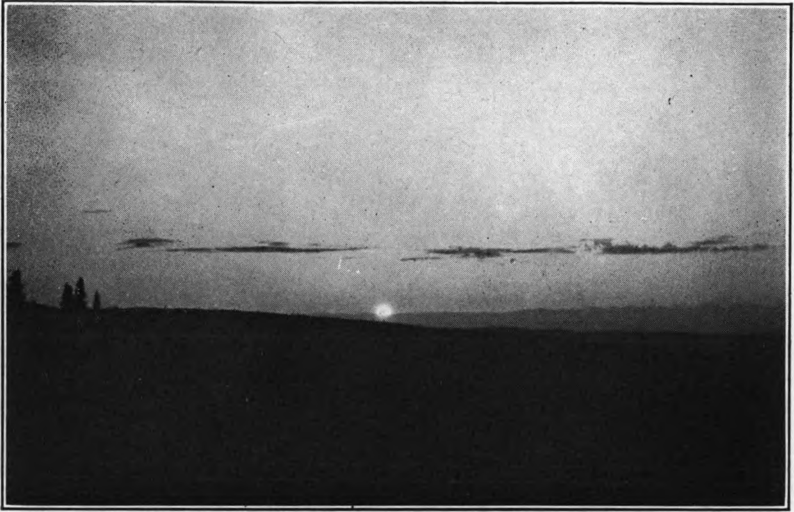
December 27, 1898. Went over river to West Dawson to see a man who had scurvy. He had gunny sacks for windows, and never bathed nor exercised. Was careless about his food and the washing of dishes. I prescribed getting a window! Lime-juice, meat, and fresh vegetables—when he could get them. Also gave him iron, and advised cleanliness and exercise in the open. From the waist down, his legs were black as ink. The cabin was lighted only by a string of wick stuck in an old milk-can and burning bacon grease. I'll admit that my advice was what we doctors call a "shotgun prescription," given in the hope that one or more of the leaden pellets may hit the cause of the malady.

Men who eat plenty of meat fat, such as the Eskimo diet, do not come down with scurvy. Game was plentiful in this region, but a straight meat diet, while eminently possible, requires a lot of meat. Governor Ogilvie told me it was incredible, to the uninitiated, the amount of fresh moose a specimen of the *genus homo* will consume in a day. It takes time —long days of time—to go hunting. And market or grub hunting is like the watched pot. If you *have* to have meat, that is the very time you'll see no game at all! Most of these men, with tremendous fortunes waiting on the next stroke of the pick, the next turn of the windlass, were not going to walk away from their precious gold claims and take time off to go hunting. Fresh vegetables or fruit were simply *not* all winter, for most of them. Even in summer, a bunch of six small

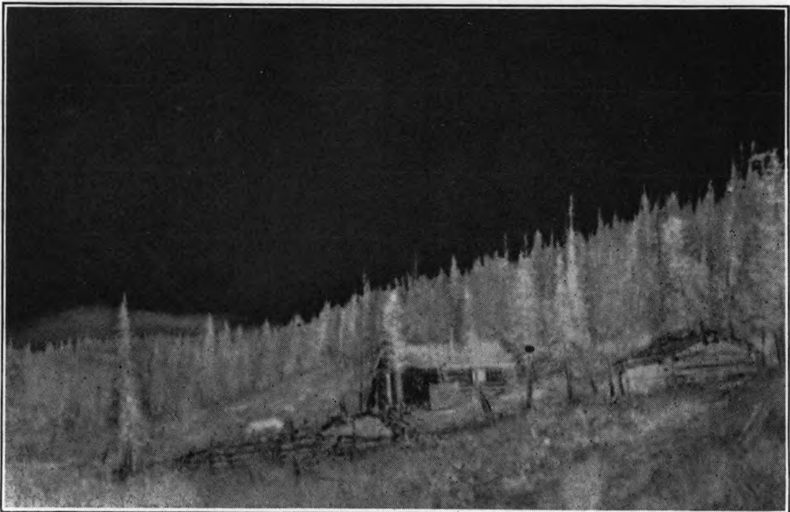


"I wish that you had known Father Judge"

"Men with fortunes waiting on the next stroke of the pick."



The sun at *midnight*, from a mountain back of Dawson.



"A landscape carved in Carrara."

locally grown radishes cost a dollar, and many of the men were in a state of "bustedness," as they expressed it.

But the cause of scurvy went deeper. Many newcomers who had good food supplies, or could have bought them, did not know how to cook their provisions. The saying used to be that the frying-pan killed its thousands. Often it was not even a skillet or a spider, but a dirty, unscraped miner's pan, or the work end of a shovel, on which their inadequate cooking was done. The true old-timers washed out once a week regularly, each sourdough cabin had its washboard and tin tub, and the old-time miner was usually a pretty fair cook. Father Judge used to comment on this, frequently. He said that during the really hard winter of '97–'98 in Dawson, when most of its inhabitants were old-timers, seasoned to the land, there was no starvation and no real suffering, although they had to do without many things they wanted, of course. He said that they had had "great laughs" at what was printed in the Outside papers then about the suffering in these parts. "Everything was so exaggerated, both the good and bad. The papers had us all dead or starving; for my own part, after all my years of real isolation on the Lower Yukon, I felt in populous Dawson as though I were back in civilization again! Yet I read in an English paper that two thousand people died here in the winter of '96–'97—when there were not that many people in the whole district, and all who were were very much alive. Up to August, 1897, I knew of only two deaths in Dawson, and both of them were from quite natural causes. That was the date on which we opened the hospital and from then to March 15 of this year, '98, when the great stampede of newcomers began, there were but seven deaths in all the seven months, among a population of seven thousand people. Three of these died of pneumonia, two from fevers, one from heart disease and one from accident. No one froze to death and no one died of scurvy."

But when the army of invasion swarmed into Dawson in '98 at the rate of two thousand a month, every phase of human need was seen, for these newcomers were inexperienced. "No doubt there are quantities of gold here," the old priest said, "but do not think that any one can come and get it without hard work. And it is just the excessive, hard work necessary to get here, together with the poor food and bad cooking on the trail and while traveling around the creeks looking for gold, that bring the scurvy on so many. They scatter, these poor wild lads, frantically, on their wildcat stampedes. And then, what happens? They come back to their cabins at shut of day, worn out and discouraged. They feel far too tired to cook a proper meal. Instead, they throw themselves down on their bunks, and sleep until noon. Then they will get up and eat half raw, soggy pork, heavy beans, and leaden soda-biscuits. Then they will either go back to bed again, or loaf away a night gambling and drinking in some saloon or dance hall. These are the men who get scurvy. It's indolence—capable of energies, but not exercising those energies. They are not bad little boys, but lazy little boys. They shouldn't be away from their mothers, if they haven't learned yet how to eat and sleep and keep decently clean! So I have to spank them and put them to bed at St. Mary's—I and the good Sisters and our thirty-four helpers. And we are all of us kept busy doing it.

"Suffering? My friend, we are rolling in luxuries here. Haven't I a telephone in my office now, that gives me a magic voice and saves my poor old frozen feet, so I can talk to any one in town when I have need, or even on the Creeks? Aren't they preparing to give us electric light? Yet thousands are still in tents; it is October, and winter is nearly on us. Soon the trees will be cracking like guns in the frosty woods. But these children will not care for themselves. We have to be both mother and father to them. It's a healthy place for

those who take reasonable care of themselves; but you can't be careless or a loafer, and be healthy, too, in any climate where the thermometer jumps from ninety-eight above to seventy below. For myself, I've found this a bad place to come to *if one wants to get to Heaven quick!* Hot countries are much better for that, than cold ones."

I loved his terse comment. It had rightness, and it had illumination. The man had none of the over meek and parasitic professional quality which I detest; but he had the great human gift of wit and insight—more valuable in many cases than my own bit of professional technique. To him, the most deadly disease was "Klondicitis"—delirium of gold-fever. And he was right. I chuckled to myself over the thought that I might write a homily of heavenly length, a useful piece for some learned magazine, on "The Faults of Doctors"—with the saint of St. Mary's as a text, and defending his points by a long disquisition.

A surgeon of the North West Mounted told me that in his wide experience the most common complaints were bronchitis and pneumonia, from overexposure; debility and dyspepsia, from improperly cooked food; scurvy from lack of fresh meat and green vegetables—as well as from overheated and under-ventilated cabins, usually too hot rather than too chilly. To bathe was an effort at home, an expense at the public bath-house. Add to these, overcrowded rooms only six feet high and ten by twelve, with three or four men sleeping and eating there, and you are bound to get fevers and infections—as well as summer typhoid, from an utter lack of sanitation. Again, no person with defective or weak lungs, no person subject to rheumatism, should try to winter here. It is too great a risk. Harper, the tough old-timer of the Yukon, died from tuberculosis in November of 1898.

My own medical kit was far too elaborate. I could have done with far less. I have been impressed with the medical

armamentarium of Sir William Osler. He was said to believe only in *nux vomica* and faith! Simple enough. I believe a man could easily do with six drugs, and perhaps six are too many. There is no question but that certain drugs are highly efficacious. But most are useless, little more than anodynes. They act chiefly as placebos; and if the patient attributes his recovery to them, so much the better for the doctor! But the intelligent doctor grins and privately imputes the *restitutio ad integrum* to that great physician, Dame Nature, *semper medicatrix.*

I took along grain-alcohol, strychnine tablets, cathartic pills, boracic acid, mercury and iodides, morphine, digitalis, and quinine, and not much else that I can now recall. The grain-alcohol could be diluted with water and would answer well in an emergency. I could not see the sense in carrying along a lot of water, in the whisky bottle! I wished to go light. I took along enough surgical instruments to perform any operation, including trephining and delivery of women by forceps. Of course I had chloroform, because of its compactness; dental forceps; gauze bandages, potassium permanganate, iodoform. I never had occasion to use the alcohol or the quinine in Dawson, and in fact relied upon drugs hardly at all. Doctors rarely use drugs for themselves, and I think that one should do as he would be done by. The surgical instruments did come into use; and while all of them were not needed, yet it was comforting to feel that one had them, if required.

November 4, 1898. Was called to see a patient on Hunker Creek, having to stay all night. Was paid $75 for the trip. Weather cold. Mustache (which I had not then shaved off) *was one mass of ice, making me look like a walrus. Enjoyed every step of the journey of 20 miles.* (Twenty miles each way.) I liked those long walks upon which professional errands took me, especially on early winter mornings when the air was both still and frosty, when shoe-pacs crunched so

crisply in the dry, gritty snow. The creek trails were most lovely then, snow covering the trees and all the landscape so completely and so silently they seemed carved in Carrara. The valley of the Klondike is rather wide for such a narrow stream, the bottoms filled with spruce and birch and cottonwood, a smaller growth climbing the lower hills. The cry of ravens sometimes broke the quiet, the turn of creaking windlass, or the clear music of a pack-train's bell, fetching the precious gold-dust to a Dawson bank. If you should overtake a man packing a blanket roll and notice that the straps were dragging hard, then you could safely wager that he carried several hundred ounces of the dust inside. A horse or mule could pack better than a hundred pounds of this hard concentrated weight; a good dog about twenty. Gold passed down into Dawson daily, without special guard. You'd go by gopher-holes of workings, a rough windlass set above a black shaft mouth, and in those early mornings the acrid smell of burnt wood still rose smoking from the night's thaw. If the cribbing stood up high, then you would know the lucky miners there had struck rich pay and were preparing for big dumps. The sable ravens cried above, protesting their invaded winter solitude; and shapes of men stood in black silhouette against the cold, pale sky-lines or were etched in mordant upon the white slopes of the hills.

December 1. Jacques Baptiste was very low, with Cheyne-Stokes breathing. However, he finally recovered. His party and I were great friends. Two of them were half-breeds. One of them worshipped me for having given him relief by lancing a felon—a very nasty one, from which the pus poured out. I used permanganate. Several times I had wisdom-teeth to treat. *December 9. Lacroix, the half-breed upon whom I operated, has not committed suicide, as we feared,* (when he disappeared) *but is in jail, for being drunk.* Once or twice that winter I was asked to perform an abortion. Being old-fash-

ioned—as I still am—I refused. But those "saved" babies may be bootleggers now, for all that I know!

There was no gun-play in the Interior, and the only bullet wound that came under my care was accidental. Dynamite was not in use, and so there were no serious accidents from that cause. There was no necessity for much surgery. The diseases that afflicted men, such as cerebrospinal meningitis and scurvy, needed no interference aside from good nursing. While I saw some truly awful cases of frost-bite—some losing fingers and toes, and one man losing both arms below the elbows and both legs below the knees—this was not a major problem. In fact, the men were remarkably healthy—or rather, those who were ill required mainly nursing and dieting. I never saw a frost-bitten Indian. Is ignorance more the cause of it, than cold?

I was often thankful that I had taken pains to secure a proper Canadian license for I heard that during the previous year not a few Americans, who undertook to practice without one, had been prosecuted; and I myself saw one such instance at close range. A gray-haired old fellow was ordered by the police to take down his sign. Instead of doing so, he pasted transparent paper over it. The Mounties yanked him to the barracks where he was arrested and jailed, since he refused to pay the rather steep fine. My sympathies were all on his side and I called on him at the jail, carrying with me as a present a basketful of huge red currants. I had a long talk with Inspector Constantine while there, and noticed that his mouth watered at the sight of the berries; but that did not deflect my currants from their intended port! However, the officials managed to make the old doctor's stay with them so uncomfortable that he eventually paid his fine and did not again hang up his shingle.

There were, on the other hand, quite a number of quack doctors in Dawson, who practiced but were quite incompetent

to make diagnoses. I am not open-minded toward the unscientific. I saw much that shocked me in their work. They pleased large numbers of the ignorant or believing; but they displeased the "Mounties," who often clapped them in jail. For myself, I derive comfort even now from the thought that I was often of real service that winter, through surgery. I derive little comfort from the memory of "successes" in the use of drugs, but I am certain that my advice as to food, clothing, and hygiene was really beneficial.

Square Meals and Social Rounds

IN slipping through the pages of my journal for that winter I am surprised to find more references to purely social evenings in Dawson than my unaided memory might perhaps suggest. It's very evident I was no "hermit," then! Dawson was a jolly town. The darkest mid of winter was its social season.

Dawson City meant full thirty thousand different things, to all the thirty thousand different folk who drifted in and out of it that winter—depending solely on that ancient question, "What went ye out into the wilderness for to see?" It was a very cosmopolitan community, and anything like common customs or a common social habit would of necessity be lacking. Quiet young Robert Service, poet laureate of our far North, observed one Dawson from behind the teller's wicket of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, or from the doorway of his cabin on Eighth Street at the edge of town up under the Slide. Father Judge looked deep into the heart of quite another, from St. Mary's below the hill. Swiftwater Bill Gates experienced a very lively third in his gay nightly round of dance hall and saloon. And so it went. The one thing we all had in common was that in the midst of winter days we all vastly enjoyed myriad friends—and different friends, perhaps, than we had known elsewhere. That was a very vital part of our Yukon experience. "Men who love wisdom must be acquainted with very many things"—as true a saying now as when Heraclitus of Ephesus first remarked it, in the reign of Darius!

November 24, 1898. Thanksgiving. Had granulated potatoes, evaporated onions, macaroni, beefsteak, sourdough bis-

cuits, prunes, and tea for dinner. Ate till money-belt stretched. Bought cord of wood for $25. One of my patients very ill. . . . December 16. Card-party at Dr. Mosher's, of Boston. Present: herself and sister; Miss King, of Regina Hotel; Nurse Payson who had cared for a former patient of mine in Washington; Miss Tascherau; Miss Ross; Mr. Vachon; Drs. Clark, Edwards, Macfarlane, and some others. Had sandwiches and chocolate. Party broke up at 1:30 a. m. Jolly good time. —I am amused, and rather ashamed, to notice how often I refer in my notes to what I had to eat, when invited for a social evening! Please try to remember that our delicacies were few, and that we paid unheard-of prices for even the necessities of life. One day I saw a small watermelon in a shop window on Front Street. The price mark was eighty dollars. This would undoubtedly be bought by some miner for his "lady friend." The men themselves, many of them, wanted luxuries and cared not what they cost. Also, they wished to show off and to be envied. More of the small-boy psychology, you see, of which Father Judge had spoken! There was a great craving for real luxuries. Men were tired of just plain things.

Cold-storage eggs, often spoiled, were three dollars a dozen. Butter was three dollars a pound. Small and poor apples were twenty-five cents apiece. A bottle of lime-juice cordial, three dollars and a half. Bread, twenty-five cents a loaf. Bull Durham tobacco was six dollars a pound. The men preferred it, and so it was more expensive in Dawson than the kinds that cost more Outside. A rough shirt cost six dollars, a lamp-chimney seventy-five cents, Seattle cider often sold for dry champagne. The price of pay-streak bacon was two dollars a pound. Hielscher and Ecklemanns made the first shipment of live pigs to the Klondike, it was said. One hundred and twenty of these porkers were stuffed, squealing, into sacks and carried over the Chilkoot by professional Indian packers. The

"curlytails" arrived in Dawson all still alive and protesting, and sold at glorious prices. One was traded for a claim which sold only a little later for four thousand dollars. This little pig went to a high market. Willis McKinnis traded a claim on Dominion for half a case of rye, and the claim was sold soon after for twenty thousand dollars.

To give a successful party those days, in any crowd not hard drinkers, meant a real problem often for refreshments. Frills of any nature were impossible. Perhaps that was why good conversation flourished in our little group. Those who imbibed strong waters to their heart's content (and to their stomach's discontent, and were quite visibly affected thereby) perhaps had a different story to tell. If they preferred inflammatory fluid, all they had to do was to order up a case of Canadian Club. But "lashings of tea is the tipple for me," a tipple wholly bland; and I can quite well

"Carry on with the herb of Ceylon,
  Or, if you prefer it, Cathay!
Or, if milk is too *douce* there is *thé à la Russe,*
  For the highbrows who like it that way.
There are also tea bricks, which Mongolians mix
  With butter that feeds and sustains.
But however you make it, you'll grow as you take it,
  In valor and virtue and brains!"

In the winter of '97–'98, when tea was often not to be had, men steeped a brew of cottonwood twigs and spruce needles. I imagine it was a similar concoction the early navigators used as an antiscorbutic, and called "spruce beer." At least one-third of Dawson had been tainted with scurvy that previous year, Young told me. No wonder men so often said, "Damn the gold! You can't eat it." After the first month of that former winter, there had not been an orange, lemon, apple, potato, onion, or an egg to be bought in Dawson City! There was enough and plenty of the golden dust—but though every

baking-powder tin in the cabin might be filled with precious metal, a man might yet starve to death or die of scurvy from malnutrition, in spite of being Midas. Near to the Berry Brothers (who cleaned up a cool million from *Five* and *Six* on Eldorado) lived a young French-Canadian, who died from exposure in his little cabin, surrounded by tin oil-cans filled to overflowing with gold-dust and nuggets.

Late in the summer, three of us ordered a simple meal at one of the "creek" road-houses above Dawson—bacon and eggs, potatoes, biscuits, coffee. The bill was eighteen dollars. Those who could not afford a "square," bought a "stave-off" for a dollar. There had been times in 1898 when "hen fruit" hung high! I was told that the first thirty dozen eggs landed at Dawson in the spring of '98, when we came down-river, sold for seven hundred and twenty dollars. We knew that they had been bought in California for twenty-five cents a dozen, and were already well aged. Charlie Jones was the "Egg King" of the Klondike, and in '98 had a store on Second Avenue. Eggs were his specialty, though he freighted other perishables over the trail. "Tin-cow" or condensed milk was no hardship, since many prefer it for coffee—or for "white tea," as they say in Siberia. And everything was being "corralled." To get a real corner on a food commodity meant fortune. Witness Swiftwater Bill Gates, the little, dark-bearded, dapper man who located *Thirteen* Eldorado. He struck gold among the first here, and blew in money like a drunken sailor. He was called the "Knight of the Golden Omelet" because he once cornered the egg supply in Dawson, at a dollar apiece! There was not much coin or paper bills circulating and it was called "cheechako money." Gold was weighed over the counter, usually at sixteen dollars an ounce; and when you paid a bill in dust, you called it "hitting the blower." Much of the mining business was done on promises to pay, on notes secured by liens on the dumps. In the previous winter, "hired money" was

worth ten to fifteen per cent. per month—and even then, on good security only, while the standard prices in a restaurant had been: Bowl of Soup, $1.00; Mush and Milk, $1.25; Dish of Canned Corn, $1.25; Dish of Canned Tomatoes, $2.00; Stewed Fruit, $1.25; Slice of Pie, $.75; Doughnuts with Coffee, $1.25; Beans, Coffee and Bread, $2.00; Plain Steak, $3.50; Porterhouse, $5.00.

Forgive me, please, this dissertation on prices and on food. I have been trying to explain the many references to eating, in my journal. At this date, they seem rather indecently frequent! I do want you to understand the why of them. I'm really not a gormandizer, though it sounds so!

December 23, 1898. Progressive whist-party at Dr. Mosher's. Among others present were Governor Ogilvie, Captain Jack Crawford, and Dr. Everett and his wife. He is of the Ethnological Department of the Smithsonian. Governor Ogilvie was not at all dignified. Captain Jack Crawford recited some of his own poems and sang. He is a clever man, and as gentle as a woman. I liked him. He wore his hair long in scout fashion, saying that the Indians respected one with unshorn locks. . . . December 25. Had Christmas dinner with Angelo Renzoni, one of several Italian friends. He is from Northern Italy, while two of the others were from near Naples. These latter threatened to knife each other, but did not. They always seem to fight, but only among themselves. There was an entertainment for the benefit of St. Mary's Hospital. . . . December 31. Party at Dr. Mosher's to see the old year out. Governor Ogilvie there. Played games and had light refreshments and singing. Home about 2 a. m.

Sunday, January 1, 1899. Walked home from the Presbyterian Church with Governor Ogilvie. He says this is an off year for the Aurora Borealis, which comes periodically. . . . January 4. Miss Mosher and Miss Payson called. The latter had a frozen nose which she got in a short walk from the

N. A. T. store to my cabin. They invited me to a whist-party on Friday evening. . . . January 6. Whist-party. Got home at 3 a. m. Captain Bennett and Dr. McDonald and others were there. . . . January 8. To Methodist Church in evening. Good sermon from Mr. Hetherington. . . . January 9. Called on Dr. Mosher and her sister in the evening. They have taken charge of a little baby girl, ten days old, whose mother died. A man named Hamburger, who was at the mother's funeral, had been deeply affected, and gave the baby a present of rugs, shawls, ribbons, laces, etc.

January 10. Played hearts with Hansbury and his sister. The editor of the "Klondike Nugget" and two others were there also. After the game we had a spread of cocoa, sardines, pickles, bread and butter, and cakes. A stampede to Cassiar Creek, down-river, is reported. . . . January 11. Called on Miss Payson and her two companions. They belong to the Victorian Order of Nurses, founded by Lady Aberdeen. Nice women. One of them spoke about the beautiful graveyard at Sheep Camp! The coffins were said to be floating in the graves. There being no earth to cover them, they were simply covered with snow. . . . January 12. Party at Dr. Mosher's given by Mrs. West. Nice spread—coffee, biscuits, salted almonds, olives, cakes. Got home at 3 a. m.

I know that you will not misunderstand my late hours, for you are familiar with the custom of our North country about disregarding clocks. In summer when the sun never sets, in winter when it never rises, what meaning have the terms "night" or "day"? We know that they have none, and we know that Yukoners and Alaskans alike are insulted if you think of going home before small hours. When the sun betrays you and the nights enlarge the number of their hours, why should you follow the conventions of sun time? We didn't.

January 14. Played chess with Hansbury. Afterwards we

had music with my flute, also guitar and violin. Those present were Mrs. West, Dr. Brown who is Ogilvie's secretary, Story, and Mr. Allen, the editor of the " Klondike Nugget." . . . A crony of mine and I have made a chess-board of wood. For men we use different sizes of brass cartridges, which we easily got from patterns used in revolvers, rifles, and shotguns. The men on one side are all loaded and on the other side, unloaded. It is a handsome set, unique, and with a beauty all its own. (I wish I had it now, for it was really interesting.) *We play often, being evenly matched, and sometimes others join us. My friend brought up a clever Jew from the business quarter to play with me. He was the champion of Dawson and wiped up the frozen ground with both of us! This game we greatly enjoyed. . . . The sister of a fellow with whom I often play chess is in Dawson with him. She is a woman about forty, to be charitable. He has dark hair, but she is a blonde through the kindly offices of peroxide. This woman has opened an ice-cream parlor, also selling soft drinks and cakes and candy. She makes the ice-cream out of canned milk, and her place looks much like similar stores in civilization. The men flock to her place and she has made a lot of money. She is a patient of mine for some trifling disability. I am often there and know all about her methods. She is perfectly " straight " but has had enough sense to become a blonde. It does make her more attractive.*

January 22. My birthday. Went to the Presbyterian Church twice. This is the week of Father Judge's death and funeral. . . . January 23. Joined library. One month's dues are $2. An old newspaper from the States costs two bits. A fresh " New York World " costs a dollar. Dr. Young had established a library here in '97–'98, some fifteen hundred volumes which were kept at the A. C. Co.'s store at first. I did a good deal of reading that winter. *January 31. Went to court to see trial of some fellows I know. They had recorded claims*

falsely and were up for perjury. One staked them while the others remained in Dawson.

February 3, 1899. Walked down Yukon to Indian village named Moosehide. Had a dangerous experience with their dogs which attacked me. Went to Four Above Discovery. *In evening called on Renzoni, Italian friend from Geneva. He is an expert jeweller and had worked for Tiffany. His principal occupation is making false nuggets in which pieces of quartz are imbedded. These fool the ignorant and bring a higher price than just plain nuggets. He has even sent some nuggets of this nature East and to Europe, melting gold-dust to make them and getting fancy prices. . . .* Specimens of rich quartz were sent out to tempt the unwary speculator—specimens which were wholly artificial, the gold being tamped into the crevices with such skill as to deceive all but experts. It was the work of a conscious artist. Renzoni was paid well for his " nuggets," which he did from castings and molds.

February 8. My partners of the Trail left Dawson for the Outside, with Ginnold of the Arctic Express and his dogs. They are to walk and run for the six hundred miles we previously navigated together in our boat. So long, Mates! Out of the conjunct friendship, there had grown between us something very real and precious. We cogged well together. I was happy to hear later that they made a successful trip. Earl had a wife and children in Chicago, and that fact made him anxious to return. They had been working on the Creeks and I in town, so that our trails could not often cross.

February 14. Played chess and again met Mr. Allen of the " Nugget." . . . February 17. In the evening went to the miner's dance at Last Chance Hotel. *There were about 15 very ugly and shady women, and a lot of men. Very funny to see them dancing in moccasins and rough clothes. Jenner, a low comedian, entertained us. His acting was so terrible that it was interesting. . . .* Drama here—" legitimate " drama,

for there was plenty of the drama of real life—was all of the blood-curdling type. I suppose that men who face death squarely, in their daily experience, prefer more gore than ordinary audiences. Tragedy has been at its best in periods after hand-to-hand battles with great odds. I recall that Æschylus had fought both at Marathon and Salamis; the Elizabethan drama flowered after the Armada had been met and conquered. We who had encountered Chilkoot and the White Horse, could not be content with comedy. The reality of death had brushed our faces so closely, our eyes no longer blinked from gory portrayals.

Theatricals were very popular in Dawson, though I'll admit that some were rather awful and rather far removed from Æschylus and Shakespeare. But the audiences were not critical, and how they roared at local jokes! Professional entertainment enters largely into the life of a mining camp and actors, actresses, and musicians were here in excess. The plays were very "hot" indeed, but only to a degree more offensive than is now tolerated in so-called society. Some of the plays given that winter were so lamentably poor that by their very appositiveness they became successes. A real Dawson drama of that day would doubtless draw wonderfully in any of our cities!

Home life in Dawson was not very eventful, for the women. There were few real social functions, for "society" was decidedly too mixed, and the calling list of Dawson's few worthy ladies was indeed short. The theatre and public dance halls were alike impossible for a decent woman, and whatever social thrills or success she knew must come within her husband's or brother's small circle of friends. There were the churches, of course. Hall Young said that of the fifty-nine who enrolled on his first Easter Sunday, nine had been women. He had only chunks of wood for seats, at first, and a five-foot block for pulpit. He used a miner's copper "blower" to take up col-

lections, and at evening services the audience was asked to fetch their own candles for illumination. Since the neck of an empty whisky bottle was the standard candlestick at that time, the scene must have been highly incongruous. But he "drew good houses!" Fawcett, the then Gold Commissioner, had been the leader of a choir Outside and led the singing. Mr. Hayward had a fine tenor voice. Another tenor, a professional named Zimmerman, sometimes sang at the Presbyterian Church. He organized a Dawson Symphony Orchestra, so-called, and also conducted the Yukon Garrison Band. Once, as a boy, he had been soloist at Mainz, and he had also sung in Castle Garden under the direction of Max Maretzek.

Many early Dawsonites pleasantly remember Marjorie Rambeau—"Sweet Marjorie"—who, escorted by her mother, arrived in that hub of the Klondike as one of the cast of a traveling stock-company. She became immensely popular in Dawson and later organized her own troupe. During her stay in the Yukon she made a host of friends, who have since followed her successful stage and screen career with interest. Pantages got his start here, "staked" by the beautiful Kate Rockwell—but he was not in the theatrical line just then. "Arizona" Charlie Meadows was of the vintage of the nineties, and the Klondike's greatest showman. I've been told that he was born in a covered wagon, under an oak tree, near Visalia in California. He married another trouper, at sea on a vessel off Singapore, while touring the world with a Wild West Show. In the seventies and eighties he had been considered one of the best of riders and rifle shots, for he had started fighting Indians before he was out of his teens and rode for cattlemen in many a western range scrimmage. He was a colorful man, tall and strikingly handsome, with finely cut features. I've heard that he still lives, still rides his thousand-acred desert ranch in the Gila Valley, back in that State where as a boy he battled with Geronimo and his braves. Those who remember

the old showman can still vision him, sombrero in hand, making his sweeping bow before the curtain of his Dawson theatre. He was surely one of the spectacular characters of old Klondike days.

Sam Dunham was away in Washington that winter; but the call of the North was strong and on February twenty-second (it being a holiday, and he being homesick!) Sam wrote a poem called "I'm goin' back to Dawson," which we read later and thoroughly enjoyed. For the human bond was strong here, and I believe there is no white man's country where the men have been more uniformly honest and brotherly. The heart of the true Yukoner was responsive to his fellows in a manner far too rare in civilization. When Dawson people went Outside, they missed this.

"I want to hear the soothin' tones of Bates's old guitar
As he sings about 'The Fisher Maiden' at *The Polar Star,*
And see Brick Wheaton rassle with his yaller mandolin
As he chants the charms of Injun Hooch an' other kinds of sin;
I want to hear them songs once more an' want to see my friends
Where the swiftly rushin' Klondike with the mighty Yukon blends,
An' they size a feller-sinner by his heart an' what he knows
An' never ask his Southern name, or criticise his clo's."

Dance halls as adjuncts of the saloons were common, and even the homeliest woman usually made as much as fifty dollars a night by dancing with the miners and persuading them to treat at the bar, part of this revenue going to the "girls" themselves in commissions. Such "balls" were given nightly at the many dance halls. Not long ago, I read that Billy Hudson, who brought the first piano over Chilkoot, had been invited by Henry Ford to play old-time dance-tunes for him in Detroit. What stories Billy Hudson could tell! But there were none of Mr. Ford's recent creations in the Dawson of our day. Men drifting in from the Creeks with full pokes, bound for a gay evening, would go first to the *Pavilion Dance Hall,*

perhaps, where the Oatley Sisters used to draw packed houses, and then over to Harry Ashe's *Northern.* Passing the huge brass scales where miners weighed in their pokes of gold, later to draw against this deposit at the gaming-tables, they would next move on to the gambling layout—roulette-wheel, faro, or poker—where the play was often pretty high. One night a fellow staked ten one-thousand dollar bets in almost as many minutes, and lost them all. He walked over to the bar and called for a drink. A pistol-shot sounded outside a moment later, and the " cool gambler " lay in the snow, blood streaming from a little hole in his right temple, the size of a lead-pencil.

All this was a part of the infinitely intricate symphony of Dawson, some passages scored for minor key, some frankly executed on the tongs and bones. In some of its base aspects, the camp was of the roughest frontier type. Although the " Mounties " preserved a very good order, the town was notably and pridefully " wide open." There were at least a score of gambling halls and as many more dance halls. The gambling-houses ran continuously, twenty-four hours a day, and the smallest wager usually made was an ounce of gold, running in value from fifteen to nearly twenty dollars according to its purity. Countless roulette-wheels whirred, day in, night out; and this vain wealth in chance and change was whirled, with their turning. I rarely saw whist played by groups of men, in Dawson. The usual game for them was poker. It was rather sickening, at times, to see men ruining themselves in more ways than one. It seemed sheer asininity. A man had to have his own cabin for peace. In the so-called " hotels," there was no possible privacy. The bedrooms there were petty cubicles, and any sound, even that of a man shaving next door, was common property.

April 27, 1899. Party at Dr. Mosher's. She was a homeopath, by the way. It was she who fetched in the aluminum

shelter-cabin, which proved so ineffective on the trail. *Mock trial of Mr. Story. Dr. Brown, Governor Ogilvie's secretary, was the judge. Captain Jack Crawford, the famous scout who worked with Buffalo Bill, was marshal. Hansbury and I were attorneys for the defense. Whitron, Harvard '95, was the prosecutor. Party broke up at 2:15 a. m. It was daylight when I got home at 2:30. The sun is coming north quickly. . . . Sunday, April 30. Took long walk in the hills to avoid incessant stream of callers who come every Sunday. And yet they say there is no social life in Dawson! . . . May 20. Took long walk to top of highest mountain back of Dawson. Snow on north side. Saw bumblebee, and a few mosquitoes which did not bite. Many hardy flowers. Met two North West Mounted Police, practicing with revolvers.*

May 28, 1899. In evening played whist at the Newmans' cabin opposite mine. These Newmans are rather interesting. The parents are actors of a sort. They have two attractive children, a boy and a girl in their early teens. These act in the theatres continually, being exploited by their parents. I had seen the mother making funny clothes for her children, each suit being half masculine and half feminine. I went to see the children perform in the theatre. It was ludicrous when each danced with the partner; this partner was the individual's counterpart; one half male and the other female. The illusion was about perfect, and it brought down the house.

—Flowers have come to Dawson. It is past mid-May. The winter is over and gone. I'm really grateful to you, Bittersweet, for opening up once more these little journals, making me relive again in memory those evenings spent so long ago, so pleasantly—evenings compact of whist and chess, of books and sermons, numerous friendly visitations. I'm tasting on my palate once again the flavor of square meals and social rounds, from nibbling these few recorded samples.

Victoria—or My Uncle?

THERE is another slant on conditions in Dawson during the winter of '98 and '99, which I have been tempted to mention a dozen times. It's here in black and white in my journals, and it was very present all through and during that period, as well as before and later.

I have left it untouched, to now, because it deals with matters of such disputed (and in many cases unprovable) fact and motive, I am afraid I'd find it very difficult to paint a true picture—to give an indication without overstating. There is a second reason, too. After all, while the odor of these matters rather smelled to Heaven at the time, they are now, although not quite so rancid as the oil on Aaron's beard, yet quite as much past history.

Against these two good valid reasons for silence, though, another factor comes popping up and out continually in my mind, while I have been reliving these old days, turning my journal's pages over with you. This item has two phases; one international, one purely personal. The first is that, although the boundary-line dispute has been long settled, although Canadians and Americans in the Yukon to-day are mutually good neighbors and good citizens alike, all these conditions now static and now equipoised may through some other set of circumstances any time arising, in some other section, again demand adjustment. They bear still within their compass the seeds of strife. And how can we document the unfolding future, unless we have already documented the folded past?

I myself have felt a certain personal obligation laid upon

me, too, because of a chance thing. You see, I was especially fortunate in approaching Dawson with a curiously dual viewpoint. I was not only in the gold-rush, though not of it, but was also born inside the British Empire, though of American parents. What's more, I was educated partly in Great Britain and partly in the United States; and my professional years had also been spent actively at work within the U. S. A. and part within the far-flung empire of Victoria, Queen and Empress. For part of my life I had been considered and considered myself a Briton, but later I had become conscious of and very loyal to my American roots and environment.

When I arrived in Dawson, I bore numerous letters of introduction to Canadian-British authorities and professional men. It was known that I had been educated in medicine at Edinburgh and had served in the British army, had been trained in its tradition. So I had the ear and confidence of the British-facing population of Dawson, in real friendship during my stay there. I had come to know a good deal about the Empire through my India, Bermuda, and British West Indies life and activities. In one sense, I was almost a British colonial myself! That was one very real chamber of my mind, one which I could not and did not try to close.

But—and it's a rather large word here—the blood in my veins was purely American. My preparatory-school days had been American. I was a product of Eli Yale. My best professional work had been done under the very shadow of the dome of Uncle Sam's Capitol. The friends of my maturity were American citizens, as I was myself. So the other chamber of my mind was furnished in the American manner wholly; the other valve of my heart dictated the rhythm of a pioneer American pulse. Hence the Americans in Dawson—and five-sixths of its population were Americans—claimed me for their fellow citizen and kinsman, which I truly was; I was party to their problems, too, and partizan to their difficulties. You can see

that I was in a position of peculiar advantage, as well as peculiar difficulty.

My loyalty was in no way split, however—perhaps because I had no personal stake in the matters invòlved. I was not myself seeking gold, nor was I vitally interested in any "claims," mining or otherwise. Because I was so simply and completely an observer I could afford, perhaps, to be judicial. I think you'll understand my situation. I was interested enough to try to ascertain and understand the facts. I was not biased enough, through personal aim or feeling, to wish to prove either side right, the other wrong.

That, in a sentence, was my peculiar attitude; and that is also why I feel, even at this late date, a compulsion to explain just what the subtle controversy was, and why. As I have intimated, causes that are themselves deader than the proverbial door-nail sometimes have descendants, grandchildren, who may some time reopen the dispute and set up claims or controversies which need not, should not, be reopened if there is proper record and settlement of the older story. Within the last week I have come on two news items, both from Canadian sources, referring with some tartness to that old and supposedly dead controversy. And so I'll try to tell you of the rival claims and difficulties of Canadians and Americans, as I personally saw them in the Dawson of those days—which I feel sure that I can do without passion or a rise in temperature! Most of those who've ever written concerning this dispute have told a decidedly *ex parte* story (so far as my own knowledge goes) to prove one side or the other right and not merely to state the basis of the case; but I will tell merely a personal tale and not attempt an international-law brief. Let me speak as a physician performing his autopsy, upon a corpus of fact authentically dead—not as a lawyer fighting for a living client.

The base-line for our survey lies in the realm of geographic fact, as do the bases of so many an international trouble.

American Alaska, bought long ago from Russia who first discovered and exploited this projection of the American continent, is as you know nothing more than a tremendous peninsula, jutting out from the northwest corner of the continent and reaching over to touch Asia, up where the parallels converge toward the Pole. The major portion of American-owned Alaska's boundary is a natural coast-line, thousands of miles in extent. But where the huge peninsula is joined to the main body of the continental structure, and for a distance of some six hundred miles below this juncture, down the coast to 54° 40′, (Alaska's Russian "Panhandle") the international boundary line between American and British claims to territory was then still unsurveyed and undetermined.

This was not, had not been, a matter of any great moment so long as neither Britain nor the U. S. A. set any value upon the district in question; and so the old bone of contention between the British Lion and the Russian Bear, which we inherited *in toto* when we bought Alaska, remained a dispute purely in the realm of the theoretical and hypothetical, up to August, 1896, and to then of interest only to searchers of dry, dusty, ancient documents. The debatable territory was reckoned worthless, not worth the flick of a paw, scarcely worth an occasional growl! And so no claims were pressed. But when George Carmack discovered gold on the Klondike, when the eyes of the world were turned to the North, and when a fabulous new gold-field was about to be opened up there, a practical and a very active interest began to be taken in the exact status of the Klondike district. It lay near, very near, the international boundary. On which side did it lie? Upon whose land lay Skagway and Dyea, the main ports of entry? Who was to determine the mining laws of the new diggings? What rights of property were aliens to possess? You can see that, almost overnight, a very lively issue was born—enlivened, as is usual, by a very sensitive "pocket nerve."

The first report of the new gold discoveries called the Klondike " Alaska," and Alaska was known by every one to belong to Uncle Sam. Even in '97, an Englishman named De Windt could write a book describing the Klondike and call it " Through the Gold-Fields of Alaska." All people and things in Dawson he spoke of as " Alaskan." George Carmack, the reputed first discoverer of gold in the new region, was unmistakably an American. He hailed from California and his very name was a twist to the British Lion's tail, for he had been christened " George Washington Carmack "! The whole section of Canada touching Alaska was then known as Northwest Territory; but the first stampeders into the Klondike district came either down the Yukon River from White Horse or up the Yukon River from St. Michael, so they called themselves Yukoners. Now the Yukon River lies two-thirds within American Alaska; but in 1898, the northern section of Northwest Territory, to simplify problems of Canadian jurisdiction, was separated and created into Yukon Territory. This added to the already complicated confusion of names. The closing years of the century were years which bred a goodly bit of jealousy and envy, across the border; for although population and capital were pouring into the States, the Dominion's people were increasing but slowly and with something less than a normal increment, while capital with which to finance the great necessary transcontinental projects must be rustled somehow, and for the most part from within the northern border.

The area of Alaska is about six hundred thousand square miles, the area of " Y. T." about two hundred thousand. Although they touch for a lengthy man-determined line, they are very different territories in their internal and their personal structure. Alaska possesses a tremendous coast-line, as I have said—islanded and indented with a score of as fine harbors as the soul of any deep-sea mariner can ask—open, for the most

part, the year round and on the wide Pacific. But the newly created Yukon Territory had a coast-line on the Arctic Ocean only, less than two hundred miles in extent and closed by Arctic ice three-quarters of the year. "Y. T." is completely shut from the Pacific by that international line.

Small wonder that the Lion tried to set his paw upon those estuaries that cut into the continent at Dyea and Skagway, claiming territorial jurisdiction down to tide-water there, a seventy-mile length of Lynn Canal. What's more, he sent his Royal North West Mounted Police to patrol and police it—causing no little righteous indignation and patriotic insult to Americans at Skagway, when Corporal D'Amour, elegant in scarlet coat and slashing riding-crop, took the air each day in his parade of inspection to the docks! However, in the much later decree of the Alaska Boundary Tribunal, even an English judge, Lord Alverstone, voted to uphold America's just claim to these ports which British Admiralty charts, corrected to April, 1898, had shown to be unquestionably American—because once unquestionably Russian, as amply proved by ancient maps. The United States had bought and paid for a certain piece of real estate which Russia owned. We claimed no more than we had bought and paid for, but we did claim all of that!

In the final decision, Canada did not secure her seaport; but long before that final decision was handed down, it was admitted by all official parties that the fabulous Klondike lay safely within Canadian bounds, in spite of any early and spread-eagle notions to the contrary. And so it was small wonder too, perhaps, that when the Klondike diggings were determined to lie safely inside the Canadian line, the Lion roared defiance to the Eagle—or at least snarled a little and not too graciously, or sometimes seemed to leer a leonine grin of "I told you so" at the American prospectors caught (by their own greed, the Canadians insisted; by their own superior

initiative and mining talent, the American stakers claimed) under that weighty paw, and claw.

Seeing both sides, I heard both sides. And both had rights, *de jure* and *de facto*. There was no chess-board clean-cut black and white of right and wrong in this great King-row game. That was the difficulty. Both were dead right. Which right was prior, which right was of superior validity: The right of territorial jurisdiction won in the course of haphazard, perhaps, but no less real, empire building and dominance, or the right of discovery and development of hitherto unclaimed and unguessed treasure-trove? That was the burning question. Small wonder that this question turned the international lawyers and the diplomats to study; and equally small wonder that it split Dawson City into rival camps. All very well for the Arctic Brotherhood later to set up as its motto, "No Boundary Line Here." In 1898, the boundary line *was* here, somewhere, always, and ran down into and over many a morass and mountain of difficulty and despair.

Against the American claim of Carmack's prior discovery of gold, was set up the rival Canadian claim that Robert Henderson—a fine Scotch-Canadian type from Nova Scotia as opposed to Carmack, the epitheted "squaw-man"—was the real discoverer of the Klondike, at Gold Bottom. Some went so far as to say that Carmack had treacherously snatched the glory as well as the gold. Henderson—a prospector all his days and a good one—never found a fortune. Later he was employed by the Canadian Geological Survey and still later the Dominion granted him a life pension, in official recognition that he first discovered rich Klondike pay. "Klondike Bob," as he was known in British Columbia, died in this year of '33, aged seventy-six. For some time past he had been suffering the tortures of throat cancer. But if most of the early stakers in the Klondike were indubitably American, as well as most of the early business men and professional enterprises, Canadians

claimed in offset (and with equal truth) that so also was most of the early " lawlessness " American in origin. A majority of the early camp-followers and bounders and four-flushers were typically and evilly American, of that I have no doubt—the scum of American cities and America's now-declining Western cow and mining settlements. And there is no doubt at all that these elements added materially to the Canadian officials' problems.

On the other hand, the technique of the free-spirited, bearded and brown, American-trained miners, who " thrilled to the wondrous strike "; their loose but effective local government, suitable for mining towns, as expressed in the typically American " miners' meeting "; their intimate knowledge of all types of gold mining, brought from western States, as well as from already well-developed workings inside Alaska: all these were positive factors of incalculable value that aided in the organization and the richness of the newly formed Canadian governmental unit in the Yukon.

You can see how tangled, how snarled, the rival claims were. American was spoken, Canadian understood! There was a common tradition up to a certain point, it's true. Canadian and American both drew from a common English storehouse of language and of common law. But Canada had never before been called upon to develop a great body or tradition of mining law, whereas the whole advance of settlement in western U. S. A. from 1849 had been bound up in a developing mining technique and mining culture; and this placer tradition rooted back into Spanish native sources, for use and custom in the early California camps had been distinctly Hispanic in origin. The very designation " placer " is a Spanish word, and all the early Yukon mining was placer in type and based upon the old and well-known principle that pure gold is nineteen times heavier than water, seven to eight times heavier than rock. Americans who flocked into the

Klondike carried with them something doubly alien to Canadian history and Canadian experience. The names of Klondike's richest creeks reëchoed this old Spanish story, in "Bonanza" and "Eldorado." Conditions found in California after '49 were repeated on the Yukon in '98; and to meet such conditions, many a stampeding miner fetched in his mental tool-chest a something fashioned first in the Sacramento Valley, stamped with the mark of Sutter's gold, and sharpened by the legend and the luck of many a Roaring Camp.

Once again there was a sudden rush of individuals with mixed antecedents, into a remote and almost unsettled territory—digging in and claiming rights long before the machinery of government and the forces of law and order could be set up and put in motion. It's true that there were ample means for the enforcement of law right on the ground, in the persons of U. S. soldiers on the American side of the border and a strong force of mounted police on the Canadian. But the Alaskan boundary controversy, which the Klondike rush brought so dramatically to a head, was still unsettled. Where *was* the border? Both the United States and Canada hesitated to use armed force too vigilantly or drastically upon that stretch of disputed territory extending from tide-water at the head of Lynn Canal to the watershed of the mountains beyond, over which the two main trails to the Interior ran. I think it speaks well for the caliber of those who came, that so relatively few of all the crowding thousands took advantage of that No Man's Land of Law, and became lawless.

Yukon Territory officials, sent out from Eastern Canada to bring order out of disorder on the Yukon, had no knowledge at all, no experience at all, of such a raw, new mining territory's needs, aims, claims, or temper. Above all, temper. I use temper in the metal worker's sense here, strictly, though you may take it otherwise if you so wish! Rampant individualists, of course, were these old-time prospectors who

became first stakers here. They were trained in a school whose code included miners' meeting, vigilante, and posse; *but no man in uniform*. Any uniform was bad enough—even the blue coat was a red rag to a western American. A red coat, a soldier-policeman with the opprobrious term "Royal" tacked to him, was an ultra-red rag! The old-time prospector knew his own code, and followed it. That code was real, it was rigid, and it was workable. He wanted, he would brook, no police supervision. Within his lights, which were limited, he was within his rights—which were at least debatable.

In the fall of '97 and during '98, fully four thousand Americans had already left Dawson, disgusted with "them Dominion knaves," as Dunham put it. And you can also understand why, in '99 when news came of even richer gold strikes (or so they were reported) at Nome, on indisputed American Alaska soil, thousands upon thousands of other Americans in Dawson crowded the gangplanks and blackened the decks of steamers leaving for the down-river country. The little *Rideout* alone left in July with seven hundred and ninety-seven passengers, who fought to get aboard her and her barges. They openly proclaimed themselves disgusted and fed up with Canadian "misrule," and were as openly and vocally "going back to God's country." I was truly sorry for these disappointed men, who by the summer of 1899 had come to feel themselves the victims of gross injustice. They got into a mess of litigation and judicial corruption at Nome, in *its* early days, fully as bad as—perhaps worse than—anything they had known in Dawson. Many of them came actually, in time, to regret "the good old days" in Dawson, and by April, 1900, Sam Dunham could be writing in his "Goldsmith of Nome":

"We had some hard knocks in the Klondike
From the Cub-lion's unpadded paws,
And suffered some shocks from high license
And other immutable laws;

But they robbed us by regular schedule
So we knew just what to expect,
While at Nome we're scheduled to struggle
Until we're financially wrecked."

The American pot couldn't call the Canadian kettle black, and these thousands were jumping from a Canadian fry-pan into an American fire, I regret to say. But in the fall of '98, we had no knowledge that the sands of Uncle Sam's own Nome were yellow and were heavy with gold.

I have told you that I met Governor Ogilvie often at the homes of our mutual friends, and sometimes walked home from church with him. He was a great though rather crude punster, and very fond of spinning yarns. One story which he often told, whenever he obtained a sympathetic audience, illuminates this international question very well. I'll try to tell it for you as he told it—that is, from his own point of view. Perhaps a quite different story could be told by others, who saw the same event from the other side of the line.

"Strange to say," he would begin his story, "few of the multitudes, Klondike-bound in 1897, had any notion of where the Klondike actually was on the map—any more than they foresaw the political, judicial, climatic, or general living and business conditions here at that time. I was in St. Michael in late July, on my way out to Vancouver—where I was to meet Mr. Sifton, the Canadian Minister of the Interior, and Major Walsh, the newly appointed Commissioner of Yukon Territory. At St. Michael, I encountered a boat-load of Americans on their way up the Yukon to Dawson. When they heard that I had just come down from the new camp, they sought me out and told me their plans. After due deliberation, they said, they had resolved themselves into a committee of the whole to devise ways and means of preserving order, when they should reach Dawson; and this committee of the whole appointed a Vigilance Committee, after the manner of something they had

read somewhere, in some adventure story of the wild American West. I was both amazed and amused.

"I listened for some time, in silence, to the report they made of their actions—and their intentions regarding the preservation of law and good order. At last I could hold my tongue no longer, but told them in a few words: 'Gentlemen, any interference of yours in our Canadian affairs will be quite unnecessary. The Royal North West Mounted Police will attend to law and order and everything else.' To my amazement, they wanted to know 'What the hell' the North West Mounted Police were. When I explained, they asked, 'Who the hell sent them here?' When told, 'The Canadian Government at Ottawa,' they wanted to know 'what in hell' the Canadian Government had to do with it! I assure you that it took some time, and also long perusal with them of the new maps I had with me, to convince these saucy fellows that the Klondike diggings actually were in Canada!"

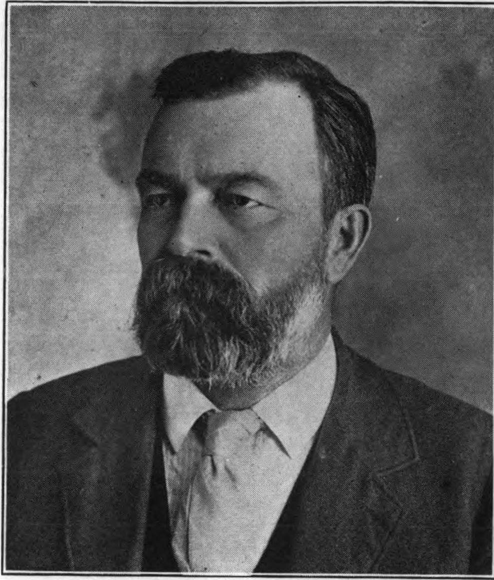
Here, in this single incident, you see the issue joined. Those men on board that vessel lying at St. Michael were, for the most part, old-timers from the gold-fields of California and Colorado, hastening with hearts elate to a new strike. There were among them many experienced miners full of courage, full of the exhilarating heady sense of freedom and of a rough but adequate justice, won from their old-time well-established camps back in the States. By their evolved expedients of the miners' meeting, the vigilance committee, the sheriff's posse, they had helped to bring order out of confusion there, as well as slip a Spanish bit and curb into the mouth of runaway passion and check the gait of any avaricious or dishonest gentry who might feel inclined to bolt the common good and run amuck in the community, for their own gain.

But all this attitude of mind among the miners had a distinctly American rootage. That miners' meeting on board ship at St. Michael was an historical hand-down—though they

themselves would have been the last to sense it—of another covenant signed long ago and also upon shipboard, in the dark cabin of the little *Mayflower.* What matter if one group had come with purpose to " pursue the pungent yoke and furrow, to drop the barley seed and spread the oat, to tempt the peril of the sudden arrow," while these newcomers yearned to reap a golden harvest from *underneath* the grass roots, with aid of pick and pan and windlass? They were two groups of men with one tradition, none the less. Both Argonaut and Pilgrim were alike in seeking their own personal and economic liberties. If Ogilvie—swashing and buckling in his best big bow-wow manner—had stood on Plymouth Rock and greeted the arriving Pilgrims with: " Your covenant so recently signed on shipboard is a joke, an interference with my plans and those of his Sovereign Majesty. You'll find yourselves more thoroughly policed here, gentlemen, than ever you have been back home " —his message would not have received any warmer welcome than did his speech at St. Michael, and from men of the same daredevil breed. Miles Standish and certain others of that earlier group would not, I fancy, have relished his remarks. If things I've heard of Miles are true, he too would have said, " And who the hell are you? "—couching his comment in a more Miltonic speech, of course, but to the same general and sulphurous effect! Puritan verbiage lacked no synonyms for brimstone. It was noted for peculiar felicity in describing the nether world and its denizens, and the Saints could prove their doctrine orthodox by good stiff body-blows as well as Holy Argument—and did so, as we know, in many a dust-up, when the King's men " meddled."

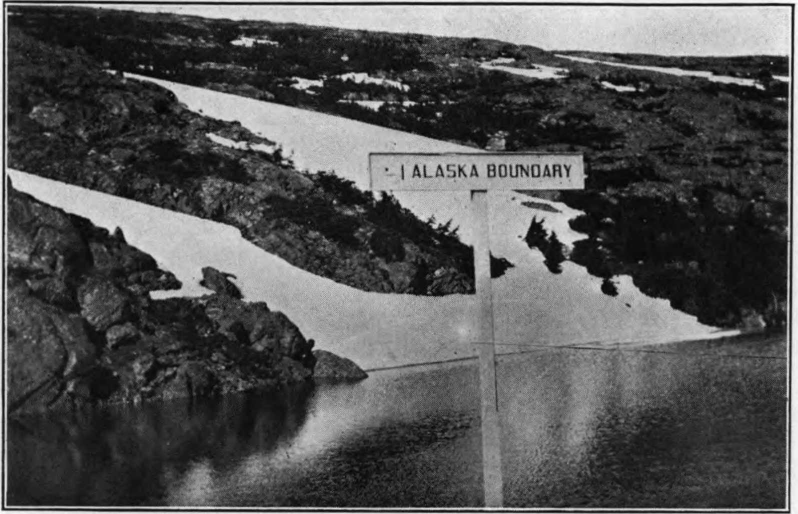
All jest aside, however, I felt a deep pity for the few, honest and well-meaning Canadian officials who tried to formulate just rules for a game—and for players in that game—neither of which they quite understood. At first they made a miserable mess of it. Ogilvie himself in part admitted this, years after,

although he was of course but human in his justifying all that he and his associates had done. I think you'll understand, though, what I mean when I say that, while in actual and cadastral fact the international boundary line ran several leagues to westward of Dawson City in 1898, yet in another very real and personal sense it zigzagged through and about the very streets of the town, separating its crowded cabins into two camps, sometimes dividing even the close bunks of partners. I confess that, for myself, I spent at least a part of that winter stepping cat-like, with my right foot on one side of that fence, my left foot on the other!

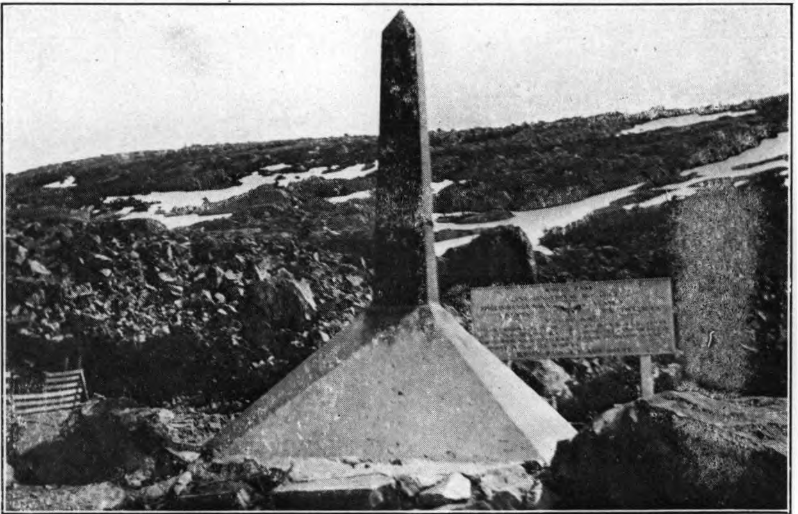


Governor Ogilvie

A Yukon graybeard rocking out his placer gold.



"Where *is* the boundary?" was the question.



The concrete answer to an old dispute — the international line.

A Line from Iolanthe

WHEN Carmack discovered gold on the Klondike—or Henderson, if you prefer the other version—there was a group of experienced old-timers already mining at Fortymile and Sixtymile. You've heard of Father Judge's days there, of Joe Ladue and many others. Most of the diggings on the Fortymile were on the American side of the boundary, though the post at the mouth of the creek was British officered and customed. When Carmack panned out twelve dollars' worth of gold in twelve minutes, in August, 1896, the next day he "located" *Discovery Claim* on Bonanza, as well as *One Below*—the double claim which was discoverer's right—while Tagish Charlie staked *Two Below Discovery* and Skookum Jim, another Indian kinsman of Carmack's wife, claimed *One Above.* It was told in Dawson later that old-timers at Fortymile, who had once carelessly prospected this creek, thought Bonanza "too wide and too deep" ever to be good gold ground; besides, "the willows didn't lean right." Which merely proves again that gold is where you find it, for a single pan of dirt from one of these three claims was worth two hundred and eighteen dollars.

Carmack had lived with the Indians many years and spoke both "Stick" and Chilkat dialects. Ogilvie told me that he had employed Carmack, as well as Skookum Jim and Tagish (he called him "cultus") Charlie back in the eighties, and Jim had packed a hundred and fifty pounds of bacon for him over Chilkoot then. Carmack went immediately to Fortymile after staking his Bonanza claims, recorded them before Inspector Constantine, and told his good fortune to his fellows

there, as was the custom, so all who wished could share in the new diggings. At first, no one would believe him and they called Carmack "the all-firedest liar on the Yukon." But the first commandment of the old-time prospector's code was: "Tell when you've found—and where!" Bob Henderson, who had been prospecting on Gold Bottom near Carmack, and had already taken out fair pay, claimed later that he had advised the squaw-man to try Bonanza Creek and always resented bitterly that "Siwash George" went to the American side of the line to tell his luck, neglecting to send Henderson any word of the new discovery. We heard in Dawson, however, that Carmack had resented the Scotchman's parting thrust: "Stake for yourself, but I don't want your whole Siwash tribe camping here!"

This was the beginning of the Klondike, and Fortymile was quickly abandoned for it, as well as the diggings about Circle City which were also over the line in American Alaska. In a fortnight, there weren't twenty people left in Circle, and they were the cripples! One man too drunk to join the stampede under his own steam was hog-tied and thrown by his friends into their boat, like so much flour in a sack—and lived to bless them for the fortune that he made there! All the first claims in the Klondike, almost without exception, were taken up by Americans. Two hundred claims were staked during those first two weeks in '96, alone. The crowd from Fortymile staked down-stream for six or seven miles, then up-stream; and when the Circle City men got in, they staked the pups or gulches. The accompanying settlements and camps were largely those of United States citizens; and there was a disposition at first—which Ogilvie resented and fought—to call the region so occupied, "Alaska." Perhaps that's why so many people still think of the Klondike as part of Alaska, and text-books even to-day sometimes describe Yukon Territory as "Eastern Alaska."

These new conditions were without precedent in Canada. Ninety per cent. of the new population was alien, and these "aliens" were one hundred per cent. individualistic. There were at first few mails and no telegraph-lines. There were no roads or bridges. An army of new officials must be created, and a suitable personnel was both scarce and scattered. The only existing body of Canadian mining law was utterly inadequate and an entire new system must be created.

What was perhaps worst, Ottawa, the source of all authority, was four thousand miles away and there was instant need for legislative and administrative act. Although Ottawa knew nothing of the actual conditions on the Klondike, Ottawa held the rein and whip—and over men half-mad, stampeded with the gold craze. While there were some few fabulously rich claims, most of the area was merely good normal placer ground. Ottawa heard and listened to the exaggerated stories of fabulous wealth, and arranged at once by Order in Council that a share of this in heavy taxes should flow into the public treasury. These first high taxes on gold production were quite all right and fair for the very rich claims, but they put the poorer claim holders on the rocks.

You can see the Canadian view. "This soil is ours," they said. "If you care to step over our line and work it, very well. But we are going to run things, and have no American nonsense. We want that distinctly understood, from the start. The whole tradition of exploration and trade in the Northwest Territories is also ours. As long ago as 1670, King Charles the Second granted rights here to 'Adventurers of England'; and in 1838 a supplementary license was granted, conferring exclusive rights of trade in the Territories west of the Rocky Mountains. To-day we Canadians—though a young Federation, scarcely of voting age—consider that we inherit all the privileges of that old English tradition, from which you have high-handedly revolted! We are very proud and very self-

conscious. We are going to develop *our* West in an orderly and British way, and we will have no Yankee tricks. What if we are in a minority? This soil of Klondike is indubitably Canadian, and all the treasure that may underlie it is Canadian. You are profiting by what is justly ours. If you don't like our Canadian ways, get out!"

—And many did. Offhand, I can not at the moment name a single American, even of those who won high stakes in the Klondike that year, who stayed. They got out; and Dawson to-day is almost an empty town, I'm told—a shell of that once populous city we Yukoners knew. Many of the Canadian-born also left Dawson, when word came of the Nome and Tánana gold-strikes.

It was not only in the realm of mining law and administration that the Canadians took firm hold of the reins. They did so all along the line. In theory they were absolutely justified. In actual practice there was much personal injustice. Oblate Fathers from Canada were sent to take over Father Judge's church and all the fruits of his pioneer work. He stayed on, it is true, but in the more or less honorary or emeritus capacity of Chaplain to the Hospital. I happen to know, however, that there were many changes made in administrative detail of which he could not approve, which hurt his heart. Father Judge's whole theory had been "give," while in quite a number of instances the new theory was "get." Although, as a good Jesuit, he never once whimpered, the man was after all a citizen of the "free State of Maryland" and he was obviously not happy.

S. Hall Young had a similar experience. He had been the first Presbyterian on the ground, after years of intensive and pioneer Alaskan work on the Southeast Coast. He came in the fall of '97 and founded a church and a hospital here, as well as a library. In the summer of 1898, a number of new preachers had come in with our new army of gold-seekers—

three Canadian Presbyterians, one Wesleyan Methodist, one Lutheran, and one Salvation Army man that I remember. The Presbyterian contingent was headed by Dr. Andrew Grant, superintendent of the new enterprise. Young himself said of him much later, when years had perhaps softened a certain bitterness, " Grant was a tall, brawny, freckle-face Scotchman, with much previous experience on the frontiers, an able, resourceful man. He had the bluff manner possessed by most of the Canadians and those from the British Isles. His first word to me was ' What are *you* doing here? '—intimating that I was encroaching on his territory. It was the attitude taken by many Canadians and Englishmen toward the Americans. By this time the United States had decided that the Klondike was in British territory, but the Canadians had not yielded to the claim of the United States that Skagway and all of the coast of Southeastern Alaska belonged to this country. Dr. Grant and those with him naturally felt that I was on their ground, and had no authority to organize the Klondike Church.

" But we got along very well, considering the difference in our standpoint, and alternated in conducting services and the other duties of the ministry. But very soon it became apparent to me that my organization must be turned over to the Canadians. The Yukon Province of Canada had been fully organized and new officers were being sent in." Then Dr. Young went on to explain that, if he remained, it meant he must become a Canadian citizen and he did not " choose " to stay under those conditions.

The American view was, in general: " We form nine-tenths of the people here. You let us discover this gold. You let us build up a town, pour in all sorts of business and professional effort and construction here. Now that we have got things nicely started, you step in and say, ' You can do the work, but we are going to boss this job.' We Americans don't think that attitude is fair."

Another clash along the boundary line occurred when Michael John Heney was working, like the human dynamo he always was, to build the now famous White Pass and Yukon Railroad. Dr. F. B. Whiting, the man who performed an autopsy on Soapy Smith, was the railroad company's surgeon and Heney's tent companion. He often told the dramatic story of how the railroad crossed the international line. The first few miles of railroad ran over American territory, climbing White Pass from Skagway. A short section had been surveyed across a corner of British Columbia, and the last sixty miles or so were to slip down to White Horse in "Y. T."—tapping our river just beyond the rapids. The railroad company had great difficulty in securing legal permission to enter Canada. You'd think Canadian officialdom would have welcomed a building railroad, with open arms—especially one financed by British capital. No! Because of the still-smoldering international controversy, the Royal North West Mounted Police were ordered to hold back all construction work at the summit, where the international boundary supposedly ran.

Heney was the contractor for the new road, and directed its construction in person. His job here was to build a railroad over a very difficult pass, within two years from the first breaking of ground, and he himself had mushed out every foot of the way with Hawkins the young engineer who surveyed a possible route. After the first five miles it was almost continuous rock work to the summit. In places an L-shaped road-bed was cut out of solid granite; and drill-crews, suspended by ropes while making the first rock cut, could look down a clear two thousand feet into the canyon beneath. The first mile of track was laid July 2, 1898, and Heney completed his contract well within his time limit, winning by a knock-out. A mad fighting young fellow, the wit of this pugilistic Irish-Canadian flamed highest when doubt and danger were darkest. "Black as the Earl of Hell's riding boots!" was Heney's own

phrase. And the building of that road was full of fight for the "Irish Prince."

He had a thousand obstacles to overcome—but the international boundary line near the coast was undetermined yet, and that imaginary and unsurveyed line proved his worst obstacle of all. When Heney's spike-drivers and track-layers reached the summit of White Pass, they were told in courteous but positive terms that their "wildcat railroad" could go no farther, as all beyond was British soil. The Royal North West Mounted Police visited the camp daily and were treated royally there, by Heney's personal orders. But they had received instructions from Ottawa that "they shall not pass."

Heney put on his "considering cap." He had a friend and coworker named "Stikine Bill," and Bill was sent as an informal ambassador to the Summit with instructions to proceed in the spirit of diplomacy and untie somehow this Gordian knot. The story goes that Bill's baggage to the summit consisted of a bottle of Scotch in each pocket of his Mackinaw, and a box of cigars under each arm. He found a guard pacing the supposed line. —Two days later the guard woke up from a long and heavy sleep; but the first sight he saw was Heney's construction gang working like beavers, laying track well over the line and already a mile or so down the shore of the lake! After this, construction was pushed without interruption down the slope of the Yukon Valley and reached Lake Bennett July 6, 1899. In this stretch of the work, the Mounties proved helpful coöperators. Rails from ocean to river were completed at Carcross in July, 1900.

Before the railroad was running, tons of mail consigned to the Klondike were often held up for months here at the Summit, much to our Dawson inconvenience. The mails were very irregular and badly handled, and we were at the mercy of careless agents. Mountains of mail-sacks piled up under a tent at Tagish waiting for the proper officers to forward them.

This absence or irregularity of mail was a cruel feature of the winter, and rumor had it that officials were feathering their own nests by going prospecting with the dog teams instead of hauling the mail. I was never able to verify this, however, though Dr. Young asserted it. I do know that Father Judge said that Dominion mail, which should have arrived the fall before, was not delivered until March of 1898; and I heard that it had taken days, and even weeks, to sort and give it out. During this totally unnecessary delay, the men of Dawson almost went mad with impatience and worry; and many (even including the conscientious Dr. Young, and by his own admission!) bribed the officials to allow them to go through the mail-sacks themselves, hoping for word from home. This trouble with the mail continued even after I left Dawson, for Dr. Isaac Moore told that in the winter of 1899–1900 it took weeks and sometimes months to communicate with Skagway.

I saw much of Governor Ogilvie, as I have said, and I suppose he considered me one of his friends. I was, to this extent: I appreciated his official difficulties, I enjoyed meeting him often at the homes of our mutual friends that winter in Dawson, and I often found his stories vastly amusing. The Yukon old-timers were past masters of the Tall Tale, a phase of humor which gains a new burst of emphasis, a new lease of life, with each newly opened frontier. The Klondike was no exception. Witness some of Service's best yarns, including his almost perfect gem, *The Cremation of Sam McGee*—typical of the way the guileless sourdough miners "set around the stove, and lie!" Ogilvie was too much the official, or perhaps too literal-minded, to excel in this traditional pulling of the long bow. But he was a nugget source of the most interesting first-hand information about Canadian affairs and views, as well as anecdotes and incidents of the earlier Dawson and prerush days, which had so fascinated me even in far away Washington. He knew my river, and he knew many of the

pioneers upon that river. He talked well about them both and I was delighted to be a good listener.

And yet, although I hesitate to say so, I can not truthfully tell you that I liked the man! He was as undignified as it is possible for a human to be. That was my first, and strong, impression. In a person of less dark and clouded countenance, his easy approachability might well have proved a pleasant quality. But he did not impress me as a man of fine instincts. Unpleasant stories about him circulated freely in Dawson, especially among the Americans, and he was said to "stand in with the crooks." I did not credit much of this, for men in his position are always under suspicion and maligned. Yet, although I was with him often, I never felt that I knew the quality or the direction of his private thoughts, and perhaps it was this very fact which bred a certain mistrust. I felt somehow a wall between us—and I was quite content to let it stay. Often, after I had been with him for a time, I caught myself mumbling whimsically the Lord High Chancellor's words from *Iolanthe:*

> "The Law is the true embodiment
> Of everything that is excellent.
> It has no kind of fault or flaw;
> And I, my Lords, embody the Law!"

I hope I'm not unfair to Ogilvie. I do not want to be. Dr. Brown, his secretary, I liked very much. Perhaps it was simply some personal mannerism in Ogilvie that antagonized. As I remember it his diction had a wonderful pomposity about it when he was in a speech-making mood, and his literary flavor was of the days when *Lallah Rookh* was considered great. He was a little solemn, a little swanky—a man with heavy-lidded eyes, an unlighted face, the lower half hidden in a grizzly beard neither flowing and generous nor clipped and conforming to the contour of his jaw, so that one never knew whether the

hidden mouth was weak, or wicked—or neither. He was a man who set himself behind a certain barricade, in spite of his surface affability. He was not a man to be pushed. He held a deadly stubbornness, a mind set and frozen, as unstretchable, as inelastic as the links of a surveyor's chain! He was an excellent surveyor. That was his craft. He knew it well, and worked well in it. Ogilvie the Surveyor we all tremendously respected.

In the winter of 1887–88, he had determined the longitude at a crude-built observatory on the Yukon, and ran a micrometer traverse on the ice down the river, locating the Alaska-Yukon boundary and marking it temporarily by a blaze on trees. In '95 and '96, he checked his previous measurements and produced the line north about five miles, opening out a good vista—and south, as far as the Sixtymile River. Very careful measurements made later, by the most modern methods and under almost ideal telegraphic conditions, corrected his first line only some two hundred feet. This was a very great tribute indeed to his original work, which had been done under the most crude and difficult circumstances. Ogilvie went to Dawson early in 1897, to lay out the town site and survey several blocks of mineral land. The new camp had been named in honor of the husband of that spicy little Lady Dawson, whom I came to know so pleasantly in Bermuda. Walsh was appointed the first Governor of Yukon Territory, but he had served only a few months when Ogilvie succeeded him. I was not the only one who did not whole-heartedly admire the man; yet how much of the dissatisfaction of the period was due to a defect in Ogilvie himself, how much to circumstances which neither the Governor nor any other human being could have remedied, is very hard to say.

Of the Gold Commissioner's Office at Dawson and the Canadian "system" of underground extortion and local corruption (which, let me say again, was repeated in American

Nome) I shall not speak. Those who were harshest in their disapprobation of such practice were themselves British subjects. That "side-door tips" on unrecorded claims could be bought by bribe, was common talk in Dawson, and timber concessions were granted wholesale to monopolists who even tried to prevent "gum-boot" miners from cutting wood for their own necessary use.

Nor am I competent to appraise the character and the motives of Dawson's judicial wearers of the robe. I know very little mining law, and "the lean lines of the document of 1787" were not the scriptures worshipped here. Nor am I a miner, skilled in mining technique and terminology. In fact, I grew rather skeptical of glib mining talk, that winter in Dawson. There was a deal of "pool-room prospecting" done, many claims were worked solely with "axe and lead-pencil," and the kind of men who hung around the saloons and gambling-houses often used a few geological terms—which they quite obviously did not in the slightest understand—and desired to pass as expert miners. To speak frankly, they were not the type I associated with in Dawson, for I could not converse with them and gain either pleasure or profit. Unproved assumptions seem not quite decent, somehow. If you are blessed—or cursed—with a scientific conscience (if you have lived for months in an observatory, for instance, its dome slit open to the sky, pulling down observations from the very stars) you dislike and mistrust exceedingly the loose use of exact and fitting words, destined for a better employment.

This pool-room-mining crowd claimed that the Territorial officials were rotten, in toto; but I felt that such a sweeping indictment was untrue and unfair. What's more, Dawson purged herself later, though perhaps too late, by typically Canadian methods and hurled certain overrated citizens from their perches—just as still later, in Nome, American citizens cleared up that judicial mess by typically American methods.

Perhaps I did not take the American charges of Canadian "graft" too seriously, because I remembered so vividly my own glimpse of Skagway as I had seen it that spring of '98 when Soapy Smith, king of the racketeers, ruled and rode the town in the most energetic and unscrupulous fashion, terrorizing its citizenry. We heard in Dawson that Soapy had led the Fourth-of-July parade that year, as Skagway's "first citizen!" Surely that was not a fact to make Americans proud.

Welsh, who was superintendent of the Canadian detective bureau, said that Soapy began his criminal career at Cripple Creek in its boom days, but had been driven out of town and had followed one boom camp after another, battening on human fears and credulities. Finally he landed at Skagway; and since the very land on which Skagway was built had been stolen from Captain Billy Moore (who had preëmpted and occupied this site long before a town there was thought of) he found a congenial atmosphere and organized a kingdom of loot at the foot of White Pass. Criminals flocked to his standard and Soapy had his own evil way all that winter of '97–'98. They grafted on the civic administration of Skagway, and the very U. S. marshal joined the forces of the bandits.

"They mulcted the saloons; they buncoed travelers and miners; they operated 'fixed' gambling-machines and roulette wheels; they played the three-card game and thimble-rigged the innocent; they flim-flammed the miners who brought in dust; and after every other scheme had been worked, they looted the bank's vaults and held up men at the point of a gun," Welsh said. "Pokes of dust deposited in the bank vaults mysteriously disappeared and the claimants could never get satisfaction. The town newspaper was edited by a member of the gang. They levied toll on every man who came to town or passed through it. If a man carried his valise across the wharf they controlled, it cost him two bits; if he set it down, it cost him four bits—for storage! To land a trunk cost one

dollar. Things had been run with such barefaced boldness, robberies, shootings, and hold-ups had become so frequent, that the town's business was being injured." Threats were made by business men that they would move over to Dyea and thus kill Skagway. In addition to paying tribute to Soapy's gang, they saw their trade itself being ruined, since miners with heavy pokes returning from the Klondike were giving Skagway a wide berth because of these racketeers and robber-gulls.

The owner of the *Golden North Hotel* called a miners' meeting but no building would hold them and they adjourned to Sylvester Dock, owned by one of their number. The time was nine at night but broad daylight, for it was now July. Guards were set at the land approach to the wharf and when Soapy, with a loaded Winchester in the hollow of his arm, swaggered down to break up this disputing of his domination, Frank Reid exchanged shots with him and was killed. But, though no man in Skagway could draw faster, shoot straighter than Soapy, he too was killed in the quick happenings that purged Skagway overnight.

A vigilance committee led by a former police captain from Portland, Oregon, cleaned up the gang. We heard that the Royal North West Mounted Police caught and returned all who tried to cross the passes into Canada. The U. S. marshal who had been in "cahoots" with the racketeers, was himself arrested by vigilantes and sent down to Sitka. In less than a week after that July Fourth, when Soapy Smith so brazenly led the gay parade, he had been killed for the notorious outlaw that he was, his gang were scattered or under arrest and, from that day on, Skagway was a clean and different town.

Nothing that was "pulled" in Canadian Dawson ever was so raw as Soapy Smith's day of misrule in American Skagway. Dawson's rackets were petty in comparison, while the Royal North West Mounted Police kept an orderly quiet town on

our Canadian side. But most of the Americans in Dawson conveniently forgot this in "spread-eagle" irritations. Life and property were notably secure in Dawson from the very first, and thousands of pounds of gold-dust lay behind unlocked cabin doors on Klondike creeks those winters. The raffish element was scarce there, and when they came the Mounties harried them. The law against carrying firearms in Dawson was scrupulously enforced. The typical miner does not bristle with side-arms, anyway. He is quiet and orderly, usually ungiven to curdling oaths, and is as well behaved as a preacher.

Canada did not prevent aliens from securing mining claims in the Territory but she put a stiff tax on all output. There were other taxes which were unofficial, but real. *February 17, 1899. Mr. Libby introduced me to an official recorder and a Dawson whore. I was told that by assigning a half interest to the latter I would be permitted to stake a claim on Hunker Creek, and also one for my friend Koschnick.*

The one redeeming feature of Canadian officialdom in Yukon Territory then was the Royal North West Mounted Police force—of course unmounted here—a well-disciplined body of soldier-police, far ahead of simple soldiers in efficiency and training. This truly grand, truly Canadian, organization had the great respect of both the lawless and the law-abiding in Dawson. Although this force has more recently been romanticized unduly in certain fiction—so that all a certain group of writers feel they need to do, to make a story a success, is to secure a red-coated Royal Mounted policeman-leftenant for its hero—yet this splendid organization did, in those days of '98 and has since done, much good for the good name of Canada. To romanticize the Mountie is unjust, for his type is the dry laconic modesty of the truly brave.

Back in the early seventies, at about the time when the new-formed Canadian Federation was setting out to surpass her

southern neighbor in area and ambition, the Northwest Territory and British Columbia were added to the Dominion; and about that time, too, Uncle Sam got into something of a quarrel with another picturesque character, Sitting Bull by name. This latter gentleman and his Sioux kinsmen were not at all fussy about international boundary lines. In fact, it was their habit to travel north regularly, whenever things got too hot for them in the States. The new capital at Ottawa became fearful lest the well-behaved Canadian Indians should learn bad manners from these fugitive sitting, or flying, bulls! Also, certain up-and-doing American traders were said to be engaged in smuggling fire-water across the line.

It was at this point that Sir John A. Macdonald, founder of the Canadian Federation, organized the Royal North West Mounted Police—or that's the story as Canadians told it to me in Dawson. They said that this semimilitary, semicivil constabulary had been organized to keep bad Americans—red and white—in their place, which was south of the forty-ninth parallel. As early as the seventies, an American in the Cassiar said of the Mounties: "They soon tame our gun-and-pistol gentry that come over the border!" In 1894, a detachment of Royal North West Mounted Police was sent to the Yukon under Inspector Constantine; and by 1897, some of this force were in Dawson, under Dr. Wills the surgeon, and were building a pole stockade there twelve or fifteen feet high, as well as living quarters. Law enforcement was their special prerogative, and their place was always "at the front." Every officer was a magistrate, every constable a policeman; so, as Ogilvie used to put it, "law and force march in the same uniform." Their vigilance became proverbial, as never-slumbering, while the tradition grew that "they always get their man."

The only drawback was that others made the laws which the Mounties so admirably enforced, and laws and lawmakers

were often not so honored nor so admirable, perhaps, as the law enforcers. In my day, Dawson was being ruled by a ten per cent. minority of its population. The American ninety per cent. were getting very restless, under that mild despotism. And yet they were good natured. One minute after midnight one early July morning, a rifle-shot had cracked on the hill behind town. A dozen shots answered, and soon a thousand. Dawson was in an uproar, a riot. Streets filled with men, dogs howled, the Mounties tumbled out of barracks. One of them afterward said, "We thought it was the Americans, rebelling, as they had threatened!"

Then some one looked at the calendar. That midsummer-midnight was the dawn of July Fourth! Good sportsmen that they were, a redcoat bugler was ordered out and the notes of Yankee Doodle and The Star Spangled Banner silenced the cracking rifle fire. The Americans responded by hiring the town band, and celebrated Independence Day by serenading Her Majesty's Royal Mounted. But the racket had so scared Dawson's Siwash dogs that many of them didn't come back home for a week!

Scarlet Curtains

DECEMBER 30, 1898. *Bought bright-red curtains, thoughtlessly. Was joshed a good deal.*

A simple entry in my journal, as you see. To you it may mean nothing. To me it is the suggestion for a whole budget full of thoughts, upon a whole profession, class, and attitude—thoughts inescapable in Dawson that winter, for no facet of that myriad-cut life flashed more flauntingly in the public eye. A scarlet coat might serve the embodied Law, but scarlet women were the most notable accents of Dawson sights and bright lights. A blind man could have sensed their constant presence and their influence. Even in a well-ordered community, a physician's experience cuts across all social levels and castes. In a wide-open town such as Dawson boasted itself, no man or woman or child but some time, in some way, must come in contact with "the oldest profession," be forced to contemplate in some degree its personnel and ethic. Perhaps this, too, was part of our Northern education. Sometimes I thought the Yukon kept turning up deliberate new phases for our constant study, as a wise tutor will set daily reading for his pupils. A man of three-score-ten to-day looking back now upon that phase of Dawson, I realize even more fully why such an ancient, constantly recurring phase of human experience—however sordid, drab, or ugly—offers tough food for thought.

It was the open policy of the authorities to place no ban upon the liquor traffic or the vice traffic. Their connivance at forms of graft in the mining game was less open, but no less actual. Young said that he had proof that one official cleaned

up four hundred thousand dollars in four months. Perhaps he did. It's not unlikely. Large fortunes were being made legitimately, too. One American who secured a "fraction" on Bonanza near *Discovery Claim,* only eighty-six by three hundred feet, cleaned up a cool four hundred thousand from that one rich pocket which chanced to hold the concentrated heavies of three creeks. Where money easy comes, it easy goes; and one of the few ways of easy spending possible in Dawson was on women. A man can eat only so much, can only drink so much. But Daughters of Joy can cry, "Give, give," insatiably, it seems. A thousand ounces of rich virgin gold, fresh-won from Klondike creek beds, could nightly flow into "the girls'" capacious pockets, and still they could find ways of spending more in meretricious grandeur. No wonder that purveyors of fine Paris frocks flourished in Dawson, and jewellers sent Outside for shipments of the largest diamonds available, for sale here. "The girls" of Dawson's palmy days were making hay of Dawson winter nights, when the sun never shone.

The Governor might boast, and truthfully, that although errors of judgment were committed, no serious crime was ever perpetrated here. This was surely to the great credit of the pioneers of the section and was not entirely due to the estimable Mounties. There had been no police at Circle City, yet there was order there, kept by the true Sourdough selves. Ogilvie used the scarlet-coats at his command imperialistically —but not, it seemed, impartially. Clean-ups upon the creeks were watched with hawk-eyed vigilance, that no fraction of the Dominion's tithe should slip away. The miners were bound by many a rigorous regulation, but "the girls" were seemingly as free as birds, to come or go or nest here, to line their nests attractively and richly. A true imperialist regards himself, I'd think, as an apostle of advancing civilization. Perhaps I show hereditary bias here, due to my father's and my mother's

way of life, for they were teachers both, you will recall, in an imperial domain. But it seemed a flaw in the consistency of official reasoning, to resent the loose but effective local government and democracy of the miners' meeting—or even the dramatic justice of the vigilance committee—as being too American, and yet to welcome, apparently with open arms, those other aspects of American or other mining communities, "the Row," the "sporting woman," the established and organized exploitation of white slavery. A "square" or "straight" woman on the streets of Dawson was as safe as, or safer than, in Washington, D. C. I never heard of a girl or woman "going to the bad" in Dawson. Any woman who went to the bad in Dawson had, from all appearances, been there before and was quite familiar with the primrose way!

The virgin gold of the Klondike was a clean metal. It had no taint upon it, it had been got by honest labor; but the man who actually dug out this gold would too often be exploited and fleeced by another type of "gold-digger," who battened upon the fruitage of brow-salted toil. The taint upon the winnings of this second class was the taint of another's sweat. I saw so much that winter of the hard work these miners did, even the so-called luckiest, to win from Nature what she hid so cleverly. Even the most experienced of old-time miners weren't always lucky by any means. By July 1, 1898, ten thousand placer claims had been recorded in the Dawson District and I'm sure that not more than one in ten, of all who piled into the Klondike that year, got even a chance to stake a promising claim there. In most cases, for every ounce of gold extracted from the tight earth, pounds of effort and pounds of sterling currency as well were first expended. The pay was hard to follow; it could pinch out overnight. Those who could find no claims to stake took "lays," the Yukonism for a lease. "Working a lay" meant doing all the actual hard work upon a claim and then dividing the clean-up with the owner of the

claim, on a prearranged percentage basis. This royalty ran from thirty to seventy-five per cent. of the gross output; and since ten per cent. over a working minimum went to the Government, you can see that only a phenomenally rich claim ever paid the lessee any profit, and the royalty on rich claims jumped to twenty per cent. The workers were crowded thickly upon the diggings, on little Klondike tributary pups, like prairie-dogs atop their burrows. On Bonanza Creek, where hundreds of cheechakos took lays, cabins seemed almost to touch.

I knew how hard they worked to win that precious and that virgin gold; do you wonder that I resented their expending it in ways that undercut their health and their morale? I hated to see these husbandmen of the wild reaping a barren gain. The Yukon was a school for meditation, for deep thought, for closeness to the real. Nature herself had built us here a laboratory, luxuriously equipped; but Nature never draws conclusions for us, she simply provides means. The wise employment of a man's resources was as possible here as elsewhere. Father Judge had found a teacher of philosophy upon these Yukon banks, and so had a few others. It was a sordid thing to turn this school of possible philosophy into a school for scandal. However, " Mind your own business " was the motto of the camp, and so I minded mine; but what I thought of it was between my journal and myself. No redcoat censored my thinking, and sometimes I saw red.

We all " saw red " the night of Wednesday, April 26, in 1899. That was the time of the great Dawson fire. It was a tremendous blaze, for Dawson was said to be the largest log-cabin town in the world, and fire wiped out one-third of the buildings. It did not come too close to my cabin for I lived on the outskirts of the town, away from the section where the fire raged. I do not know how it started but can easily imagine, since many cabins were built carelessly without sufficient protection for the roof, where hot stovepipes penetrated.

I believe that every one turned out, to see and to help. There was an organized fire department, of a sort. A man named Joe was the first paid member of the Dawson Fire Department, and his main job was to see that the water-holes were kept open. At one time the equipment for fire-fighting, such as it was, had dog-power transport. I think there was only one hand-pump. The hose was placed in the Yukon and a stream of water brought to play, but this was utterly inadequate. The cabins were fairly close together and burned like tinder. Men spoke of dynamiting buildings, but this was not done—perhaps because there was no large supply of powder. Instead of that they placed ropes around the cabins and, with a large gang of men hauling, the whole building was " snaked " away to safety.

The thing that alarmed me most was the imminent danger to the North American Transportation and Trading Company's warehouse, which held the town's chief supply of food and stores. If this had gone we might indeed have been in serious trouble, and so I spent most of that night helping there. But it was saved because the buildings near it, although not on fire, were removed in the manner I have described. Most of the fire-fighting was done at night. The temperature was not excessive although it probably was zero weather. We were up all night. It was a truly glorious pageant, as pure spectacle. When the flames had finished their work on the logs, the cabins still stood for quite a long time, giving the appearance of golden tinsel houses, glowing with a rich, red color. Such radiant glory I have never seen displayed, and in that clear arctic night it was a memorable thing to watch those rows of cabins, brilliant as lighted playhouses, glow with that all-consuming pulse of heat and color—then fall.

The night was filled with roar of flames, the rush of feet, the shouts of men, the shrieks of the evicted Daughters of Lilith as flames swept their quarter, the call for blankets and

for pails, the clang of bells. Clothes and hands and mustaches were icy, as hundreds of men lined up in double rows from the river bank and all available buckets from the Alaska Commercial Company and the N. A. T. & T. were commandeered, filled, passed down the line in double-quick tempo, and swung up to the workers on the roofs—to be returned as speedy empties and refilled.

Buckets had a double use, that night. I've heard that in some parts of town, hooch by the pailful was dished out as reinforcement and encouragement to the fire-fighters, although I myself did not happen to see this. As flames attacked one eating-house, two barkeepers burst out, each armed with a large galvanized pail and a tin cup. They dashed down the line of helpers, dipping into the pail for a full cup to each man. The same thing happened in other sections, so men said. I think it was " Nigger Jim " who emerged from the *Pavilion Dance Hall* followed by a flock of " girls," and soon it seemed as though the buckets of fire-fighting water from the Yukon were no more numerous than the buckets of authentic firewater pouring from the various " establishments." Some even claimed, later, that it was the hooch which saved Dawson! But I myself saw just one man—a man whom I knew well—get really drunk that night. He tried to take charge of the hose nozzle, and was arrested and jugged immediately by the Mounties. He was crazy drunk, but no other man I myself saw acted wildly. In fact, no crowd could have acted better. Those vast storehouses were threatened and we knew well that, if they went up in flame, we should go hungry. It was laughable as well as pitiful to see the women of the " profession," as they poured out into the night carrying their flimsy finery upon their arms. They found no difficulty in securing hospitality.

Every one seemed happy through it all, as though it were a lark. Just one exception I remember. A fellow had a shack

that stood in the line of the flames. We decided to move it. Ropes were fastened and a hundred pair of hands tugged. When it was deposited a block away, the building was decidedly on bias. The owner was irate and wanted us to pull it back in shape again, to square it up. Most of the firefighters were dog-tired by this time and so we ragged him by declaring, with great solemnity, that his building was right as a trivet but all the others were out of kilter! From out the spendthrift, ever-optimistic riches of the golden North, new buildings soon were rising on the ruins.

The Great Dawson Fire had some strange aftermaths. F. G. Kimball, who was in St. Michael that next year, told me about being Outside on a vacation in 1901. He visited the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo and, in front of a building on the Midway, he saw a sign, *The Burning of Dawson City, Alaska.* "I dug up my two bits, and went in," Kimball said. "Sure enough, on the stage they had Dawson City built up, and the Yukon River in the foreground. The steamer *John Cudahy* came up the river and a few snowflakes fell. The main part of the show was the spieler. He wound up his talk by telling how Dawson burned and three hundred and seventy-five people were driven by the flames into the Yukon, and drowned! You could feel that audience shiver, the way he told it. After the show was over, he went out in front to smoke a cigarette before the next bunch came in. I asked him, 'When did they move Dawson over into Alaska?'

"'People think it's there, and we have to advertise it that way,' he said. I asked him if the three hundred and seventy-five people didn't have a lot of trouble getting through two feet of solid ice, to drown. But he said, 'Nobody ever thinks of that!'"

The "girls" of Dawson were of many grades and classifications and, though all of one profession, as far separated in personal allure and personal fastidiousness or character, as

heaven is from hell. The gamut ran from the elegance, the social intelligence and the real and regal courtesan-like charm of Dawson's two or three "queens," brilliant though venal hetæræ, down to the tawdry, cheap, vulgar and disgusting, sheer dirtiness and sluttish habits of crudely painted creatures such as the mud-stained miners seek and know, from Coolgardie to Cripple Creek. Many of "the girls" came from good families and were young, comely, fairly well educated. A physician's eye sees much, you know, and he can not be faithful to his Hippocratic oath unless he does see all and study all, yet keep his counsel. Motives, etiology, were quite beyond the scope of my probe, but I do know that I saw faces that bespoke refinement—heard gentle speech, sometimes, when called upon such errands of my profession.

Some of these women married men who later became famous, and to-day they hold a high social position. I could name you names that would surprise you, but I shall not. One Dawson prostitute of '98 was later the nurse-heroine of the most devastating epidemic I ever knew. Several of the finer type afterward took up professional nursing. One of these girls had as sweet a face, both in expression and features, as ever I have looked upon. She left "the profession" before it set its sordid mark upon her. Many of the more notorious Dawson women contracted tuberculosis, due to a too close housing, too little light and air and exercise, too strenuous and gay a night life. The fragile phthisic courtesan would seem to exist in fact, as well as in the Camellia-strewn pages of Dumas the Younger. Another girl whom I remember being called to see had the soft blue-eyed face and open innocent expression of a typical stage "Salvation Army Lassie." One could never have guessed her profession. The secrets of the human heart were beyond my ken. The why and wherefore I don't profess to know. I simply tell you what I have observed.

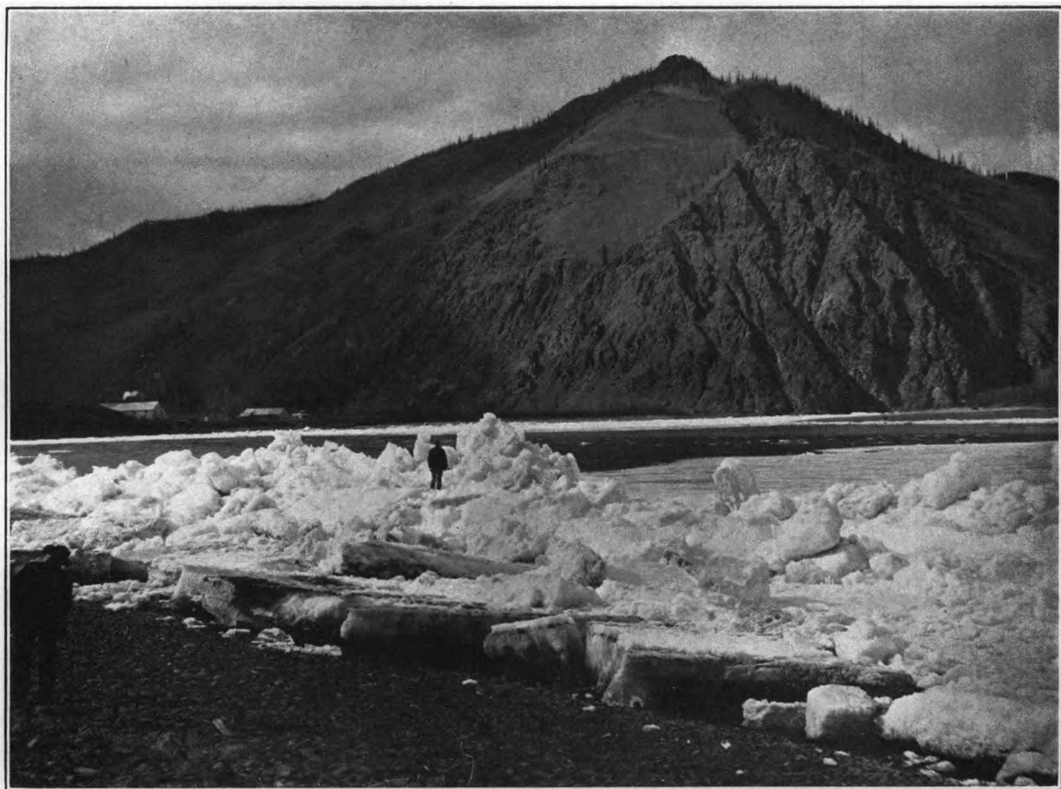
Easy money and easy virtue have always run together. When a miner or prospector had spent months in the solitude of the Yukon hills, the gold-lined gulches of the Klondike, and finally had found the precious thing he sought at rim of bed-rock, his first thought was always " back to town." And town was Dawson. " Town " was any place where humans were assembled, socially; and the only social life offered him in those hard, rough, and " happy days " was the saloon, the gambling place, and their persistent noisy complement, the dance hall. As Father Judge used to remark, with a twisty smile to his oversensitive mouth, " Miners are no saints! " Restless spirits had gathered here from all the ports and points of earth. When Americans migrate, they often leave their principles behind. You may remember the old saying, " West of Bismark, no religion; west of Miles City, no God." Some were just patent mire-gorged souls, while the eternal cussing of others was simply a surface smoke and flame, not sulphur and hot pumice. When such men blew into town, bent on a vent of joy, the *Palace Grand Dance Hall* or some other greeted them with " fairies," " gambs," and orchestra, and they were made welcome. I doubt if many of these men consciously sought " sin," in the evangelical sense, but all of them sought human company. They went where they got it—whether across a slab of slick mahogany, or under the bright light thrown upon green baize, or in the curtained cubicle of a dance hall from a coquette with slippery heart.

The phenomenon of " the strange woman " has occupied the thought of wise men, from Solomon down to modern sociologists. In the Dawson of '99 it would have been difficult, indeed scarcely possible, for any person to obey the solemn Solomonic injunction to " come not nigh the door of her house," for she was everywhere. You couldn't take a simple walk down Main or Front Street, and not come precious nigh that door. But then, from all accounts, Solomon himself

preached better than he practiced on 'that score—provided it was really that same king, possessing seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, who also penned the gnomic thought of Proverbs. Diogenes (with or without his lantern, in or out of his tub!) defined lechery, you remember, as " the occupation of those who are destitute of other occupation." Perhaps Diogenes the Cynic, with the philosophical grim humor of a proletarian, had been made rather grouchy by the gay air of Corinth! But he would have found proof aplenty of his dictum, in the Dawson of my day.

I think it foolish to romanticize this oldest profession—old as Lilith, old as Thais. Although I have seen many so-called " daughters of joy " active and reformed, fitting later into the social order—and though I know of one who is an intelligent woman, one who is genuinely kindly—I know of many others who are mentally malformed and lack a certain very necessary balance and control. I believe this traceable to some slant or twist of early or hereditary—and hence socially removable—pressure. To know all may be to forgive all; but that doesn't mean we must admit their fitness to be social leaders in a community. Does it? " The Queens now dead who lived there young " were consorts for the time, sometimes for " keeps," to Klondike Kings of dazzling fortunes. Such ladies invoiced high per head for upkeep. Or so the Dawson rumor ran!

To be a dance-hall girl did not, of necessity, carry an erotic implication. There were some " squares " who made high winnings there, without having to pay in return the high but ever-standard wages of sin. But the " Whitechapel " or *Yoshiwara* of Dawson was openly what it purported. At one time " the girls " had worn bloomers as a uniform, but Inspector Constantine of the Mounties issued an edict against bloomers. The early Dawson houris resented his ruling and strange tales were told about the sometimes forcible means



"Now that my river flowed once more to sea, I, too, must follow"

"As May days lengthened, I became impatient."

employed to "debloomer" the protesting females! Red curtains in the window, a rosy lamp-shade, were a trade-mark in '98 and '99—as were also certain shapes of caps which no "square" woman ever wore. You'll understand now why I was unmercifully joshed for my social slip, when I so thoughtlessly bought scarlet curtains and hung them in my cabin window!

Every one in Dawson was disgusted with the mining graft, and so was I. The immorality did not disgust me, though it did sometimes move my pity by its sordidness or waste. And there was no hypocrisy, and hardly any pretence of being good by those who were not. Then, too, there was a deal of real morality of a high order to offset what was low. Witness our Father Judge. And men were "square," even when they broke some of the Ten Commandments. They were, in general, exactly what they appeared to be. On the whole, I think that they were more moral in certain important respects than are the people of more effete culture. Nobody interfered with another's business. A man could be good or bad as he pleased, so long as he did not steal or tread on another's toes. They were a grim lot, mostly, and there was much that I liked about their attitude. It was characterized by sincerity, both positive and negative. There were no hypocrites.

Generosity and courage are kindred qualities, and so it was a notably free-handed country. I knew of no mean spirits. Its humor was of various vintages—some dry and others sweet. Some humor bubbled, some slipped down more quietly. All Yukoners had humor. One couldn't help it. One couldn't exist here without the saving beverage of humor. Some was but small beer, it is true; but even that small beer had head upon it. Some was light, like the dancing wine of Rhineland; and some, like fruity port, had acquired both body and age. This ever-shared and friendly grace of humor helped most to lighten the mid-winter dark. —We had no very clear notion

here of the days, the weeks. Without my journal I'd be lost, and could not find the trail again back through it all.

One of the sad things was to see men go to pieces, in body or in spirit. I told you that women did not "go to the bad" in Dawson, unless they had already been there. I can not say the same for men, many of whom slid rapidly down hill. I knew a fellow on the early part of the Chilkoot Trail who looked and felt rather a "swell." Imagine my surprise, on reaching Dawson, to see him standing before a saloon, playing a cheap wind-instrument with might and main. He got fifteen dollars a day for this, to attract customers inside. He was no musician, but just made a noise. There were many who did the same thing. It was of course inevitable that a large proportion of the too venturous and too unprepared cheechakos, who had paid dollars by the hundred thousand to the touting steamship lines and outfitted for the North unwarily, should, after failing in the search for gold, seek means of gaining a miserable existence in some—in any—wage-paid occupation. But it was these discouraged souls who, on eventually returning to the States, painted black pictures of the North.

These dark canvasses, drawn out of bitter memory, are what have formed the general opinion of the Yukon and Alaska. Before you listen to a man's tale of the Klondike, find out whether he failed there, and if so, why. That's my unfailing motto. After I know the color of his thought, then and then only can I judge how much he had unconsciously discolored truth. Maybe he was one of those who refused to face any sort of poverty, declining any chance to try again. Maybe he was the victim, not of depression but of prosperity; for over-confidence invited its own disaster in this Cloud Cuckoo Land. Tragic error and a stalking Nemesis pervade this drama. Even to win was to fail, in some cases. A man could snuff out, here, by sudden wealth as easily as by pestilence, hooch, or lead.

I knew another, decent sort of chap, on the early trail. When I reached Dawson I found him cleaning out the spittoons in a saloon, which seemed to me about the lowest of all callings. Not so, however. This fellow too was panning gold, easily and certainly! Men drinking at the bar were constantly dropping bits of gold upon the sawdust floors of the saloons —often inadvertently, but sometimes with intent to reward this sorry man with "pickings." He knew what he was about and did well financially. Another of my early acquaintances on the trail had been a gentlemanly bank-clerk from Chicago. He said that his forebears were men of adventuresome spirit and that he had inherited their spunk. He was decidedly uppish, a flyer to the Sun. Before the river closed in '98 he left Dawson as a waiter on the boat, a broken man. Our eyes met, but he did not speak to me—ashamed of his fall from the heights, his brief Icarian dream, trampled by the hooves of the Sun-god's chariot.

Another trail companion we had met got a job running the ferry-boat across the Klondike River, and was paid an ounce a day. Just after getting over Chilkoot Pass down into the Interior country, I had a talk with a fellow passenger who had come up on the steamer with me. He was a Kentuckian and as brave as they make them—or so it seemed from our talk upon the boat. But when confronted with conditions over the Chilkoot, his manhood vanished; he was dazed, bewildered; all he wanted was to get out; and he got, taking the wreck of his fortunes back home, selling his outfit for a song. Men said, "The North has got him," for instances like that were common.

The Klondike diggings, while well spread over several creeks, never covered a vast area. Most of the really good ground was already taken up, before even the great stampede began. A few newcomers found "fool's luck." "Side Hill" Frank Berry had been the laughing stock of Dawson when

he first suggested finding gold in the Eldorado Hills, but later laughed last from behind some half dozen bench claims worth from fifty to a hundred thousand apiece. Winn Oler met an old friend in Dawson who had no claim, so he made the man a present of *Forty-three Below* on Hunker—later valued at more than a hundred thousand. But most of the late comers were forced either to work for wages or take lays on some of the least attractive claims, carrying a few cents to the pan. After a man had paid his ten per cent. due the Canadian Government, his fifty per cent. due the owner of the claim, little indeed would usually be left from the contents of the baking-powder tin—to square accounts in "Yukon dust" with the N. A. T. & T. for provisions bought at top-heavy cost and freighted to the creeks at thirty cents per pound, or to repay him for the time he's spent in hardest labor.

Miners who struck even richest pockets on the fabulous fractions of the Klondike, and took out fortunes, acquired (the most of them) that treacherous, too easy philosophy of all "good times." They thought that they could surely turn the trick again, any time they wanted to. Consequently, they spent it gloriously (ingloriously, if you prefer) and then—the inevitable morning after, with its black taste of failure and frustration. Clarence Andrews, one of the sane deep-lookers of our North, was saying just the other day, "Nearly every man who had a rich claim in the Klondike is broke now. My friend Lippy (a day-laborer on the Fortymile in '96) who took out over a million in gold, died last summer a man with embarrassments. Alec McDonald, the Klondike King (who owned *Thirty*, Eldorado, and took out one hundred thousand dollars in one month, from only forty feet of ground), went broke before he died. Tony Stander, who paid Rose her weight in gold to marry him, is a section man on the railroad to-day, I hear. And word has just come that our old friend Swiftwater Bill Gates is starting all over again, in Peru."

There were some true gentlemen here, some true ladies, judged even by the strictest standards; but the Yukon was a terrible test of character and personality. That sudden break and loss of a whole tradition, of which I have already spoken, was an inescapable phenomenon in social and personal experience. No organized group was any longer compelling us to anything; there was nothing, outside our own inner compulsion, to live up to. It was our task to build up a new ethic. The genuine pioneer has standards, decidedly. He has honor and he has virtue. He has a certain tough unformulated faith, but his standards are not the standards of home. He has evolved a new pragmatic set.

Perhaps the most execrated man in the Yukon, at one period, was an English-born gentleman of the highest professional and personal ethic—as judged by Outside standards. He was a man of education and of caste, who would prefer to die rather than break the code. Yet he did die, and probably without ever knowing how he was hated, how despised, by men whom he looked down upon as moral derelicts and crude, unethical subsouls. The tragedy was, that they condemned him—secretly and silently—because he constantly broke *their* moral code. They never knew his code, he never knew theirs, in spite of years of living in the North. For he was one of those who never learned.

His crime was simple: *He left no kindling.* You who have lived in the land, you who have trusted the trails, know that it is the basic and fundamental Law of the Yukon—as basic as that caches are inviolable—that a man may occupy any cabin he comes to, use the fire-wood and the stove and dishes in it, as well as food found there if he has none of his own; but upon leaving he MUST cut and split and fray at end for easy lighting, a generous bundle of kindling to be left piled close beside the stove. Otherwise, some cold half-frozen musher on the trail may some black day come staggering in, fingers

and feet numb and hard with frost, and easy kindling may mean the essential difference between life and death. Our English friend, though counted a veritable saint among his own people, was cursed and bedamned by countless suffering sourdoughs who followed in his trace along far trails. He left no kindling, and so to them he was a breaker of the decalogue, a sinner against the cold hard code of the inexorable North. They hated him.

—It was a pleasant, an enriching experience, my winter spent in Dawson. I learned to see behind the curtain of the dark, a human little. I learned the *a-b-c* of a new code, closer to earth and to reality. I learned the all-embracing fellowship of "those who know the trail"—not merely a bond but a benison, and a distinction so accounted. I learned to know that hardships are only as you take them. Here, any real deprivations were shared by every one, and so became no deprivations.

The harder the knock, the greater was the resilience of resistance. Your true Sourdough is a Great-heart: hears a singing even in the Valley of Humiliation. And it was something of a satisfaction, too, living in a town where alertness is a common virtue and friendliness exists without undue inquisitiveness. The rigor of a Northern winter broadens the mind and deepens the sympathies of men. There is a phrase from the impressive Arctic Brotherhood Obligation which, having heard, one does not soon forget: "If a brother falls, gently lift him up; if he fails, imbue him with fortitude." Here, where the Arctic rainbow ends, the milk of human kindness is less rigidly congealed. One came to learn of many gustatory values beyond the momentary tickle of the palate, to realize that straightforward coarseness may often be sweeter and decenter than a smug self-conscious Latinism of evasion. If face to face with blatant vulgarities, auroral flame of naughty verbiage, one could either sew on decent verbal fig-leaves for himself

or remember with a smile that hurdy-gurdies rintle still in Soho!

So we became experienced in mankind, with human vice and virtue hand in glove. Negative ethic did not flourish north of fifty-four. Creative ethic seeded in this soil, in strange new combinations and new growths. During one of our evening chess-games that winter I was told of a claim on Bonanza that was being worked by a curious assortment of partners. A Salvation Army man took the trick down in the hole, a muscular ex-missionary cranked the windlass, an archdeacon of the Church of England pontifically swished the rocker, while a former faro-dealer continued to improve his manual dexterity by flipping skilfully the morning flapjacks in the rôle of cook! I walked home through the glory of Aurora-lighted night, pondering what strange new social agents were reacting here. Negatives and prohibitions were not.

I had gone North with one sole purpose: To follow my great River from source to ending, listen to all it had to tell. When Winter poised the Yukon here, I was content to winter too and learn new lessons from the Dark and Cold and Stillness. With my great River I had lived shut in by ice, yet known a constant underflow of lively interest and continuing.

Now that my River flowed once more to sea, I too must follow. As May days lengthened, I became impatient to be away with it; no longer winter-bound, to journey onward with my peripatetic River. Dawson held much of friendly interest but Dawson could not be, had never been, my mistress. The bawdy and robustious Dawson was but an incident in the life of my great River. The Yukon was my master and once again the Yukon hurried on his westward way. I must be quick to follow, River and I, together.

III

River and I

The Craft of Buddha

CAN not tell how often, during that now past winter in Dawson, friends both new and old had tried hard to dissuade me from my proposed trip, alone, the further length of my River. Several—a dozen or a score, I think—had volunteered to go along with me.

One of these was a woman, who offered to do all my cooking and washing! This might sound like a highly unconventional or leap-year proposition, to any one who did not know the North. But you and I both know that woman prospectors did, and still do, often go upon long journeys with men prospectors, sharing the work and the expenses and exposures equally; and we also know that such arrangements are seldom, if ever, misunderstood by genuine sourdoughs. I could name, and you could too, a dozen women—grizzled or no—who have participated in such journeys, often of weeks or months duration, and remain highly respected and respectable leaders of their northern communities.

If I put the temptation of companionship away from me, I am frank to confess that it was truly because companionship was no very real temptation on this projected journey. Against my will, my first six hundred miles of Yukon had been taken in company with many thousand other trail mates. My plan had been to navigate the Yukon alone. My former tried true partners, the Prince boys, having left the country, I wished to form no other partnership but to complete my journey—if I could—unaided.

There were a dozen motives leading up to this decision;

and while most of them would have sounded silly to my Dawson friends, they were yet very real to me. Perhaps the first was that I felt, and strongly, a very genuine need of being quite alone after my "social" winter in Dawson. By May, my journal shows I was escaping from my cabin whenever possible, to avoid the "streams of Sunday callers." People began to pall. I had come North to find myself; but in the more than year I'd been here, I'd known few days, if any, of aloneness. I had left all behind, wishing to explore in the unknown for what I dreamed was somewhere there. The few short glimpses I had caught behind the curtain of the North heightened more keenly my desire for isolation, secured somehow—by barrier if necessary—that I might enter further within the true significances and full freedom of that taunting, eremitical solitude lying so alluringly—so silently and flowingly—so close beyond the hurry-scurry bustle of that near-arctic town.

I had fallen completely under the spell of the Yukon. I felt a thirst to know and understand it further, to give my soul more elbow-room, burst out from windows and from doors. Completely myself, entirely alone, moved by a large and liberal discontent, I wished—I truly and I deeply needed, and I sought—to cultivate intensively my own strict acre, to dig the moat of solitude about my own lone fastness; test and explore my sole resources there.

Some men are brilliant at the net but play an unsound base-line game. Although technically I now was a sourdough, having wintered in Dawson and "seen the ice come and go," I knew that I hadn't even yet met the real test of the strong of heart. I had learned just enough, by then, to know that the real meaning of that curious and loved word "sourdough" was not expressed in the extensity of months or even years a man spent in the North, but rather through intensity of individual backlash—perhaps to some one, great, acutely scored

experience. This last year I had sometimes looked on faces of real men who had been marked forever as true sourdoughs, not by their length of sojourn here but by the living memory of some heightened moment, which ever after whet their spirit's temper to a more poignant edge. I wished forever to escape the tenderfoot stage, by being thrown completely on my own resources. There was something that yet needed proof—proof to no other man alive, but to myself. The sliding of some subterranean plane of thought, which I could only dimly guess, had changed my landscape of a sudden from peace to chaos. Faults geologic cause displacements of the outer surface, those crust slips we call earthquakes. Some "fault" in me, some dislocation of a vein which breaks the continuity, had caused my surface life to slip from peaceful to the insecure. I must find out the hidden angle of that geologic fault, and when I found it build my house of life upon a firmer ground.

I had been soul-sick, in my remembrance of resorts in Europe I had known, the discontents of Deauville in the season's height, or any other favorite haunt of the *Monde où l'on s'amuse.* There's the real stamping-ground of Discontent. It frowns at you from furrowed faces under brilliant lamps, it stares at you in strained and tightened demi-starving countenances from every passing glorious equipage. All that had once got hold on me. Now I was in a mood—a stern mood if you will, a mood of blackened doubt—to let the other half of life get hold of me completely, really get hold of me, and give the realler and more natural way a chance. London sparrows twitter among the chimney-pots of Kensington. But who would be a sparrow? A crowd of sparrows may be very jolly, but who could ever associate sparrows with ecstasy? Not I.

The inane and the colorless pastimes of the majority of people I had seen in America betrayed, so I thought, minds clouded as an overexposed film. The average American, I

mean, who reads but one book a year and eats ten dollars' worth of candy while doing it! Few saw "culture" as something growing from a verb "to dig": something digged deep within one's native seeded soil, worked for, tilled, developed, strengthened, improved, refined—outgrowth and not veneer. Few saw the correlation between culture and roots, ploughed ground and ancient landmarks. I felt a need to rediscover such real culture, deep within myself; and a great river—the very symbol of that power to combine change with continuity, which one who's science-trained must know to be the secret of a living growth—seemed the appropriate companion in such search.

I read a book not long ago called *A Short Introduction to Human Stupidity.* It ran to some two hundred and fifty thousand words and ended with the sentence: "We are now ready to *begin* the history of human stupidity." The author's thesis was that the progress of civilization is increasing the relative stupidity of mankind because modern life grows complex much more swiftly than human beings can enlarge, broaden, and deepen their sensitivities. The endless impact of new sensation induces a mental numbness and fatigue, abrogates judgment, sterilizes the delicate tender seeds of reflection.

Then there is Zuckerman, anatomist of the London Zoölogical Society, who having studied the close structural resemblance of the monkey to man, has some very interesting comments on the social life of monkeys and of apes. He holds that the impulse which moves the primates in their relations with one another is purely egoistic, generated either by the reproductive urge or flowing from a lust for dominance. "Subhuman primates have no real apprehension of the social situations of which they themselves form part." The impulse which induces apes to social organization is based on no rational concept of mutual aid; for by Dr. Zuckerman's evidence they are quite unable to reason.

Multitudes of human beings, many forms of human society,

had come to seem to me like apes from that London Zoo. I was beginning to think that " civilization " had made a monkey out of me—as if my whole vocation were endless imitation—and that's not a good feeling! There was a sedulous-ape—an imitative-monkey—trait fostered in any city, any crowd. Shaving every morning and dressing up to look as beautiful as possible—because that was expected and the uniform or badge of social class distinction; being spotless neat—upon the surface; letting bluecoat policemen fight your battles; having your food prepared for you; and being babied constantly in one way or other all the day—it sickened me. Dante complained the steepness of other men's stairs. I felt a crying need to lose, for a time, other men's everything—stairs, food, fashions, conventions, phrases, outlook, even thought—and to escape completely from this stupid dolled-up life and find what the least common denominator really stood for in value, a quantum of certainty. I was sick of pestilential imitation, of stuffy, sloppy, sleazy thinking, the glib speech of habit consisting solely of loose conclusions. A man should be able to care for himself, to think for himself, in toto.

My Dawson friends pointed out how easy it would be to board one of the many steamboats going down-stream, and without any discomfort (except, at that season, a good deal of possible crowding) arrive safely at St. Michael within the week. Mosquitoes too, they said, were rampant on the river at this season; but in the high built and swift steamers going down-stream I'd not even notice these pests, whereas in a small boat and drifting lazily with the current, mosquitoes might prove a great nuisance. But the menace of human congestion was the very thing I wished most to escape. Then, too, I wished and hoped to make acquaintance of the Natives of the land through which I passed, stopping as long as I pleased whenever anything interested me. The Yukon Indians were a real part of my River. They knew it and had lived

upon it and from it, in adaptation to its seasonal change, for centuries. I must make friends with these, if my River were to speak truly with me. No chugging steamer could do that for me. I must be foot-free.

My Dawson friends said that the voyage alone was dangerous, very. They pointed out a thousand possible chances of disaster, to one man in a boat alone. Snags, quicksands, falling banks, lost channels, accidents by wind or water, sickness, hostile or thieving Natives, criminally minded Whites who might covet my outfit and quietly remove its owner, unseen and undetected. They quoted precedent, name, date, and place for each of these categories of disaster; and I listened—quite patiently and gratefully, but quite unconvinced.

I knew that the world would not miss me, if I were proved unable to endure the hardships or the accidents of my long journey. There was no one in Dawson, then, to whom I could confess the whole and actual truth. If Father Judge had lived, perhaps I could have told him; and I know he would have understood completely, as man to man, and hidden my confession deep in the arcana of his priestly mind. Perhaps I was too young then even to express it. Perhaps I can't express it even now. But Father Judge, accustomed to a faltering confessional, would have diagnosed from my blur of discontentment that I was soul-sick from disease of stress as well as of contagion, and seeking an essential salvation of an important kind. He alone, of all in Dawson, could have understood that old cry of the human spirit for harmonious integration. Maybe he would have quoted Marcus Aurelius to me! He sometimes did. "No where either with more quiet or more freedom from trouble does a man retire, than into his own soul. . . . . Constantly, then, give to thyself this retreat, and renew thyself. . . . Live as on a mountain."

Or perhaps he would have warned me that I had been paying too exclusive attention to the physical and biological sci-

ences. One part of me had not been fully fed. So I was making now an almost desperate and a free-willed effort to take myself in hand, from out the mores and the compromises of my time and place where custom lay upon me with a weight, and do my best to shape myself into a being whom I could respect. I wished to get acquainted with myself. A companion, no matter how congenial, would render that impossible. The River would be company enough. And—though I did not realize this then—I had to go alone, if for no other reason than because I feared I was afraid to tackle it alone. A confidence that goes does not leave emptiness, but fear; and yet, it isn't fear itself that eats the marrow of the spine of men—it is the fear of fear. If that dull pressure of mistrustfulness begins to weigh against the spirit, I know but one sure cure and that is Danton's ever-timely shibboleth—*Toujours de l'audace.*

I knew, of course, that a man's whole physical and mental make-up taken all together, his inborn trends, must be considered as component aspects of an illness, in contemplating cure. Those inborn trends play no small part in any clinical picture, in any comprehensive diagnosis. Syndrome—that name we doctors give to the complete picture, all the symptoms—is essential. I had begun to realize, though dimly, that some of my impressions of early childhood and something hauntive from that first environment were having somehow a tremendous amount to do with the after conduct of life and with my dis-ease in general, although I hadn't yet had time or opportunity to think this out. The labyrinthine house of Freud and Neo-Freudians had not been built in 1899; but any sensible physician knows that sometimes it is only needful to explain an illness, for the patient to be on the road, at least, to cure himself. Restore perspective and health will follow.

My childhood pictures had been painted in quite different pigments from the memory books of most American young-

sters. They may even seem to be fantastic colors, but they were deep realities to me. My first remembrance is from Agra, that fairy-book city of the fabulous Emperors where Baber once had snatched the Kohinoor in loot; where lay in very ancient times the trade-post and the farthest frontier fortress of the conquering Aryan, in that outer plain between the Ganges and the Jumna. It was the highway for the traffic from the rich Bengal delta into the very heart of India; and here, when Charles the Second ruled precariously in England, Baber's tremendous grandson Akbar built a great fort, against freebooting highlanders. It was an old, rich, strangely watered soil for any child to grow in, plowed deep with fear yet shone upon by an unearthly beauty.

The picture I recall best is a child crying his small heart out, because the family rode away upon an elephant and I was thought too little to share in that adventure—though I had a little donkey of my own, which I well remember, before I was five. Excursions later in dak gharries, those comfortable travel-carts of India, were times of joy. So, too, was a journey down the Ganges in a boat. My ayah and my body-servant both saw to it that I was put in mortal terror of tigers, bears, and wolves! For many years, even after I was quite a big boy attending school in this country, I know I never went to bed without first looking under it for a tiger; and monstrous bears continually trailed me, as I went up-stairs in the dark.

The only way I'd ever found to make that black bear disappear, was to turn around and face him. Then he was gone. The only way to know the tiger wasn't hiding there, was actually to crawl down underneath the bed, and feel for him—even though every fiber of you winced and your fingers were clammy cold. Perhaps that's why I chose to leave Dawson on July 13, just to snap my tiger on the nose. But on June 13 of the year preceding, I had shot the White Horse safely, you remember; so an "unlucky" thirteen had no very real sig-

nificance in my calendar, although it struck real terror to the hearts of some of my dissuading Dawson acquaintances and they did their level best to delay me.

I had deliberately chosen the best setting-out time, taking all factors into due consideration and weighing all the evidence that friendly folk had lavished on me all that winter. It was supposed to be eighteen hundred miles from Dawson to St. Michael's Island, and I expected to be about forty days on the trip. It took me forty-seven, actually—days full of hard work, plenty enough of interest, and at times more than a plentiful excitement. Even with a single companion, I could have made far better time—if time had been desideratum—since one man could have navigated while the other slept. Perhaps with a companion's help I should not have been lost on Bering Sea. But, with a companion, the River never would have spoken to me, nor would a certain garden gate of memory have opened.

I told you how, on the approach of the preceding winter, the Prince boys and I had broken up our home-made, Bennett boats for house-building material. So for this trip I bought another, and selected it with very great care. Searching the Dawson water-front in days of inquiry, I found an admirable craft, constructed by two sailors in a most workmanlike and shipshape manner. She was a lapstreak, clinker-built of California redwood, twenty-two feet long, five feet wide, flat-bottomed, decked over in the bow, and with a roomy locker in the stern. There was a fine sail with three reefs, made in the States; and in all ways she was perfectly adapted for my trip, although perhaps rather too large for one man to handle well or easily alone, should serious obstacle be met. In the stern, after laying two empty oil-cans for a base, I set up my sheet-iron Yukon stove, two and a half feet long and carrying six feet of easily removable stovepipe. I had plenty of blankets for bedding and a large wolfskin robe, seven feet by eight, in

which I could roll myself luxuriously. These I spread in the bottom of the boat when I slept. The larder consisted of flour, beans, desiccated potatoes, evaporated eggs, sugar, oatmeal, abundance of tea and coffee for trading with the Indians, canned meat, condensed milk, butter, macaroni, dried fruits, bacon, rice, and some trifling goods for barter and for presents.

Dawson had celebrated the shortest " night " (the sun wasn't down an hour, and just below the northern hills, so all was brilliant) by a grand opening of the *Opera House Theater.* The *Seattle Market, Hales and Vroom, Proprietors,* was now doing business at its new Second Avenue location, with a full stock of fresh meats. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Finch, of *Eighty-nine Below* on Bonanza, were the happy parents of a lusty heir, born one recent Sunday morning. Dawson was beginning another season, with increased facilities and comforts, and these and other various and many civilized doings. If I didn't leave pretty soon, I might quite as well be back in Washington, I thought, so far as pioneering hardships went or any life lived close to earth and sky again, which I so craved.

My friends gave me a good send-off, that July thirteenth. They thought that I was doing a rash thing, for this is not and never was a one-man country. I told them again that I had planned for nearly three years to make this journey, alone; but they protested, up to the last moment of my going. In the North, your friends are real. They truly think of you. Mine semiseriously pronounced grave sonorous obituaries over my watery corpse, consigning me to Davy Jones, his locker! They made unflattering remarks about there being no accounting for tastes—to which I answered that taste-blindness in the many is a fact (as Yale experiments have since shown) just as some are color-blind and some have no ear at all for music, being tonal deaf. I too turned semiserious and added that, alas, the individual knows at best extraordinary loneliness, his knowledge of the world confined to the scant observations of

his own five senses. "*De gustibus*"? Why, of all sensations, those of the palate remain forever the most hopelessly uncommunicable. Do you really know how beans or biscuit actually taste, even to your best friend? He may have learned to read your very thoughts, but no amount of words will ever tell him how to truly feel with you your tastes. And so, concerning tastes there's truly no disputing, because there is no common ground for ever meeting.

—I cast off, leaving my good friends of Dawson still prognosticating dire disaster, still carping on my queer outrageous taste in choosing what was, if not dangerous, then surely bound to be full of discomfort. There's no use fibbing—the next forty-seven days were full enough of many of those predicted discomforts, as well as of occasional danger. Yet the hard times of a man's life, dangers overcome, are those which he reverts to in the memory years. Who ever heard two hardened yachtsmen get together and tell, with gusto, yarns about their simple, easy runs—boast about balmy breezes, or rave about glass seas? Indeed no. All you will overhear when yachtsmen meet are things which, to the uninitiated, sound very like most unadulterate discomfort.

Any human who has shared deeply in any true sport will know exactly what I mean. There's a fair amount of discomfort which is an integral part of true sport, but it's no "martyr complex" which turns true men to that pursuit. Far from it. The best of sportsmen relish comfort as much as, or perhaps more than, other folk; but by that selfsame, or another, token are more willing to pay in discomfort for something which they feel more valuable, and to be got no other way. My fakir of old India might not be called a sportsman in the modern sense, but surely he would have the same idea: Pearls must be paid for. Wasn't it Spinoza—in many ways the deepest speculator of his age—who remarked that "all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare"?

In trying to defend my strange, alone, Quixotic journey, I'm going back to India and to childhood once again, you see—as we must all do for those deepest tap-roots of decision. And what is conduct but a test of motive? Starched white linen and a surgeon's expensive kit had not proved satisfying, to something in me that was weaned in India. I had specialized in both work and thought, following the convention, the fetish, the decorum of my day, in emulous pursuit. Now, searched by fear and hope, I was not sure. Leibnitz was fond of using the word psittacism (shaped from the Latin word for parrot) to describe that parrot-like mental condition in which so many of us find ourselves confusedly wandering at middle age—without reflective consciousness, without understanding. Perhaps, as Emerson had once suggested, the individual, to possess himself, must sometimes unspecialize himself, or else remain " the parrot of other men's thinking."

Lord Buddha, the Gotama, was a prince, a prince of India—one who in deepest contemplation underneath the pippul-tree conceived a new way of salvation. And he loved comfort, he knew comfort well—comfort extended into princely luxury. But Buddha (it's a Sanskrit word, you know, meaning " the wise " or " the enlightened ") truly fulfilled his given name Siddhartha (" he who has gained his end ") by slipping from those silver chains of comfort. We all must somehow pay, I realized, and in discomfort, for anything that becomes really worth while to us. It's merely animal to seek for comfort as of primary value. Yes?

Even in the very midst of so-called civilization, men can refresh themselves and get fresh hold and start by doing, for pleasure or for spiritual profit, just those same very simple things our forebears did because they had to. If most of our ancestors' luxuries have become physical necessities, to-day, perhaps their stern necessities are needed for our spiritual comfort! At noonday I'd forgotten morning, and now I must turn

back. A small boat, a river, an open land, unknown adventure, or perhaps unfriendly Natives—these are but tools to push back centuries, to break past barriers of a tight industrial age of overspecializing work for humans, to find a something lost and a something deeply needed, something we have forgotten in our hurry and our herding. I'd crack the gentleman and find the man, perhaps, in an environment the more serene and wholesome for both the toiling hand and soaring spirit.

At any rate—if a man finds words as difficult as I do, in telling of the pleasures of that voyage, its real enjoyment, he will fall back upon discomfort for the very proof of that enjoyment. A paradox? No, only simple logic. If I shall tell you of a night spent drifting, lost, upon a gray and nearly arctic sea, in a small boat, with broken gear—of days and nights wind-wet and teeth achatter on the Lower River, worn by the ceaseless noise of whipping cordage, shaken throughout the watches like a pea in a rattle—it's just another way of telling you how beautiful, how satisfying, how completely successful was my journey. Though one disliked it thoroughly, discomfort's self in retrospect becomes transmuted into the very foison of mnemonic treasure, impossible to distinguish any longer from the treasure's self.

I have not one regret, now, that I went. I saved my face, in my own estimation, and got from the experience a priceless self-respect which meant more to me, much more, than lakhs of rupees or the Klondike's gold. I didn't much care what the others thought. I never felt a real man till I got my rebirth in the North. It made me over and a better dream was fashioned from that broken fabric. The solitary journey was a revelation, and my whole life has since been tinctured by it.

I fancy that the Lord God uses smelly smacks and cubby-holes of cockpits more often than down cushions for His class-room furniture. Discomfort? Fiddlesticks. If you want

cushions, stay there with my friends in Dawson and wave good-bye to me as I drop down-stream. I'm after figs once more from Buddha's pippul-tree, and I am searching for them in a boat. Let's go!

Spitting Eagle

MY River flows continuously through mountains from its steep source to a distance beyond the international boundary; so that upon leaving Dawson that July thirteenth, I merely picked up in my hand again the same clue we had raveled on the Upper Yukon the preceding summer, at first a same and strikingly familiar story. But it was good to get a boat once more beneath my feet!

I passed some Indian fish-camps, but the first "White" village on my journey was Fortymile City, in which I took a more than casual interest because of Father Judge's winters there. At first, when I came North, I used to smile at that term "city," as applied to the little groups of low log cabins such as this: eighty or ninety of them possibly, set on a mud bank, low on marshy ground, the space between all wood chips, tin cans, tree stumps. "City," indeed! Yet when I learned from Ogilvie the reason for the designation city, I too began to use the term—Dawson City, Circle City, *und so weiter* —to avoid confusion.

I found that each one of these northern towns had grown up as the center and supply-depot for a *district,* a mining or a fur-catch district, usually including the whole drainage of a river or a group of creeks. The town had no significance, no substance, except in its relation to the district which it served—no life aside from the produce of that district. It is the district which comes first in sourdough minds. The town might be anywhere, or anything. The name belongs, then, to the district; but if the town bears the same name, then "city" must be added to distinguish it, the lesser, from the greater. The

term city is thus neither an ironic thrust of incongruity, nor yet a blatant striving for effect, but—sometimes rather pitifully—*memento mori.* " Fortymile City " is as good as saying: " I mean the little, temporary, man-made place—not the whole river-district of that name, with pups and tributaries, which will remain long after this poor city has sunk into the soft tundras, or been cut from under by the jealous, rolling river." Frontiersmen have the feeling that the land itself is stronger than, and is superior to, any work of man. City, in miners' parlance, is a frankly brief, ephemeral word in meaning. There may be local pride in " city," but it is the pride of tinsel passing glory, the pride you have in a gay trimmed-up Christmas tree. Camps great to-day will be but empty shells to-morrow.

Not long after I had dropped down-stream away from " Dawson City," thousands of other men were doing the same thing, swarming the river boats like flocks of blackbirds headed for fresh gold-fields and new strikes. I had seen Dawson City in its palmiest day, its high tide both of popularity and population. That summer of '99 it was to be depopulated almost as fast as swarming thousands had poured in the year before—as soon as ever proved accounts of the Nome gold discoveries worked up-stream. The high tide of the Klondike gold production, too, came the next year, and after that a steady falling off. In 1897, the first year of real Klondike work, two million and a half was taken out. In '98, this jumped to ten; in '99, it was sixteen; in 1900, the great total was over twenty-two million dollars in gold. But 1901 had dropped to seventeen, and after that the curve ran downward steadily. Much of the glory of gay Dawson had already departed, though she serenely did not know it. Nor did I on parting from her, or the leave-taking might have been more sad.

Dawson had been my first " gold-city " ; and on closing books and leaving, as I dropped away and Dawson ways and

days fell into memory of perspective, I felt relief and greater freedom and a gladness. Dawson City wasn't rainbow's end. It had been full to overflow of men who were hard after gold. Some of them found a little, some found a good deal; but all of them soon lost whatever they had found and, if too ardent in pursuit of gold, its loss must mean despair. Nor had I noted any very real satisfaction among those kings of Klondike, even in their very gold attainment. If all the emphasis be put on gold, and (even in the Klondike) gold here fails you—what then is left to live for in the arid hour? It's bitter to give gold for brass, and wake with tarnish only on your cheated fingers.

Not long ago, sixteen tired old men I once had known were sitting on iron bunks at the King County Poor Farm, paupers on Seattle's charity, waiting for the end. They were playing poker—as they so often used to do in the golden days of Dawson—but with burnt match stumps for their chips, to-day. They were " so broke," as one of them remarked, " that buyin' a paper is as serious a proposition as investin' in a ticket for a world cruise used-to-was! " Every man of those sixteen had been a prospering Klondiker in the summer of 1898, " going down to the Haunted Valley, light-hearted pioneers."

I too, to-day, am a man brooding, fingering burnt ends of matches, raking the embers of that past, recontemplating days of quiet adventure, revaluing what sooth and sourdough gold I found there—a treasure unexpendable, which can not slip through careless fingers into loss. That's why I dream and dally so, am slow in reaching Fortymile City. As the River caught my shallop craft of Buddha in his strong-muscled current and began to bear me on, sure in his drawing to the unseen distant sea, I was a glad man to commit my soul to something so much stronger than myself and so much more assured in reaching toward its goal, after the overvaluations and false emphases of Dawson. The moment I set sail again

upon my River, and alone, the thoughts and the events of the past year began to ferment in my brainpan like the sour dough from a miner's crock: Yeast, living culture ever active, ever working, ever increasing, capable of infinite progression and renewal—sour-dough yeast, lifting the heavy mass to something palatable and life-giving. Unwittingly, I thought, the pioneer expressed his spiritual faith in words, even when his tired feet sought the more material trails. For his most precious package, even more than gold, would always be that sour-dough pot of yeast, a symbol of renewal and of life. And no man called himself "gold-seeker," when he would boast; but "Sourdough" was the term of pride, for true old-timers. They knew that any fool could find mere gold. To be true Sourdough was distinction.

But let's get under weigh again and stop a while at Fortymile, only fifty miles from Dawson but full of memories of old days and true pioneers in mining. The Yukon wanders and it twists. Sometimes you can not see the way ahead, but only folds of supertowering hills through which no course appears. And yet, the River patiently has found that way, through centuries of trial and error. One learns to follow, leisurely, in faith.

Father Judge told me that old Fortymile City as he knew it was very much like a far-western mining camp of frontier days, with Indians, bears, wolves, moose, deer all around. The town I found agreed with his description, composed of about two hundred low log cabins, a few of the stores two or three stories high. Warehouses on the Yukon had to be rather large, as the transportation and trading companies had to store, in two or three months at most of open river use, all the whole district would need for a whole year. So their storehouses were by necessity much more sizable than the same volume of business would require in the States, where all-year-round transportation is possible.

Many of the cabins at Fortymile City seemed remarkably comfortable. If a woman were about, then the walls would be brightly calico or paper covered, the floors carpeted, and sometimes there were even lace curtains at the windows, pictures upon the walls. The ordinary miner's cabin knew no such trimmings. Father Judge often commented that a great part of the miners he found there in '95—before the Klondike strike—seemed to be men who had been running away from civilization as it advanced westward in the States, until here they had no further place to go. Having found the last frontier, they had stopped moving. He told of one man who, although born in the States, had never seen a railroad because he had kept pushing on ahead of railroad building until he got here! And Fortymile is doubly a frontier, for the international boundary crosses the stream twenty-odd miles above its mouth.

Fortymile had been Father Judge's first mining camp, and the amount of work men did to find a little gold greatly impressed him. He spoke of it frequently. "Although in '96 the camp panned half a million in dust, yet the greater number only made a living even then," he would insist. "And what an astonishing amount of work they did, in that mere hope of finding gold! Very often, after sinking their deep holes, they discovered nothing. If men would only work for the Kingdom of Heaven with just a little of that same wonderful energy, how many saints we might have upon the Yukon!"

Ogilvie had told me that up to 1887, I think it was, all mining done in the Territory was on bars and banks of streams, where the ground was water-thawed or sun-thawed by Nature. Most of this was known as "skim diggings"; that is, only two to four feet of the surface was worked. Below that depth, in the majority of cases here, too much water flowed in and so prevented profitable working on the bars; while on the banks,

frost would be met before the work extended far. One of Ogilvie's chief claims to distinction was that he, so he said, "invented" or at least suggested a new method (employed later in the Klondike, as well as at Nome and other gold-camps) of working claims to bed-rock by burning. This was a matter of great argument in Dawson, a truly "burning question," to quote one of Ogilvie's own puns! He said he got the idea in Ottawa, where he had watched men thaw the streets in winter to get down to fix defective gas and water mains, and he suggested it and tried it in the Fortymile country. Others in Dawson claimed that the notorious Skookum Jim had put down the first "burnt hole" in this region, and that the old-time white miners had ridiculed him at first and called the method "a lazy Siwash trick"—until they saw its benefits. Others, and among them the son of old Captain Billy Moore, say that a bar miner first thawed by heat for gold.

No matter who invented it, the scheme proved profitable. You could burn a hole like a well through twenty, thirty, or even forty feet of frozen sand, clay, or gravel. Some miners did this on bar gravels, uncovered by very low water in winter. But to sink these holes (as I had learned in my one mining venture on the Stewart) one has to cut large quantities of wood, make a big fire every evening, and next morning clear out all that is thawed. It's work. Alec McDonald said that a fire banked twenty-five feet in length and two and a half feet high, required half a cord of wood and would thaw only five cubic yards of gravel.

On July eighteenth at six-fifteen p. m. (you see, it was quite an occasion and so I noted it carefully in the journal!) I crossed the one hundred and forty-first meridian which divides Canada from U. S. A.—Yukon Territory from Alaska. I celebrated that truly glorious event by firing a salvo of six shots from my Colt's double-action repeater, though no one but myself could hear. It was a boyish bubble of patriotism, sheer

excess of spirits. It is not rational, I know, and yet it is instinctive for a man to call his *own* " God's country " ; and I was surely glad to be *home!* There's nothing wrong about a man's clean pride in his citizenship. —" *Civis Romanus sum!* "

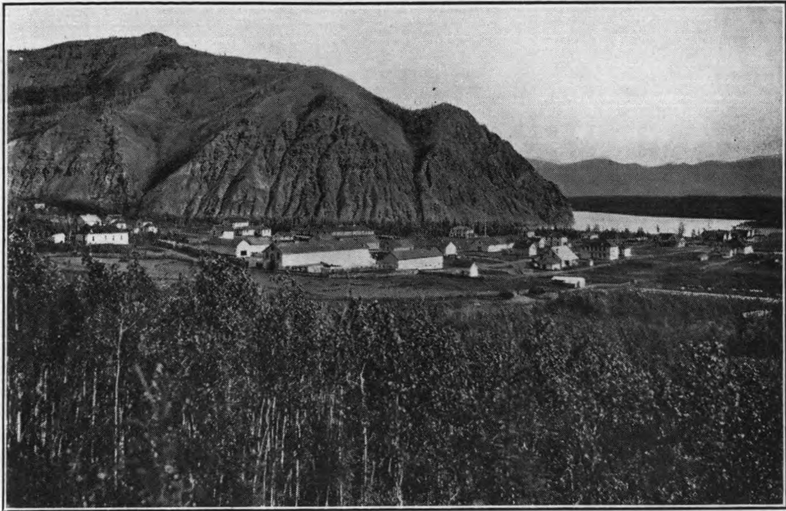
Ogilvie had marked the one hundred and forty-first meridian by an opening about fifteen feet broad, cut due north and south through the forest on either side of the river, to the tops of the surrounding hills. If his line had happened to fall four or five hundred yards farther west, it would have been prominently and naturally indicated by a strikingly symmetrical nipple-like spur. Shortly before this crossing, I had visited the North American Transportation and Trading Company's coal mine, where they were taking out a lignite. The coal was thoroughly impregnated with mineralized resin of a sort, giving the appearance of veins and lumps of amber. What had been mined, and stood exposed during the winter, was crumbled by the frost into countless fragments and clefts.

Soon after my six-shooter celebration of spread-eagle patriotism, I arrived at Eagle City, where the U. S. Customs official boarded my boat and honored me by expectorating therein—when by merely turning his head the whole river was at his disposal for a cuspidor! This, after the stiff courtesies and formalities of the R. N. W. M. P. to which I had been accustomed for a year, rather dampened my patriotic ardor, I am free to admit. In those days, Easterners were bad enough about the horribly prevalent custom of spitting here, there, and everywhere; but as one traveled west, one found the habit growing worse and worse until in Alaska it became a prominent part of the etiquette. Some of the old-timers were especially proud of their spitting marksmanship, and would spend hours trying how near they could hit the oven latch of a Yukon stove. Seemingly it was considered a mark of friendship and of cordiality to spit in and on one's habitation,

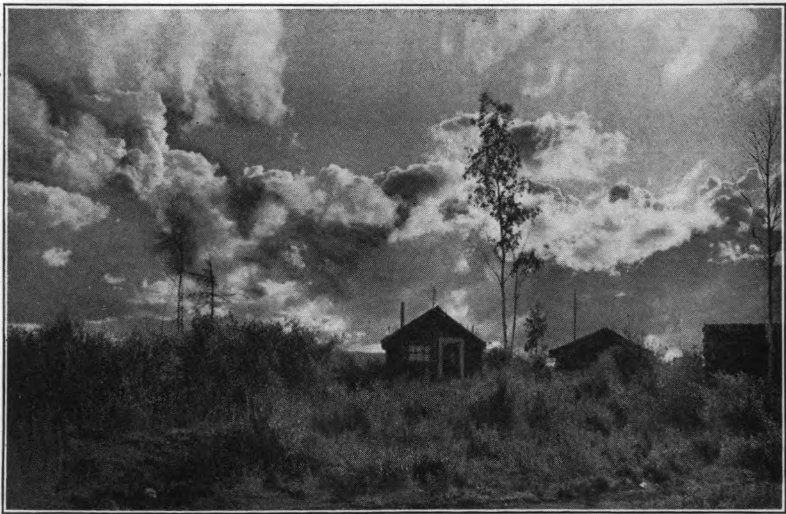
whether cabin, tent, or boat. "Come aboard and spit on me," might well have been painted on a shingle and nailed to my boat's mast, for that's what happened!

Unless the man were a customs inspector, such as this fellow (with whom I did not care to argue) or, as in one Dawson case I remember, a patient paying a large bill—a testy fellow with a cut-water nose, who had a pepper-pot of temper, and I needed the money—usually I would point out, with as much suavity and grace as I could muster, that I lived here and had to walk, sometimes barefoot, on the floor, and would prefer to keep it clean and as sanitary as possible. Being a doctor, I would explain, I was perhaps over fussy; but rather nasty and dangerous germs were often spread that way, as I happened to know, and my own health and the health of the community were both very precious things to me. This little speech was always taken in good part; but invariably my expectorant caller expressed the deepest surprise, even shock, that any one could on any grounds object to mere saliva or tobacco juice! Since many to whom I made this suggestion, in Dawson and elsewhere, became good friends of mine later, evidently they bore me no ill will but probably set me down merely for one of those cranks from the East, with the East's well-known crazy notions.

Eagle City at the mouth of Mission Creek was a considerable collection of comfortable log cabins. The population was not large. The town had been laid off by some miners in 1898 but there was an older and established Government fort or cantonment nearby where thirty U. S. soldiers were garrisoned, then under the command of Captain Richardson. It was he who later surveyed the Richardson Highway in Alaska, and during the World War was identified with the Archangel adventure where his early northern experience no doubt stood him on good stead. As a mining town, Eagle City had not been a great success, though I was told there was a highly

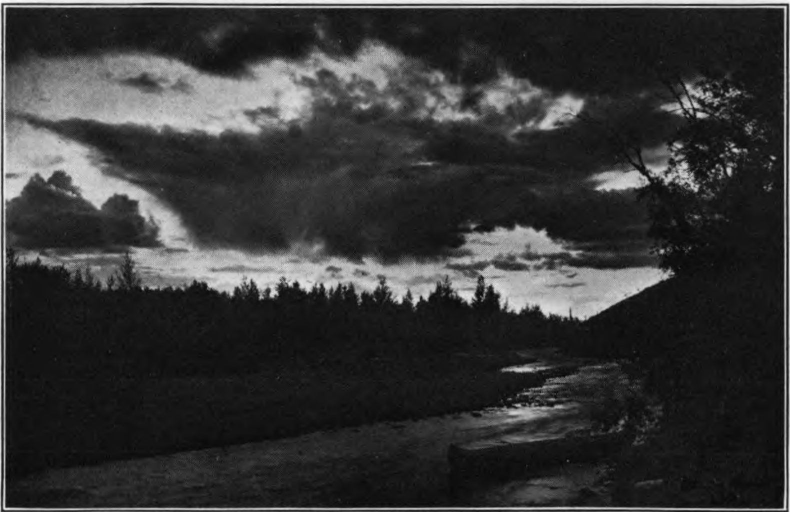


"The military post adjoining the town was called Fort Egbert"



"The painted sky-land of our American Eagle."

"The older houses wore flower gardens on their tops."



"The day's work done, a good westing made."

mineralized section lying to the south of it; but for beauty of location and suitability of town site, it far surpasses Dawson, *in my estimation—or for that matter, any other village along* the Yukon. To one who came direct from Dawson, the largest log-cabin town in the world, all other settlements upon the Yukon seemed naturally quite provincial.

The military post adjoining the town was called Fort Egbert, and both here and on the N. A. T. & T. Co.'s post the American flag was kept religiously flying night and day—for daylight ran the clock round in this section. Steamboat-loads of Americans coming down from Dawson caught sight of these fluttering flags above the tree tops of the river bends, and set up rousing cheers that rang in reverberating echoes through the still hills and across the roll of water. The man at the post-office in the N. A. T. & T. store said that one ex-Dawsonite came in and asked for an American stamp. "I haven't sent my wife a letter with an American stamp for three years. Gosh, but she'll be glad to see this!" The first mayor of Eagle, J. C. Brown, was leaving for the Nome strike and I heard that he was later the discoverer of the "third-beach-line" pay-dirt there.

A Mrs. Anna Malm, of Finland, came here with her husband from Dawson in 1898, living in a tent until they could build a cabin. Town lots were being jumped and her husband told her to hold the fort and let no one step foot on their ground when he was out prospecting. One day this good woman was alone when two men appeared and ordered her off, claiming the ground by some prior right. She spoke but little English then, and barely understood them; but the usually mild-mannered little lady was sailing under orders, so she opened up and fairly deluged the two trespassers with such a flowing flood of Finnish that she almost swept them over-bank into the Yukon! She and her husband were together building a log cabin on that lot, when I was at Eagle City. The

older houses, with dirt-covered roofs for warmth and moss-calked cracks between the logs, wore flower gardens on their tops like gay spring bonnets, very picturesque indeed and jaunty. The human population was so far outnumbered by the mosquito count that it seemed almost negligible—until we got acquainted.

Shortly after leaving Eagle City, the river swung me by some gigantic and beautiful rock cliffs, strangely stratified, far too steep for vegetation and therefore showing cleanly the exposed surface. Below were rapids—not dangerous unless you took wrong channels. During the first few weeks of my journey the sun sank so little below the horizon, and only for a few minutes at the midnight hour, that practically there was no night at all. Very frequently I traveled by " night " and slept by day, a trick the old-timers in Dawson had taught me. Cheechakos or first-year men do not as a rule know enough to follow this wise practice of the sourdoughs; but in this region there is much to recommend it. One can sleep better by high day, when the July pests of mosquitoes and black moose-flies are less troublesome; and also, if one is making land trips where every ounce of burden counts, it's best to travel in the cooler " night " when the sun is horizontal, using the vertical sun when asleep by day in lieu of a blanket. Tie a sock or a handkerchief over your eyes, and you can stretch out on a dry bank, wrapped in sunlight like a warm comforter.

I slept in the open for the first few weeks of my trip, merely spreading a tarpaulin over the boat when it rained. But farther down the river, where the climatic conditions were less favorable, it became necessary to have a better sleeping shelter and I invented one. I made a framework of two hinged, inverted V-shaped supports, with a ridge-pole, all of which could be speedily put up or taken down. Over this, when the day's travel was done, I spread the large tarpaulin, fastening it laterally with snaps that bit into some rings conveniently spaced

along the sides of the boat. In this way I could have a cosy tent-cabin, made further delectable by the heat from the sheet-iron stove at which I could warm and dry myself in wet weather.

Unless you have experienced all this, you can't know how truly delightful it is, in a bleak country like the lower reaches of the Yukon, when wet and cheerless and hungry, to have one's stomach filled with hot salmon and tea and then lie down upon a fur robe, feet to the stove, and listen to the flapping of the flame, the canty whisper of the kettle, the patter of the soft rain on the tarpaulin, while you puff in slow, reflective contemplation on a friendly pipe and know that soon kind sleep will come and make you king of wealth and comfort. I think I almost literally purred with full-fed satisfaction, when the evening meal was over, the day's work done, and a good westing made.

Foot in the Circle

BY cooking in the boat I saved time as I floated, and also discovered some gastronomic secrets worthy of an Oscar, of which I grew very proud! I tied up to the bank upon occasion, but only to sleep. It rained, and then I put on hip-boots, my large oilskin slicker, a sou'wester hat, and sometimes rubber gloves. Treacherous gusts and squalls of wind rose suddenly among the mountains, so that I must be very careful when my sail was set. If I ran close in under the bank, it was hard sometimes to keep the boat from filling with the loose earth slipping from the overhanging rim of the river, or from catching on logs or trees that were but half submerged. The light soil is thawed only fifteen to eighteen inches but the steep, muddy banks keep constantly caving and changing. Although you swelter in the drenching sun heat, you can see the ice still glisten on a new-formed bit of river brim.

July 21, 11: 30 a. m. Reached Circle City—and found it a village of double paradox, for it was neither on the Circle nor a city! Its founders thought it lay upon the Arctic Circle, I was told, and named it so; but further and more accurate measurements showed the town site to be fifty miles south of the line. Yet the name stuck. Here the river changes character, for the first time in many hundred miles, emerging from the hitherto so-constant mountains and spreading out now into flats. Circle was an old settlement, even in 1899—much older than Dawson. Jack McQuesten, Father of the Yukon, had his store here long before the Klondike rush—a corrugated-

iron shed, the only one then on the Yukon. Old-timers said, "Jack gave credit to any man who asked, and he was never cheated of his pay." I found Circle City still a rather largish town of perhaps three hundred log cabins, the trading center of the Birch Creek mining district, and enlivened somewhat by a small garrison of U. S. soldiers.

One of your flu patients in the great epidemic, Pat Kinnaly, was an old-timer here at Circle. Do you remember Pat? He came North in '89 and worked a while for the Treadwell people at Juneau, and then stampeded to the Hootalinqua. While there he heard the rumor of a strike on Pitka Bar near Circle City. When he got here, he found the district overcrowded; but he and Jack McGregor worked back from the Yukon and finally struck rich pay on Mastodon Creek. J. F. Kelly was another of the Circle City old-timers. He came in by Teslin, at the time we did. Kelly was telling not long ago about the fine new tourist hotel Frank Leach has built at Circle Hot Springs. "Modern, five stories high," he says, "and twenty-four cabins on the hotel grounds." I find it hard to imagine. He says that vegetables are grown out of season in a six-thousand-dollar hothouse. Leach has piped the heated water from the springs not only into every room and to a covered concrete bathing-pool, but even the chicken-houses are piped with natural hot water from Nature's own steam-plant just beneath the Arctic Circle, and old man zero has to quit in disgust even in fifty-below weather! Imagine bathing in a concrete pool of natural hot water, at Circle Hot Springs, when out of doors the smoke ascends straight up and mercury knocks out bottom! I can't. That wasn't Circle City as *I* saw it. The most incongruous sight I saw there was a fellow townsman from Washington, a cheechako just arrived by steamer. He was wearing the first and only plug hat I had gazed upon in nearly a year and a half, and this sight struck me as hilariously funny. I chaffed him no end about it.

A man named Crane, who had been the first United States Commissioner on the Yukon, was agent for the N. A. T. & T. in Circle City and he said that a recent winter had been almost utterly gameless—for some reason the moose and caribou did not appear and the Tánana Indians to the south were absolutely starving. "We eatem snowshoe, mukluk, parka," was the word. The companies donated a couple of sled-loads of "store" grub and sent a half-breed named Joe to take the food down to the Tánanas—a long trip and in the midst of a wolfish-hard winter. In course of time, Joe got back with empty sleds, snow-blind, stumbling behind his limping Siwash dogs. Crane asked him how he found the Tánanas.

"Huh," said Joe, in great disgust, "I guess Tánana Injun plenty lie!"

"How's that, Joe? Weren't they hungry?"

"Tánana lie. No starve. No eatem parka. Eatem two pair snowshoe, eatem one pair mukluk. No eatem parka. No starve."

—So much for the literal-minded, famine-inured Indian! A mere white man might think himself starving if he had taken to eating his boots, but not half-breed Joe.

Below Circle City as the waters run—above it on the globe, for here the Yukon is still swinging north as well as west—the river opens into what appears to be a huge lake full of islands, so vast is the expanse of the great stream. Now, in my one-man boat, I realized that I was in the Yukon Flats sure enough, and found it a delightful change after so many, many months of being tight-surrounded by high mountains. For upwards of two hundred and fifty miles the Yukon traverses these flats, a great basin and as level as a table-top. Here, in its time of inundation, the Yukon stretches over twenty miles in width and presents a genuine labyrinth of twisty channels, vast reaches of which had not in my day been explored. The river steamers took on an Indian pilot here, and

it's a most perplexing place to navigate without one, I assure you; for you can easily get lost, alone, in a blind, narrow slough, ground hard and fast on quicksand bars, and have to wait there weeks, perhaps, until the river rises once again and floats your boat away. If you, alone, climb overboard and try to push her off, you're very apt to sink in treacherous quicksand and be lost, adding another chapter to the already innumerable Yukon mysteries of strange disappearance.

I'm frank to say that the problems of navigating these intricacies, alone, filled me with considerable foreboding. It would have been impossible, entirely, if there were not a swift current in the main channel to guide me. Even this proved treachery sometimes, careful as I might be. I got into no end of difficulty; for though I might follow swift water along one side of an island, soon I would find the channel ramifying and the current slowing down, until I was in slack water again. Then I would have to row, perhaps for miles, before I found the main current once more. And a twenty-two-foot craft, five feet in beam, is no fancy rowboat! Even when empty she would have rowed hard. Loaded down with stove and freight and mast, she dragged like so much lead. It was surprising, though, how very swift the main arteries of the current could be, even where the river was expanded to so many miles. I ran into some actually awe-inspiring eddies, in places where divided waters met at favoring angles.

I saw surprisingly few wild animals on my lonely journey, taking it all in all; but this was the section where I met most of them. A lynx swam the river just below Eagle, easily and more out of water than I had imagined. A couple of black bears were salmon-fishing on a bar, and very seriously intent upon their sport—quite comically so. One day as I was passing an up-river steamboat, bound with winter freight for Dawson, the pilot of the steamer sighted a moose swimming the river and blew his shrilling whistle, frightening the animal

into a great confusion and drawing all the passengers top-side. Soon the whole forward deck was blazing with rifle fire and the water all about was potted with a rain of bullets. I was glad enough to duck by without being hit, for the firing was wide and high. I sympathized with the poor moose in his escape. I had a fellow-feeling!

I didn't happen to see any bands of migrating caribou, although I had been told that they are frequent here. Ogilvie said he found them almost as tame as cattle and magnificent swimmers. He and another, in a light, Peterborough canoe, paddling as hard as ever two men could, were not able to keep up with the swimming caribou breasting the current. Caribou hair is full of air cells that are buoyant, and their split hoofs spread like open paddle blades in swimming. Thousands of these animals taking to the river at once, must be a sight worth seeing. I've heard a score of others tell of it. Ogilvie said that a log cabin was an object of great curiosity to migrating caribou, for they are deer and have the deer-like inquisitiveness although they lack deer-like timidity. He told how they would come close to his cabin, whistling and snorting like a bunch of wild range-horses sniffing a corral. They were so noisy they became a nuisance and he went out and tried to shoo them away! He got tired of shooting them. It took ten days for one such herd to pass his cabin in '95, I think he said, on the Fortymile—tens of thousands, uncountable in number. They flocked south in the fall, north in the spring.

July 22. Met the "Sybil" again, headed down-stream, but she was stuck on a bar. I had passed her before, on July fourteenth, at Fortymile and had talked with her officers. They had given me good accounts of the then new gold strike at Nome, or Anvil Creek—which did not excite me, however. On the seventeenth I had met the steamer *Burpee* going down-stream and on the eighteenth passed the *Porteus B. Weare* near the boundary line. This slow old steamer had been put

on the river in 1892 and, with the *Alice,* carried the first Klondike gold to "St. Mike" in June of '97. She made immense waves churning up-stream in the rapid current and I had trouble to escape the wash. *July 19. Saw steamer "Pilgrim" high and dry on a sand-bar with many men trying to get her off.* On the twentieth I passed the steamer *Tacoma* of the E. T. Co., and on the same day the *Monarch* going up to Dawson. All these river boats were flat-bottomed stern-wheelers of very light draft. Heavy freight was on its way into the Klondike and I could see that Dawson would not be hungry that next winter. The down-stream boats were beginning to be crowded with returned Yukoners, as soon as the authentic Nome news spread; and as the White Pass Railroad was not finished yet, all the fat gold yield of the Klondike was going "out" down-river this year before the freeze-up. Even after the Yukon froze that fall, the Klondikers still kept on coming. I heard later that fifteen hundred of them streaked it down over the winter trail on the ice to Kaltag and then across a ninety-mile portage to Unalakleet on Norton Sound, following the coast from there around to Nome. Nobody had anticipated this great Nome stampede and so the lower-river trading-posts were stocked only for their usual Native and wood-chopper trade. This mob cleaned them out in a hurry. During the winter of 1899–1900, Dawson folk grew fat while Nomeites tightened their belts.

Among these islands in the Flats the mosquitoes were frightful—really. So much so that sometimes I made no attempt to sleep for, since I was all alone, that meant tying up. Out in midstream and moving with the swiftest current, I was almost free from them but when I got into slack water, or pulled up to shore for camp, they nearly overpowered me. Yet I remember the Flats pleasurably, for as the land opened out I had a sense of sudden release, of greater freedom and of space—more room and pause for thought and reflection.

Here too, for the first time, I could make accurate observations of the setting and the rising of the sun, with no hills to obstruct free vision. On July twenty-first it set at ten-fifteen p. m., Dawson time; and that same evening, just as the sun was setting a huge moon rose, looking ridiculously large in that clear atmosphere.

Never have I seen such glorious, burnished, brilliant moons as those which luminated Yukon Flats for me. For so alone I was, so silent was the vastly open land, so smoothly spread the open reach of river, I seemed to overhear the subtone of a cosmic speech in that swift flitting betwixt light and light. Not even in far Italy, so beauty-full—not even in Bermuda of the Bless'd—have there been spread such gorgeous sunsets and sunrises, red as the seeds of pomegranates and melded in one glowing midnight spectacle. Beginning with rich burgundy, melting to pale chartreuse, then as the moon came clear a dash of menthe was added, jade-green above the black-green spruces of the river and the gray-green of the fringing willows. Intoxicant and heady draughts of beauty, these—and I alone upon the River to share this cup with the old River-god, who drank the changeful color with me. My hoary god of River drank of beauty and his wise old tongue was loosened, and he spoke. The calling of the River, in this dusky seminight, was whispering both of mystery and hope.

There's some half knowledge that is more than knowledge whole—half knowledge that will edge into a dream, will lift and carry more than its own weight upon the journey; whereas a knowledge buttoned on the ends and finished, snapped close-shut, is often burden and a weariness to carry. The slowly puffing river steamers passing me down-stream, bore heavy burden of fat Yukon gold, fallen now into greedy hands. But as the night's eye opened and the day's eye closed, I came to realize that these gold-laden boats did not in any real sense enfreight the treasure of the Yukon. That sailing moon was

much more golden; and I took out my silver flute to serenade the round-faced moon, who made such glorious company for me, gilding the rubifacient clouds—

Guter Mond, du gehst so stille
Durch die Abendwolken hin.

On July twenty-second, having kept closely to the right-hand side of the river, I came to the ruins of Old Fort Yukon, formerly a Hudson's Bay post but now entirely deserted. Alexander Murray established it, in July, 1847; and he said, even at that time, " We are over the edge and that by a 'long chalk,' which I call six degrees of longitude, across the Russian boundary." A long time elapsed before the English company was ousted, however, for the Russian Lukeen did not make his journey up-stream to Fort Yukon from St. Michael until 1863, and he was the first to do so. The Russians never made a survey to determine the one hundred and forty-first meridian, and it was not until two years after the United States bought Alaska that bluecoats made the Hudson's Bay men *clatawa*—an ousting they resented. Remembering his stung nose, the Russian Bear after Sebastopol seemed afraid to stir the Alaska boundary question with the Lion; so we, the Eagle's brood, inherited the sour fruits of that long indecision.

In early days, returns from this farthest station of the Great Company of Adventurers reached London only after a delay of seven years! The post lay a little above the confluence of the Porcupine River, entering here from the north. Pioneer white men at Fort Yukon got all their goods from, and packed all their furs to, York Factory on Hudson's Bay; and the first step in that long trek was La Pierre's House on the Upper Porcupine, six hundred miles away on the doubly twisted river and a twenty-day trek up-stream. Between La Pierre's House and the Peel River (a tributary of the great Canadian Macken-

zie), lie a continental divide and an eighty-mile portage; and Peel River itself was merely a name in the wilderness, high on the arctic edges of the earth.

That old trail and portage of the Porcupine and Peel were still being used by some, however—though to their sorrow. When I dropped down to new Fort Yukon, I met some Argonauts just arrived after an appalling trip. They had left the East about the same time I did, early in 1898, but chose this "all-Canadian" route and so were not in Dawson yet! Indeed they still had a good two hundred and fifty miles to go, and up-stream against a stiff current. But this old "Edmonton trail," a tough route even for the hardened early voyageurs and coureurs de bois of the Hudson's Bay, had by certain Canadian authorities been officially recommended to unprepared, city-bred Argonauts of the Klondike day. It seems unbelievable, and certainly was criminal in a sense; yet I can show you a map issued in 1898 and widely distributed gratis, on which this heart-breaking trail is boldly marked out in red as a good route to the new gold-fields. Perhaps two thousand were induced to come that "all-Canadian" way, and estimates made in Dawson showed that at least five hundred of that number lost their lives en route while most who actually won through lost all their outfits on the way. One long chalk against Ogilvie, in the minds of many at that time, was that it was he who recommended this unpractical long trail, when on a visit to Ottawa in '97.

At Fort Yukon I listened to the talk of these men who had taken that Athabascan or "back-door" route, and I was struck that the curve of their story never rose to high dramatics. They were absolutely calm in the way they spoke about themselves and their lost hopes, their lost companions. Their quiet account was bare and factual. There were no heroics, among those who actually had done things. Such talk was heard only in Dawson saloons! These men described their journey simply

and in epic terms as bald as a page of Xenophon, " thence we proceeded twenty parasangs." Although all their companions had been crushed, one way or other, upon that endless, grisly trail, yet those who now remained were still bent on reaching Dawson, for it was Dawson they had started out to reach a year and a half before. Doggedly, with no hope now of mining fortune, they headed up-stream.

Here also at Fort Yukon I met a Mackenzie River Indian who had trekked over from Canada with his wife and family of four small children. He spoke English quite well and surprised me by the use of the word " savvy," a transposed bit of Spanish which seems to have traveled widely north and to be universal among the Indians of the Western continent. I was also taken to see a Native woman, reputed to be well over one hundred years old, and looking it. But she was dying and nothing could be done for her.

That night while I was asleep near the Indian village, their rascally Siwash dogs boarded my boat and, although my provisions were all covered with a tarpaulin, stole five pounds of rolled oats, half a can of butter, a can of condensed milk, an opened tin of corned beef—and all so quietly and with such stealth that they never wakened me! I had not learned then the old-timers' trick of bracing the boat off-shore at night with a pole eight or ten feet long, so that the dogs would have to swim to reach it. Unlike their owners, these animals will surely steal and, being thieves themselves, they make poor watch-dogs. Certainly they did not seem to have the property sense which most domestic dogs develop, though they are very strong and able to live on poorer and less food. They impressed me as being closely related to the wolf, and frequently I saw a bitch with a litter that must have been sired by a gray wolf from the timber. Indians purposely encouraged this interbreeding of their dogs with wolves, so they told me. Many times in Dawson the last winter I had seen full-blooded wolves

harnessed in a dog team, and right well they proved their strength and their intelligence. The howl of a big wolf near camp will terrify the ordinary malemute, yet the wolf in harness will be fearful of many things a sled dog understands. For one thing, your true timber gray will almost always try to hide from strangers. In fighting power not even the heavy-set husky could match a wolf, the wild creature's agility, strength, resourcefulness, and jaws being in every way superior, although they were notably treacherous. I often saw "domesticated" wolves, or even the hybrids, attack others of the team and mutilate them terribly.

When I was laid up for a week at Long Lake, just after crossing Chilkoot, you may remember that I met Captain Ray there, to whom I presented a letter of introduction. Ray had been here at Fort Yukon in 1897 and he told me quite a bit about conditions then, rather a dramatic situation. In the late summer of '97, steamboat after steamboat came up the Yukon, hurrying to get through to Dawson with provisions before the river closed; for, any time after early October, the northern reaching tributaries of the Yukon begin to throw out pans of heavy and very tough clear ice that soon cover the river's surface and batter in the hulls. These boats were also filled with human freightage, hurrying like gold-crazed lunatics to reach the fabled Klondike before winter. Some of these boats reached Dawson with their loads before the freeze-up, but more were caught en route and were compelled to spend the winter along this stretch of middle river. Fifteen steamers, so Ray said, were ice-locked with their passengers and freight that year, between St. Michael and Dawson. I heard one estimate that less than fifty of the eighteen hundred men who tried to reach the Klondike by the St. Michael route in the fall of '97, got through before winter, and thirty-five of these were promptly "deported" down-river again, as non-producers.

Some of the boats which did reach Dawson had carried more

whisky than food! Panic arose in Dawson lest there be a famine, and the N. W. M. P. blue-ticketed many of the early Dawson "undesirables" and forced them to take boat down-river late in the season, quitting Canadian territory. The authorities said, "There's plenty of food at Fort Yukon," and a hundred and sixty were given free passage on the *Bella* alone. There were some disappointed American prospectors, even in 1897, who also left for the American side, hoping to find better prospects here; and many of these were working near Fort Yukon that fall. One boat coming up-river late in the summer of '97 and running into low water here, unloaded part of her freight and pushed through to Dawson with her passengers. When a food shortage threatened Fort Yukon that winter, a miners' meeting was called and the decision made to commandeer and prorate all these cached supplies. Captain Ray and Lieutenant Richardson, who had arrived on the *Healy,* took charge—necessity demanding—and distributed the stores fairly to the men, on sworn promises that they would repay the boat companies for the supplies so given and also on sworn promise that the men would prospect through the winter, or at least cut wood for river boats and so earn their grub-stake. Some worked and paid their bills next spring but others skipped the country.

A miners' meeting was also called at Circle City and commandeered the cargoes of the *P. B. Weare* and the *Bella.* The men were armed, but orderly—not looters. Ray called their action unlawful, but the lives of some two hundred men in the camp depended on that food and Ray was but one man and one voice against many. The miners went on board, took charge, and removed all the freight to their own warehouse where it was checked and an accounting made. Ogilvie told me he had met Ray and Richardson in July, '97 at St. Michael, as they were coming in and he was going out—that time he told the Americans about who made the law in Canada!

The Yukon flows northwest until it curves across the Arctic Circle near Fort Yukon. Then, as if recoiling from the polar regions, the Great River turns southwest and heads for Bering Sea. It's a strange turning, for the Yukon meets no earth-thrown barrier here. It merely steps a foot within the Circle, pauses, and then turns elsewhere. Something inside itself con-verts it. Some magic or some miracle deflects, but the course thereafter is a far surer, greater, nobler way. Father Judge once made a little homily upon this curious circumstance, drawing richly upon his long years of daily living by our River and pulling his timely moral like a supernatural rabbit from the magician's hat of fact, under the very noses of his wondering parishioners. He understood the way to make their shared experience speak in precept, as a wise priest will and should, knowing the power of words over the mortal mind.

Here, with my Yukon, I had entered too into the mystery of the very Arctic. Here too my course was fated for sure change. Here I was soon truly to start seaward. But here the Yukon is full fifteen miles in width, so filled with islands that all navigation is a task, a problem, and sailing is both slow and difficult. There are at least five distinct "main" channels, all seemingly of equal possible value. Choice was so difficult, and there were far too many scattered islands for one to see the whole expanse of stream from any vantage: a bewildering maze, as though the Circle we had entered were indeed a magic circle, and he who but stepped foot across it lost all power of will or choice. Even my great River seemed here to lose his way in twisted channel and in petty streams, becoming hesitant, uncertain.

I lay upon my wolf-robe there, within the loop of Circle, and listened to the howling of the wolf-dogs at the Indian village close beyond. The short and dusky mystery of summer night above the Arctic, a great moon hung in the still-lingering sunlight, enshrouded me below the Yukon's bank. The lapping

current gurgled, drifting past. Perhaps I dreamed, although I do not think I slept. I am not given to hallucination, but —that night I heard the very Yukon speak. The rolling River spoke, and in that sound I heard already the far-lying Sea. The Yukon told me of it, in the night. Only the sureness of an all-enfolding sea could draw those spreading waters with such gravitated flow.

"What though I'm wandering now in devious ways? I too have been, am now, where you now are. I have known doubt and indecision, a course unsure—bounded, encircled, baffled, seeking that sure bourne I only sensed was there and drawing me. But where? Somewhere behind the hiding hills, far, far, long leagues away.

"I am your River that runs West. Into the sun-path, rather than the earth-path, I would run; and guide my course by chariot of Apollo, snatching the lathered harness of his flaming steeds rather than roll with Earth the easy way. I touch this magic Circle and I turn, to follow sun-god far as I can follow, and empty in the Sea at last, be lost to rise again in unperceptive mist, to let the sun-god work his will upon translated waters with his winds, to draw or cast me wheresoe'er there is parched need.

"Small, drifting, human chip upon my water, trust to my finding of the way. Cling to the steep-cut right bank, ever. For though far longer, it is surer that way in the end. Beware the tugging quicksands which, although golden, yet will drag down in loss. My course is only half-way run, and here seem doubt and indecision and disorder within the tangled channel of the flats. The way may seem uncertain; but we have allies marching, vassal and retainer marshaled from far sources North and South, unguessed as yet, unseen—augmented forces that will surely carry us to Sea in progress intricate, yet unperplexed.

"Peace only in the ending have I found: a broad and silent

peace which I can surely promise, where no horizons shut at last, where I can leave my earthy banks and seek the ultimate issue won by many mouths and channels, spreading but identical in aim. Be wakeful in the smoky twilight dusks of summer midnight, and you will learn I am no cozener of fools. I have not lost my way, nor wander blindly. I lead you truly to what might be, should be, can be, is. . . ."

—You'll not believe me, maybe, if I tell you—speaking no more, however, than mean truth—that no adventure of my Yukon years was half so real or meant so much to me, as that quiet moment when the wise old River spoke. To-day the dream—if dream it was—seems but a sweetly archaic memory, like a child's tale of fairy-land, full of a gentle incredibility. I say quite firmly in my mind, "The River did not speak"—as one says to a child, "There is no Santa Claus." Yet, in belief, the child has hung his little stocking, has found that stocking filled.

I turned my life about within the Circle, swung sharp about face with the Yukon. Who knows? Perhaps that strange mind underneath the mind, to which cold reason has no access and no key, may be unlocked in dream and so discover the ancient, lost relationships of river gods and men.

Rolling River

FORTY-SEVEN days and nights, River and I were pals together in the closest company—a friend, yet with an ancient dignity of wisdom brooking no impudence, no easy, loose familiarity. I found him stern, but just. I read his ripples for his moods, for all of them demanded deep respect. I studied his expressions as we wandered on together, day by day: an intimate companionship in which I was disciple, pupil, he the teacher always. I could not wholly master his long wisdom but I could follow where he led, and listen. I heard no more the well-worn words and patterned phrases of the crowd, but only the slow rhythm of my sibilant River, speaking to me within the Wilderness.

The days were busy, full of a quiet adventure difficult to tell. No one day spoke, yet all the days together whispered and their cumulative voice was clearly audible, a book of proverbs unforgettable and ineluctable. And my soul-sickness knew a happy delitescency. As Father Judge had given his soul's keeping to his Church, I gave mine to my River. The way was long, but it was memorable. My years are double now what years were then, but I have not forgotten what the River told me. My life since has been saved, yet so as by water, from the unsteady jerk and jitter of the city's cramp, the hodgepodge of a so-called civilization. I'd learned the magic spell, within the Circle, and afterwards I dared to use it. The River taught me that—alone—things speak which otherwise are silent.

When you have found a friend, you seek comparisons. Was there another, anywhere, like to my River running West? I had searched out two western continents to find him. I

searched my mind for some analogy, and found one other. I remembered that, in reading Schwatka's story of his journey down the Yukon, I'd been struck by one word, in especial. Speaking of this mid-section of the Yukon, where it throws a loop up over the Arctic Circle, he wrote in his journal: "The twenty-ninth of July (1883) was a hot, sweltering day, with the sun and its thousand reflections sending their blistering heat into our faces. In fact, our greatest inconvenience near the short Arctic strip of the stream was the tropical heat. . . . We drifted down the hot river, by low banks that needed nothing but a few breech-clouted negroes to convince us we were on the Congo."

The Congo was that other, in the other hemisphere—that other great one who dared turn himself to Westward. How very far apart they were, in seeming, yet how amazingly alike in truth! One in the eastern hemisphere, one in the west; one in the northern hemisphere, one in the south. Yet there were mighty parallels. Both were among the first great rivers of the earth. Both rose in lakey chains and flowed for miles to north and west. Both met and crossed a magic line—the Circle, the Equator—and there changed course completely, turning face about and heading south and west thereafter, to empty into distant seas that lay beneath the setting sun. Both lost themselves, so at last passing, their great intolerable burdens all abandoned, to final rest in latitudes almost identical with those of their far birth—after their thousand leagues of wandering and search.

But, of the two, my Yukon was more friendly and the Arctic more inviting than the Tropic wilderness. My Yukon was amazingly navigable, for one thing. I recalled that Ogilvie had spoken of this often; and now its fuller friendly meaning began to reach me, for the quiet cup of the wilderness is potent, if slowly supped. My Yukon rose in mountains, I well knew, that overlooked the sea. Only a little distance from

the Yukon's birthplace, where tiniest streamlets trickle from the eastern slope of Chilkoot, lies beautiful Lake Bennett where we built our boats and navigation of the Yukon can begin. From Bennett's head to Bering Sea is, very roughly, two thousand five hundred miles by the full out-sweep of the river, as one must travel—not by the in-curve, as geographers will measure. Two-thirds of all this way lies through a maze of mountains; yet this great length, with the exception of those three miles at the Canyon and the Rapids, is all easily navigable by steam. Every mile of the Yukon, except the first fifteen, is navigable by man power. Could this be said of any other of the greatest rivers? I think my River is unique in this—unique also in that it rises within sight and sound of tide-water and yet, after all those miles of wandering, turns back again to rest at last within the crook'd arm of that selfsame sea.

Silent, alone, with no companion near, the wonder of the River was its tranquilness, the intimation of a timeless promise. The compass of the wilderness was vast, a lonely pomp, a silent majesty. To be in the very midst of such immensity, alone, with none to speak to, is in itself a stunning experience. The setting was so stately that one who is alone here must learn dignity. The wilderness is no place for frivolity or foolishness. The rushing waters, the somber mountains, the streaks of lava-flow from ancient live volcanoes, the towering peaks glimpsed from the vantage of the water-level's self—these often grip me yet in solitude, but I have not the power to tell them. My days upon the River were a whole life in itself, more full of real experiencing than many decades of before or after. What's truly you, the part of you that hungers and that fears, is primal as the River's self and kin to it. Alone, you learn the ancient trick of nature-talk, when all things speak and morning stars may sing.

You are the hills, you feel their roots, you sense where

they are going. For the eternal hills are also wanderers, the River tells you. You can feel them moving, in and with the river—the far blue hills dissolving, solvent—the very mountains going home to ocean with their river, forever coming down in particle. I stop at night to rest, but the river and the hills keep moving in a stanchless flow, rubbing against the boat side in the night, caught in the lap of river. The River was not something I was floating on, it was myself: Born in the mountain gorges, turned to the east from birth, twisted about through valleys deep and the bewildering foot-hills, gradually and imperceptibly converted, changed, and turned at last in definite journey west. Nothing happened—I was enfolded in a quiet of days, unbroken. Yet in that very quiet my heart took root and courage. There was the sky, and there was the weather. There was the River, and there was I. And these comprised the universe *pro tempore*—River and I, wandering by, together.

Soon after I had left Fort Yukon, I got into a whirlpool from which I could not extricate my boat for a full hour—which proved to me what a strong current flows in the main channels, no matter how divided was the Yukon. The mighty Porcupine flowed in below, one of the few clear tributaries; and, like each largest affluent, it visibly increased the flood of waters. A multitude of sea-gulls had come north to breed and it was an intense amusement to watch the fuss the old ones made, coaching the youngsters in the art of flying. They were very noisy and so tame I could have killed them with a club if I had cared to, which I did not. Was that a part of my Himalayan birthright, too? Believers in reincarnation practice thought for animals, on deep religious grounds. I realized so fully my own desire to live and grow and do, *la douceur de vivre,* somehow I've never dared nor cared to take the life of anything, except for necessary food.

There were many ducks about and so I got one for my larder

when I needed meat. Fish too were plentiful and salmon cooked upon a stick placed near an open fire, occasionally turned till brown, is dainty eating. One large variety of salmon was so rich that in the fry-pan no additional fat was needed. The River was provider as well as friend, and fed me bountifully. It is small wonder that men cherish rivers, and it is sad that commerce and not man possesses most of them; for I have known a no more pleasant, no more reassuring, accompaniment to life than was my River. No man could know depression, no man could feel uncared for, uncompanioned, with a great river flowing past, reminding him continuously of continuity, permanence, and peace. The River was a moving image of eternity. The infinite variety of the River! Each night it packed away my cares and carried them beyond my kenning. Each morning it would fetch me new and fresh delight—including fish for breakfast!

On the twenty-fourth, the steamer *Linda* of the Alaska Exploration Company passed me, going up, and tore a hole in the quiet morning with her whistle of salute. She was shoving a barge named *Bear* out on her nose and she looked a remarkably fine boat. On the same day, the cold-storage *Robert Kerr* came by. River men called her "The Yellow Dog!" July twenty-fifth, the steamer *Lotta Talbot* of the Alaska Meat Company, "Refrigerator No. 1," chugged past en route for Dawson markets. I had heard the winter before that in the first days of the gold-rush the *Laurada,* an old blockade-runner from the Cuban revolution, had come around the Horn and towed two steamers up the coast destined for the Yukon trade. I think these were this same *Lotta Talbot* and another called the *Quickstep.* On the twenty-sixth, the steamer *Hannah* almost ran me down. I had the fun of forcing the great overpowering boat to stop and monkey round, as the swift current carried us both down in the same swirl, her stout stern paddles churning to a froth.

Three sister boats, the *Hannah, Susie,* and *Sarah*, were big packets like Mark Twain's river steamboats and officered by old Mississippi men. Built in a cove of Captain's Harbor, around the bend from Unalaska, they proved quite stout enough to make the nine-hundred-mile sea voyage through Bering to St. Michael under their own steam. These were the largest river boats those early days, over two hundred feet long, a beam of forty-two feet, in depth about six. They had been powered to make about seventeen miles per hour in still water. On the twenty-seventh, the steamer *Leah* passed me going up, and she too shoved a barge. Later I saw the *Milwaukee* of Ballard. On July twenty-eighth, the steamer *Alice,* a sister boat to the *Bella* but not quite so large, brought a lot of U. S. soldiers to Rampart City. On the thirty-first, the *Margaret,* a Pabst Brewing Company's boat, passed by, with beer for thirsty Dawson. August first, I met the *Susie* going up, and August ninth the steamer *Yukoner.* Except for these occasions, the river was an empty way spread for my solitary passage.

I often passed the camps of loggers, though, cutting wood for the hungry steamboat boilers, and sometimes I played to them on my flute. "Home Sweet Home" was their first choice, but "A Hot Time in the Old Town To-night" came close second! I often played to myself, however, as I drifted, especially in the long twilight hours of nearly but not absolutely night when the sun creeps along the horizon just below the northern hills, gilding the ice-pack round the Pole. For there's no sudden coming up like thunder of the sun, in these latitudes, but a gradual and circuitous going and coming. *The Lorelei* perhaps gave me the greatest pleasure in my lonely playing—a weird reminder of the trivial dangers and adventures of the little Rhine compared to those of my Great River, which Yukon is in both fact and name. The echoes in the distant forests were most lovely, coming back to me as though

another saucy silver flutist were repeating whole measures of my music. In the mountains, echoes were even more remarkable and clear. It was amazing how far one could hear sounds upon this river. In no country have I known such dignity of stillness, summer or winter.

Along the Flats there is a sedimentary soil which the full current constantly wears off, undermines, tears down. The steep mud banks on the out-curve are always changing, and trees thrust out from them straight horizontal with roots up in the air, supported solely by a little, moss-bound, semi-frozen soil. Of course, these constantly fall over in the river, and when whole sections of this marginal forest fell into the water the sound from a distance, in the surrounding stillness, seemed almost exactly like the report of a gun. Sounds in solitudes create most strange illusions. Sometimes a mosquito's hum gives the ventriloqual effect of a human voice in the distance, while the rhythmic and hydraulic hammer-stroke of some half-submerged tree would often sound like the puffing of a distant locomotive. Time and again I might imagine, from the sound, that I was approaching some raging cataract. Half a mile or so further on, I would come to the cause —a ridiculously small obstruction ruffling the swift water. Finally I decided that my friendly Yukon was just giving me a little lesson in the folly of useless worry.

Portions of the river-marge upon the Flats, in these long sloughs, were very like the banks of River Thames and quite as beautiful: placid water, shingle beach in small terraces, a strip of the most vivid emerald grass twenty to forty feet wide, and all set against a back drop of healthy young willows, lightly green but silver at the touch of any wind. Wild gooseberry and currant bushes grow upon the fringing banks, and much wild rhubarb, many wild roses. At the lower end of the Flats the river spreads in a vasty expanse, ramifying indefinitely. Some branches here are but slack water, while in

sundry others the current will be quick. For three full days I floated down toward the mountains which would terminate the Flats. They appeared to be so near, in that clear air; but it did seem as though I'd never really reach them.

On July twenty-seventh, at midnight, I passed at last out of this labyrinth into a mountainy land again, where for many hundred miles the river keeps once more to one broad channel, though thickly studded with a flock of islands. The mountain panorama proved of eerie beauty, enhanced no doubt by my own joy at coming to an easier mode of travel, less full of doubtful choices and of wanderings through the Valley of Decision. As I passed out from the Flats into and through the rocky portals of the Lower Ramparts, in the glorious twilight of subarctic night I saw a cross set high upon the hillside, while far away within the darkling forest an owl broke the wide silence with his hooting. The wise Greeks knew him for an emblem of their Pallas. I thought it a good omen and I bowed to great Athena and her blinking bird, before I got myself to wolf-bed at three-fifteen a. m. after a peculiarly hard stretch of river work. The night before, mosquitoes had been so pestiferous that I made no attempt to sleep, preferring to twist my way out as soon as possible from the confusing Flats. Here in the mountains, where a gale of wind sucked through the trough between the hills, the insects were all blown away allowing me a dreamless and luxurious sleep, easy in mind at being safely through a very trying portion of my journey.

Indian camps began again after I left the Flats, and soon I was at Fort Hamlin—merely a trading-post and a small Native settlement where I stopped long enough to buy some hardtack. The wind blew out a merry note across the mouthpiece of my stovepipe and, with the plucking of the cordage for accompaniment, furnished a plenty music. Head winds prevailed from now until I reached the lower Yukon, often amounting to stiff gales which, blowing in from Bering Sea

and dead across the swiftly moving body of the water, rolled up white waves and boat and I rode hourly in the lurch of the stiff spray.

Here too the scene was truly grand, in scale and contour. Every few miles the river opened into an enormous sweeping circle, as wide as a large inland lake, through which I was a long time passing. For one can not afford to take a short cut through these pouches or he will come to grief upon a bar within the shallow in-curve. To one's vexation, sometimes, the current and the channel both compel the widest possible sweep, thus enormously increasing the sum of miles to travel. I jotted in my diary a notation here that I had not seen any stars since May, showing how un-dark the nights were. The midnight dusk was chilly, though, and heat from my small stove was very grateful.

The River was a roving wise old friend upon this journey, who changed his face from white to brown to red, with changing winds ahead and changing skies above. But I made other little friends—those timid curious groups of black-eyed Indian children who crowded to the Yukon's bank when I made landing at their camps. It flatters something deep inside a man, when children "take" to him. Especially a lonely man. My flute made music for them, often, and I drew them with my fluting like the Hamlin piper, for they would gather and would follow. I gave them many little gifts of bright bandanna kerchiefs from my store; and to their mothers, pieces of fat salt pork which overjoyed them.

The dark-brown faces clustering around were friendly faces, always. I felt back home again. In ways, I felt a happy child again, although so far, so very far, from Agra, Lucknow, and the Northwest Provinces of India—from Landour and the high Himalaya where we lived during those few dear years that form my childish recollection of old India. I seemed to have experienced in my life so many several different kinds of

worlds; yet on the lonely River, as the slow days passed, I was continually reliving them and tapping always from those deepest reservoirs of memory that had been filled to overflowing in the first years of my life—unconsciously and consciously and often. Why should I not love rivers? The very place-name of the country of my birth was "River." A Sanskrit word *sindhu,* meaning river, was twisted by a Persian tongue, twisted again by Macedons who followed haughty Alexander across the Hindu Kush, and became "India." There's such rich fruit of lands and folk and times and persons to be got, climbing up and down the family tree of eldest words! I was born of a River.

Brown skins and dark-eyed faces, smiling up at me, were all a portion of that blessed early memory. Indians meant India, to me; and here were Indians, and hence friends. That little boy in India, in the sixties, possessed two treasures—an ayah and a man servant all of his very own. I loved the man more, for he carried me about in a basket upon his back, and played with me. I recollect that once two other Natives pinioned my man and said that they were going to throw him down a deep, deep well. Of course it was a joke, to tease me, but I took it with terrific seriousness. I caught my man about his feet and cried that they would have to throw me down the dark well, too; and I meant it. To feel again the touch of India was to move a time-flight backward to my romance-nurtured youth, to feel the firm foundation of the highest ranges of the earth again beneath my feet of fancy—Himalaya, lovely Sanskrit words, "Abode of Snow."

I traded tea and apples, dried, with many of the Native men. Both Russian influence and Hudson Bay upon the Yukon have left a tea addiction; and tea, not coffee, was the favorite drink here and I found it best for trade. In fact, tea was money in most Indian camps I visited. I gave away several dozen bandannas, and quite a quantity of my dried apples. These sum-

mer fish-camps of the River Indians never slept, for in the long day of continuous sun the Indians pay no attention at all to the time but each eats and sleeps when he feels like it. So the camp is always stirring and as busy at midnight as at midday; and at the first deep-throated sound of any steamboat whistle, how all the malemutes do howl in unison! One canine bass leads off, managing to hit the exact pitch of the boat's loud toot, quite often. Then baritone and tenor join and amplify the antiphon, in rising waves of sound, until the quiet air is fairly split with racket.

Strangely, these Indian people of the river call themselves the very name the Navajos call themselves. I thought it strange, that is, until I later learned from ethnologic friends that these folk and the Navajos belong to the same language family of Amerindians. It shows how wide the Native culture is. Navajo is a Spanish word, of course; but the " Navajos " call *themselves* Tinneh, or " the people "—with the accent very sharply on the definite article! And that's exactly what my brown friends on the Yukon called themselves. At heart (as we all must do, I suppose) they still considered they were supermen, and all their old traditions told that they were both more numerous and more powerful than any other people upon earth. Without such vision, such a tribal pride, a people perish. We've surely done our best, we conquering Americans, to soil and kill that vision.

I treated several of my brown-skinned friends for little ailments. One man had lost the forefinger of his right hand. This, as he explained to me most graphically by signs, had been accompanied by suppurative swelling of the forearm. Another Indian was a humpback, another was cross-eyed, while many had consumption. In fact, coughs were the rule among them. As I floated past their camps at night, invariably I heard some of them racked with coughing. Tuberculosis and other typical white man's diseases were destroying them; and the germs, hav-

ing such virgin soil in which to fructify, attack them with a great severity. Dr. Chapman told later that infection from tuberculosis was so general throughout the Anvik region, he thought it safe to say that there is no Native who has not been, or who is not almost certainly destined to be, affected in some form. It's doubtless owing to this fact that certain epidemics have been so fatal here.

But the little children were always gay and playful, as shy and friendly as brown puppies. Ingenious, too. I watched a group of boys playing with a steamboat they had made out of some trader's cast-off cigar-box wood, and quite as good or better than a Yankee boy of equal age could make. On one occasion I met a young man in a canoe going up-stream. He had two dogs hitched to his craft, hauling him by tow-line from the shore. He looked a swarthy Lohengrin, without the swan, the poetry, or romance!

Yet, although lacking poetry or romance, possibly, I found innumerous hearts among them that were kind, hearts that responded glowingly to kindness, although their skins were Indian bronze and though the hungry latitudes were high. And once they warned me of my own, white, tribal kinsmen. Two white men camped below were "bad." By broken word and eloquent dramatic pantomime, they showed me how I must steal quietly by that camp, not wake them.

"No like him face. Him no smell good," they told me, shaking their heads.

I heeded that kind warning, to the letter.

Mnemosyne, Her Garden

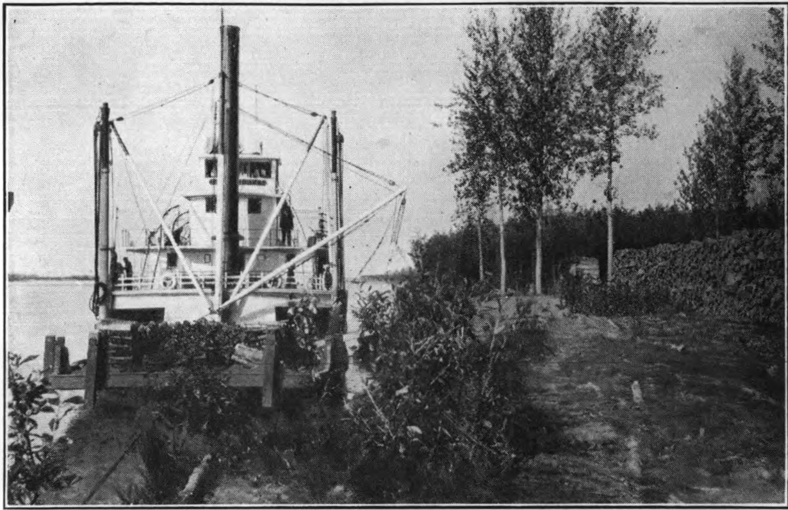
N July twenty-eighth, stiff and tired from traveling all night in a gale of wind dead ahead, I reached Rampart City—a good-sized town but not so very active at that season. In the fall of '97, large numbers of gold-seekers on their way to Klondike by the Yukon route had been ice-blocked here at Rampart, as well as at Circle and Fort Yukon. During that winter an Indian brought some gold-dust from Minook Creek, and many of the five hundred or so would-be Klondikers staked hereabouts instead of Canada and started a busy little town clustered around two " company " stores. When I arrived at Rampart, Minook still yielded the greater part of the gold found in this neighborhood; and Minook gold was remarkable in assaying nineteen dollars and a half per ounce, whereas the Eldorado and Bonanza gold assays only thirteen or fourteen dollars, though on those Klondike creeks the precious metal was so much more abundant that its lower value signified little. No one can be long in this land without discovering that even virgin gold has varying quality, and never occurs unblended with minute traces of baser metal such as copper, antimony, silver. The differing alloys cover a wide color range in raw or natural gold—from palest yellow that is nearly white, through brassy tones to almost copper-red.

That town of Rampart held some very colorful personalities, those days. There was John Duncan, who first heard the shrill of swirling bagpipes at Rothsay in " the land of the naked knee." He reached Alaska via Boston, Seattle and San Francisco, where he had been a carpenter. The Liebes Company of

San Francisco controlled the Alaska Exploration Company which ran a line of trading-posts and boats along the Yukon, and Duncan was assigned to Rampart. He is still working on the creeks there. M. S. Gill tied up his poling boat at Rampart in '97 and mined on Little Minook. "Cap" Williams came from southern Idaho to join the gold-rush. He made a trip up the Koyukuk with Gordon Bettles in '98, and prospected the Deklakaket with John Andreas in the winter of '98-'99. In the spring of '99, they both set out for Rampart and were mining on Glen Gulch that season. Bill McLaren was the U. S. Recorder on Minook. Tex Rickard, since famous, worked in a saloon here in the little town, for a time; and young Rex Beach is still remembered as the life and soul of that camp—past members all of Rampart's Old Brigade.

Fifty-three soldiers of the Eighth Infantry were stationed at Rampart then; and on the day that I arrived, more still came in by steamer from St. Michael. The prices at Rampart, as well as other points on the Lower Yukon, were much less steep than those at Dawson. For instance, I got a dinner of roast chicken and huckleberry pie for a dollar. Flour was but two dollars a sack as against six at Dawson, and other things were proportionally cheap.

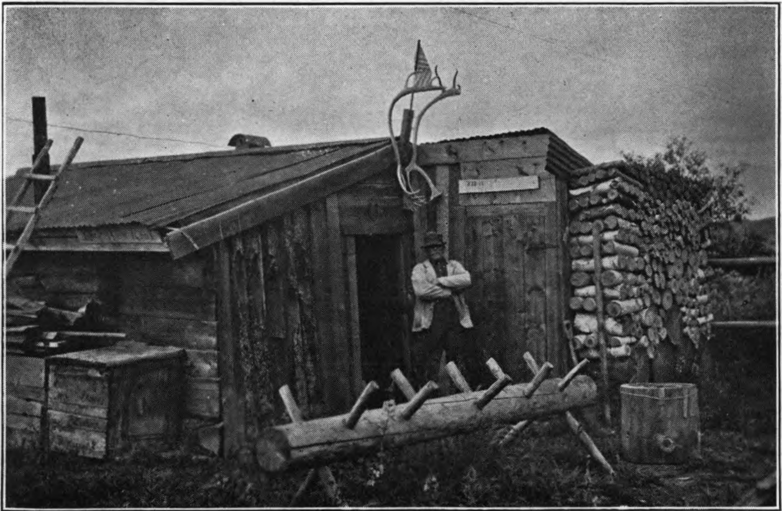
Twenty miles or so below Rampart City I came into the Lower Rapids, through which I passed about three a. m., the sun brightly shining. These rapids are not at all dangerous and I navigated many another section of the river where water was much rougher and yet where no rapids at all were shown upon my map. There was no good map of the river, then. Bad rapids were marked down where there were none at all, and other really dangerous stretches of white water had not even been indicated. Here for a little distance you can look distinctly down hill on the current, and a collection of big ice-scraped boulders rise up in midstream where the Yukon cuts his way across and through a tough ledge. But I had no trouble in avoiding them. The con-



"Loggers had been cutting wood for hungry steamboat boilers"

"The slow rhythm of my sibilant River."

"Summer fish-camps of the River Indians never slept."



Young Rex Beach once lived in this Rampart cabin.

stricted river is shut in by rocky but well-timbered, very lovely hills that must be eight to twelve hundred feet in elevation.

Alaska's trees are curiously experienced, traveled creatures. Down on the lower Yukon, a large maple log was washed up on the river beach. I'd seen no growing maples since I crossed the boundary line, so this log must have fetched down from near the sources of the Yukon, a lengthy voyage. The spruces here are wind-bent and wind-bitten, ofttimes to twisted, stunted shapes; yet they grow bravely and do not fear the wind, but wear a sometimes strangely spiral grain. One piece that I examined closely was a sapling only four or five feet long, less than two inches in diameter. It had been killed by fire some time before and was quite naked of a bark, but weathered. Its spiral, dense, and even grain made one complete turn to each three inches or so of height. Under the low-power magnifying glass I used, the rings of fresh layer wood shaped with each new growing season indicated that this " sapling " had been born about the time of George Washington's cherry tree! It scarcely seemed credible.

Some men of science claim that forests are slowly creeping southward and the northern fringes of such bold, brave, pioneer, small trees as these are being pushed back, showing that a period of greater warmth once existed here. They think that the whole tree-map of the North may be slipping south, because the forests too are migratory and by their movements picture not only certain cycles of the past but prefigure also transformations we must look for in an ever-changing world. The violence of winter winds here must be almost unbearable, beyond those limits where the Lower Ramparts of the Yukon shut the interior valley from the sea plains.

At the influx of the Tánana, my Yukon widens into most noble proportions, throwing the upper section of the river into insignificance. This had been the farthest point reached by the Russian traders, in early days. The Tánana is itself a mighty

stream, a Missouri to the Mississippi of the Yukon. While not so swift as the upper and middle Yukon, its waters are muddier and it drains an enormous area lying far into the south, up to the highest mountains of which McKinley is the overlord. Where the two rivers meet, they spread a sheet of water certainly five miles in width. The land is flat, with low hills rising further back; and in the distant south, at sunset hour in the late evening, the rosy, mighty peak of Mount McKinley, though so distant, glows opalescent above the darkened valley floor. I'd looked upon no similar towering massif, snow-beautiful in midmost summer, since long ago in Landour beneath the " snow-abode " Himalaya. *Kennst du das Land?*

I could remember well those rosy snows, incredibly celestial, seen through a garden vista. The rhododendrons on the hilly slopes grew there as nowhere else in all the world. Since childhood, the ever-greenish leaves and beautiful five-parted flowering of " rose-trees " have been a veritable passion to me. I was so little, then, but my first playground was that Eden spot of beauty. My second was the ancient Mogul glory of Agra, where in true mirror pool a child could look with wonderment on actual magic, for that clear surface caught and held the Taj Mahal herself, reflecting a perfection exquisite. I think that even a small child can draw in beauty through his very pores. The deep power of joy must be and is, I think—at first—based almost wholly on a picture world which catches all the vivid garnering of the senses; and if a child be fortunate enough to have as earliest memories things that are beautiful, majestic in themselves, those recollected hours, those lovely forms and sweet sensations will come to be habitually dear in a clear retrospective joy, fastened by invisible links to his affections. " The happy, prompt, instinctive way of youth " will keep and treasure all this precious book of pictures—near because lost, whole because torn—so that its color tints the whole of life.

The Taj Mahal undoubtedly did something to me, for as a

wee lad there in Agra I lived beneath that most poetic edifice of all the world—limpid and rhythmic as the lovely elegy it truly is, an ode to deathless beauty. That period is a dreamland, yet so real, when memories have leave to drift and open, as upon this journey. Remotest childhood became again a visible scene on which the sun was shining, and "all its sunbright features touched as with the varnish and the gloss of dreams." Gardens of Agra, more dear than may be well believed, became again a living presence of the earth. I walked again in beauty long forgotten. The Jumna washed the red-dark sandstone walls of Akbar's ancient city, designed by Moguls like the Titans that they were, yet finished with exceeding jewel-like craft. The pearl perfection of the Moti Masjid, of the Jama Masjid, arose against the azure sky of India. And above all, the gleaming and all-satisfying purity, the glorious domes and minarets of Taj, took shape again in aerial grace, floating in lustrous marble bubble, in jewel mosaic of spandril laid with agate, bloodstone, jasper, within those calm reflective pools. I saw a frozen fountain, more perfect even than the fragrant living fountains in well-remembered Mogul gardens of Nishat Bagh—lotus-starred pools where cooling breezes blow from Shalimar, where Akbar came with caravan of elephants, and Shah Jehan himself came with the lovely Mumtaz Mahal, whose pearl-like beauty built that Mahal dream in marble.

The Taj Mahal is architectural fountain, that seeks in flowing stone to symbolize the ebb and flow of life itself—in poetic ecstasy to dramatize the whirling squares and logarithmic spirals from which it was conceived. I saw it once again, in all the dream-like vividness and splendor investing sights and objects of our childhood. I've known keen memories since, evoked by fragrance of gardens the most exquisite—of scents and vistas for which I would this day give half of my possessions to enjoy again, recapturing

"Those first affections
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountainhead of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing."

As I had floated down from Rampart, in the slow dusk, the soldiers just arrived were camping for the night; and from the trees across the waters as I drifted out alone, came those so-always-haunting last two bugle notes of taps—hanging poised on air, uplifted always as on wings of sound, as in song-flight ascending—the notes that weary dough-boys the world over tell you can only mean "come home." I too had been a wanderer. I knew no roots, no home but that far India of my birth, exotic and unreal, combining both the bitterness of Lucknow and the impossible beauty of Agra. Strange mountain flowers of scent and sound and color, half seen or wholly lost and found again, gathered from fields of sleep, grew for me in the garden of Mnemosyne that night, as the sure River carried me to sea.

. . . On the north bank of the Yukon, across from and a little below the influx of the Tánana, other U. S. soldiers were busy building barracks for a post to be called Fort Gibbon. There were two hundred there, under the command of Captain Booth; and all were hard at work, clearing the underbrush, building cabins, and preparing for the winter. Most of them had come straight from the recent campaign in Cuba and gave me tardy but interesting information concerning the outside world. Their equipment seemed, and was, ridiculous. They had many horses and oxen, brass cannon, and all sorts of semi-tropical clothing and clumsy military gear and truck, utterly unadapted to this country. The oxen could be eaten, but what in ever they could do with cannon and with horses in these trackless forests was a mystery! In all this region there are only a few eminently peaceable Indians, and hence no need at

all for protection of that nature. And the summer myriads of insects would drive their horses mad, most likely.

If any possible trouble should arise (which was not probable) either among the few and scattered Indians or about the boundary dispute then joined with Canada, troops could have been sent much more effectively from some Pacific port than from any of these scattered military camps. The enlisted men were not at all pleased over the prospects of a winter here, and had already dubbed the post "Camp Misery."

Seeing me arrive alone after such a long journey—though Tánana was but the half-way point of my trip from Dawson—both officers and soldiers extended a most cordial welcome. The men were all of the opinion—and said so, openly—that a certain transportation and trading company had cleverly induced our Government to send them up here, ostensibly to check lawlessness and incidentally to protect that company's stores. Several ocean steamers had been required to transport these troops and their equipment from San Francisco to St. Michael, and then several more river steamers were needed to convey them up-stream on the Yukon. The profits to the company securing this contract must certainly have been large. While the officers were not, of course, so outspoken as the men, yet they felt just as the soldiers did about the folly and the uselessness of this military move.

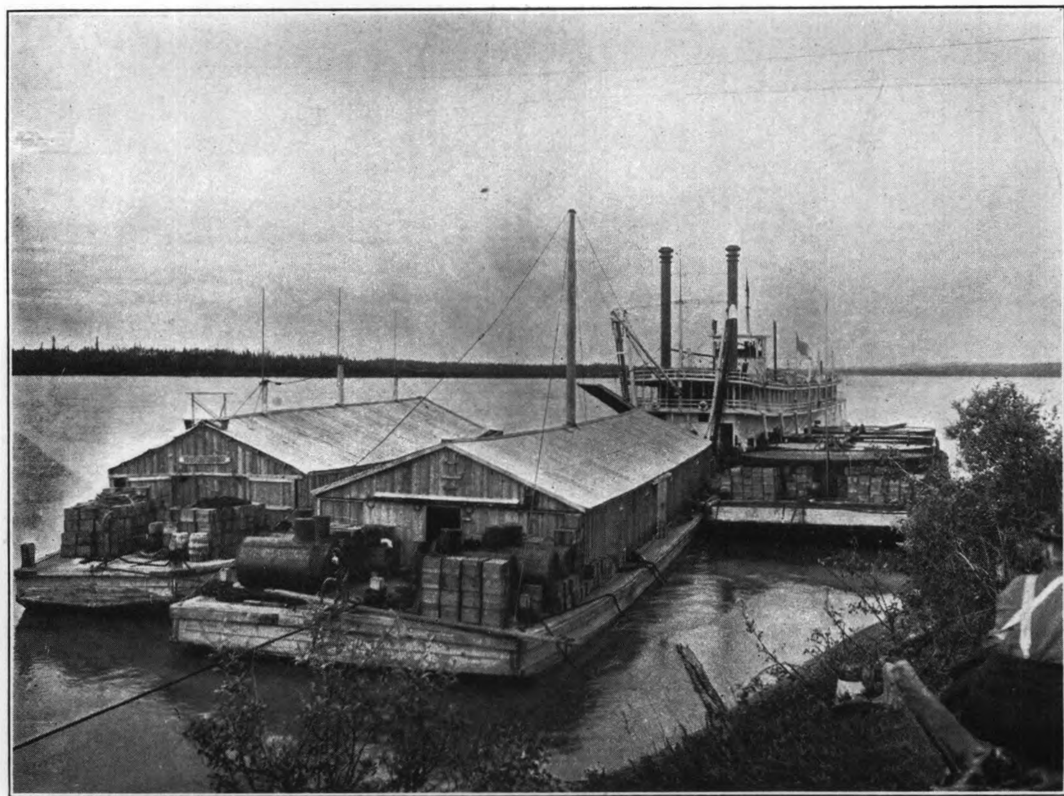
The Alaska pioneers had been amazingly peaceable and law-abiding—dime novels and Jack London to the contrary—and miners' law, just, prompt, efficient, had up to now answered all purposes. There were of course a few of criminal intent, as elsewhere. But soldiers were not necessary; were not in any way effective, as experience in Skagway showed so well. Sometimes they had even been the cause of trouble rather than its cure. What Alaska needed—still needs, in my judgment—is a smart body of men, patterned after the old Irish constabulary or the Canadian mounties—soldier-policemen, in-

dividually empowered to make arrests on their own initiative. Small station-houses manned by a few such men could be placed at frequent intervals, and the police provided with canoes and dog teams rather than with horses and artillery grouped at long distances in powerful forts. To-day they could use planes most effectively.

Though I was glad indeed to meet these officers at Gibbon, talk with the men, I felt as they did that this outpost duty was a useless, inane thing, which the soldiers quite justly resented. Our men made a poor showing, too, so far as mere appearance went, in comparison with the Canadians. The N. W. M. P. were always spic and span, even when on rough service. Our soldiers here were, frankly, dressed like bums. They took no care at all of their uniforms, and looked as though they slept in them—which perhaps they did, poor chaps! Any official foolish enough to send horses and cannon to Fort Gibbon, would also have tucked men up under the Arctic Circle without blankets, I've no doubt—and that direct from the miasmas of Cuba!

I left my camp above Fort Gibbon at eleven-thirty a. m. of the thirtieth, starting out boldly with full sail; but the wind soon changed to stiff ahead. I passed St. James Mission, a two-story, substantial frame structure with dormer windows, belfry, and all painted white. The day was Sunday, yet I had not realized this fact until I saw the open chapel, because the soldiers at Fort Gibbon were working quite as hard as on week days. This struck me, for in Dawson the Sabbath had been well observed and officially enforced.

There's a cluster of islands, one of them almost fifteen miles in length, shortly below the embouchure of the Tánana. After this great tributary joined us, the right bank of the Yukon continues high, the left bank low, until almost the very ending of the river. It was as though I drifted daily between two worlds, one closed to me, one widely open. Here the two



A Yukon steamer and her barges at Fort Gibbon

"The Tinneh canoe is slim, long and pointed."

met, and were equated. Sometimes I caught glimpses of high mountains in the distance, sometimes there was a steep bluff pressing close upon the river. Not long below Tánana I passed a curious series of mud and gravel palisades, perhaps a hundred and fifty feet high, forming an immense semicircle a mile or so in width. I was forced by the current to take the whole sweep of this. Huge masses of earth, sometimes tree-matted, constantly fell here, making a thunderous roar and a great splash—the noise accentuated by the peculiar intensification of sound across and through the water.

From the end of the Ramparts to the Koyukuk, perhaps two hundred and fifty miles in all, this steep and accidented right-hand bank presents a various wall, a calico of color in conglomerate, quartzite, yellow gravel, bluish slate and sandstone, and at times a soft, green rock with curious star-shaped specks cast in it. I couldn't help remembering what Agassiz had said about plutonic action, and how it played the most fantastic tricks with the crust of the earth, which seems as plastic in the grasp of that fiery power hidden within as clay in the hands of a sculptor. These are quite different from the banks along most of the upper Yukon, which rise in great rolling bluffs, spruce-covered, with thick underbrush between. Another curiosity in this section was, to me, the clear transparent water of small tributary creeks, but true port wine in color. I wondered what had tinctured it. Dead leafage from the turfy tundras? The color of this red-brown water was almost like an iron and iodine, although the taste was clear.

On the evening of July thirty-first, before I had made any camp and while still sailing, a great rain-storm caught me unprepared and for several hours poured down in sheets, harder than I have ever seen rain fall outside the tropics. It grew so quickly dark, I could not see my way at all. The wind howled out a gale and I knew well I was in gravest danger of crashing into one of many overhanging trees, or

grounding hard upon a bar in the swift current. To avoid disaster, since I was quite unable to make any landing in that wind-pitched dark, I beat up-stream and thus rode out the storm. At one next morning (by St. Michael time which I had got at Gibbon) when I was most disconsolate and drenched and desperately tired, the storm abated somewhat and I managed to get sleep—in spite of mosquitoes, a bed roll soaking wet, and sloshing bilge-water!

From the Lower Ramparts to the ending of the river, for half my length of journey and the whole next month of time, my diary constantly records rain and more rain, wind and more wind. The winds were heavy head winds, and the constant gale became monotonous and, at times, nerve-racking. It was an ever struggle to man the boat alone, keep dry and fed and reasonably safe from upset. The wind seemed blowing me forever back up-stream. It seemed to fight the river and to scream its nasty sentinel challenge, enforced by frequent jabs of bayonet to further put me in my place. Often I had serious trouble lighting a fire and cooking with wet wood; but, with a fire once started, it was easy to dry out more wood in my little oven. Wet day succeeded to wet day, continuously, until my soaked muscles ached and my very bones felt rusty at the hinges. This was a very different wetness than that I'd known descending from the Chilkoot. I'd passed beyond the Ramparts now, and this new cold was marrow-chilling.

But if the wind died for a moment, then a million active-tongued mosquitoes flew out at me from some ambushment—or from nowhere! I don't know which was worse. Years afterward Rex Beach, who learned about mosquitoes here at Rampart, wrote a book in which he has the villain die upon this section of the Yukon, in this very season, stung to madness by the pest of insects, alone and hunted on the river. You may have read that book (it's called *The Barrier*—which is just a synonym Beach took, as you can see, for "Rampart") and

thought that vivid chapter of insective torment a gross exaggeration. I can assure you, by the witness of my body, it is not!

So many people think of mosquitoes as a matter of low latitudes; but mosquitoes don't depend on latitude at all, and even arctic winter can't discourage them for they flourish aggressively around the whole Circle, in Siberia and northern Europe as well as America. They'll find a place and way to live. Mosquitoes depend on stagnant water, in which to breed; and I don't know a place where this is so abundant as on the tundras and in the timbered flats of these subpolar levels. Schwatka had described how the intense cold of winter sinks its shaft of ice deep into the damp earth, converting it into a thick crust of impervious stone. However warm the short summers may be, this heat is insufficient to melt more than a superficial portion of that boreal blanket, where only a swampy carpet of moss may flourish and through which the stagnant water can not sink or drain away. As the summer is not long enough or hot enough to carry all this surface moisture off by evaporation, (although in July here the weather can at times be insufferably hot) these marshes extend far and wide and the mosquito myrmidons have ample room to flourish.

With other changing scenes of my long journey, the Indians also noticeably change in personal appearance, dialect, customs. The Chilkat packers of the Passes were alien to the " Sticks " of Upper Yukon Lakes. The Tinneh of the tribes upon the Middle River were changing now to Lower Yukon people: Sooncargut, Melozicargut, Tosecargut. Upon the first two thousand miles of Yukon, I should say, the Native canoes were invariably of birch bark and of one unvarying pattern—slim, long, pointed—birch stretched upon a well-constructed frame of light willow and varying only in length, which might be eight to sixteen feet as designed for one person or for three. The seams of this frail birch were sewn with finest rootlets of spruce, then carefully calked with spruce-gum. The Tinneh

always carry a supply of spruce-gum in their pouches when on journeys; and if a leak appears, they go ashore, make a small fire, warm the gum, turn the canoe bottom-side-up, and smear the gum in semifluid state into the seam, rubbing well until it's water-tight. All tribes used a single-bladed paddle, and steered by incessant shifting from port to starboard. Here too they fished with the paddle in one hand and a large net, mounted on a pole, in the other. They all display consummate skill at fishing.

Indian camps were scattered every few miles and occasionally I passed by large villages. In summer these villages were all but deserted, for the families were distributed at various vantage-points along the river, busy now securing the winter's supply of fish. Yet it seemed that I could rarely slip by, even at night, without some of the Natives peeping from their tents. Almost invariably the children set up a shout as soon as they spied me, and always the dogs began to howl. Their dogs don't ever bark. This noisy reception made me feel very important, as though my passage were a matter really worth some notice!

The summer was by now quite well advanced, and the river's westing was also with a very southward twist. So now I note a changing latitude, and record in my journal the welcome sight of a few stars the night of August first—the only stars I'd seen since early May, in Dawson. I rigged my cosy tent-cover over my boat, so that at night I could be warm now and secure. Let the wind gallop and the rigging sing like harp-strings! I have eaten and I am warm. I lie upon my wolf-robe, smoking an evening pipe, the heat from my little oven and the sizzle of my drying wood blending sleepily in my mind with the drive of rain squalls. The river rolls beneath me like the stanchless flow of time itself while, looking up, between the driven cloud rack I come upon the garden of the stars.

E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle.

The Mirror of the Wilderness

THE afternoon of August third I passed the mouth of the Koyukuk River, another of the major tributaries, which comes swinging in from the north and with such a push of water that it seems to bend the Yukon further south; for there's a notable great twist here definitely away from the Arctic into more southern seas. The Co-Yukuk Sofka, as the Russians called the very grand steep castellated bluff, is stratified in perpendicular up-ended sandstone and around its base the waters sweep with a terrific force. A true gale beat the muddied conflux into heavy white-capped swells. Nearby I saw the notable records of old spring ice-jams which had scored deep marks on the marginal forests high above. All along the river I had noticed trees denuded of their bark by scraping ice, and here and there were places where a huge ice mass had deeply ploughed up mud and gravel banks.

I passed a prospector's coal mine and tried a stoveful of his produce, which burned very well and lasted all through the night, but left many clinkers. Here, too, I came on many Indian fish-traps. First they selected gravel bars that were hidden just below the water, and then drove down hundreds of stakes, neatly spaced in circular form, with a broad opening that narrows to an apex. The fish, once caught in such enclosures, can not escape—or do not.

Not very far above Nulato, five Indians put out from the bank and forcibly boarded my boat. I say " forcibly," for they were uninvited and they stayed on board for full two hours—my sole boat companions during the whole journey. Two of

the men were half-breed Russians, which they pronounced "Rooshian." They rummaged impolitely all through my things, and asked pointblank for many valuable presents—which I quite as definitely refused. One of the half-breeds was very overbearing, but I thought the others appeared to discountenance him, although things took a rather angry shape at times. I was courteous enough, but very firm. I gave them nothing but some pipefuls of tobacco and hot coffee. After this, they grunted and they said, "You very good, white man." I felt better!

But they had found my precious flute in their pawing and rummaging amongst my treasures and I imagined they might covet it—perhaps for the gleaming silver of which it was made—either as a pretty, bright toy or thinking it was something of great value. In any case, I was afraid that my dear flute was lost, for I could see their eager eyes upon it and I sensed the childish itching of their fingers. So I decided to play for high stakes—quite truly play, for all or nothing: Either to win them by its silver sounds, so soft, so clear—which seemed rather dubious from their not very friendly acts—or lose my flute and, very likely, a lot more. Won or lost, it should be with dramatic flourish, "with vine leaves in my hair."

I very quietly, but very quickly, reached a hand and took the flute away from them. The motion was entirely unexpected, but I made it with a wide smile for accompaniment. Then I sat down with studied ease in the boat's stern and motioned them to sit down, too. After a moment's hesitation, rather awed by this new manner of assurance and with swift glances as of children sensing magic, they squatted down amidships. I caught the cue. They were but children. I would amuse them, give them their fill of magic, and make the sweet flute warm their hearts toward me. And so I played. I played, for much more than an hour, the river bearing us along, me and my strange companions. They were delighted, rolled and

shook with pleasure like brown squirming kittens in a basket. They fairly purred with pleasure.

And then I offered it to them, to try to play. Of course they could not, and the silver flute was silent. I made some passes of great dignity (or so I thought!) remembering the professional magicians of old India. They were impressed; and it was comical to witness their amusement at each other, too—their bafflement, when one after another of them failed to force a single note from out the magic flute, although their cheeks puffed out like chipmunks! They passed it back to me at last, with great respect. My "medicine" was mighty. We parted as great friends. I was told at Anvik that I was very fortunate in such a happy ending, for the Koyukuks have the reputation of being insolent, the worst Indians of the Interior. They had murdered several white men at various times and one of them was lynched by McQuesten, Moore, and others. But that is another story.

About a mile above Nulato, the steep cliffs on the west side are sandstone and a shale, with plants and ferns growing upon the base. The full, deep river runs more than a mile in width. In other spots nearby it opens to lagoons, sometimes as many as five miles in width and studded thick with islands. I'm still six hundred miles above the Yukon's mouth when I tie up at Nulato, a very respectable-looking Indian village on the north bank, built on a level stretch of open land. The soil is rich upon the flat, and berries grow to giant size. The rippled pattern where the wind was running through the grass seemed very lovely.

Folk told me that the Russians built the furthest and most inland of their fur-posts here, long years ago, and probably some Russian factor was the father of my half-breed river friends. Nulato and the names of other little villages along the way are printed on the map in such large type (to fill the empty spaces of the wilderness, I fancy) that I kept always

looking for, expecting, some fairly largish town; but of such there was none. Nulato consisted merely of two rather small trading-posts, one of them presided over by a Russian half-breed. The rest of the town was wholly an Indian settlement.

From Nulato downward the river, although hundreds of miles are yet to be traveled, runs at all points quite near enough to Bering Sea to be influenced by this coastal climate and weather, notoriously treacherous. The banks are wooded still; and where the Yukon breaks in islands, the current is more sluggish. I can no longer expect the glorious weather of the far interior of Alaska. Traveling southward now, the nights are starry and quite cold. Prevailing winds blow up-stream, most unfortunately, the same south gale that blew me into Dawson on the upper Yukon now doing its hard best to keep me there. It certainly was a squally old stretch, the water a great depth in places. In favorable slatches I let out all my reefs and boomed along at top speed with the wind and current; but usually a head wind blew and my diary here is constantly referring to storms, cold, hunger, fatigue, rain—and insects. Try as he will, no one who ever made this journey in midsummer can forget the sting of the Yukon.

In one severe rain squall my rigging came to grief, the tackle jamming so that I could not lower the sail. It was imperative that I unstep the mast—a hard task even for the two experienced sailors who had built my boat, they told me. But, when one has to do a thing, one does! I used up every ounce of muscle I possessed—and more, I think, perhaps, for in a time of stress we draw on reservoirs of strength. The mast came down, as it had to, and I rode free again. My resting times were always imposed by the weather conditions, which often made navigation too difficult. Another time, when making the night's mooring, my boat stuck in some quicksand and I had the greatest difficulty in extricating ourselves.

—I said " ourselves " unconsciously just then, for my boat

became a very real thing to me, upon this journey. I think I know why men have always called by woman names the thing they love—especially a boat, a ship, a thing whose close companionship they most enjoy. Perhaps it's something rather deep in sexual instinct. We sometimes master her, for a brief physical moment, but her eternal spirit is unmasterable. We know this, in our hearts; know that she has, rather, mastered us.

Nature and Science bear the names of women, and Psyche, too, the very Soul. Those wise ancients were such good psychologists, they never went amiss in names that fitted! They knew that Memory, Mnemosyne, had Heaven and Earth for parents, and so belonged to both. And they told, too, in a most lovely fable that when Mnemosyne was mated with Zeus Eleutherios, she became the mother of all Muses—sweet memory and the highest freedom-bringing god together giving birth to the enriching arts. To every greatest realm of mystery and of research, men have given a woman name, instinctively: *Natura* and *Scientia* and *Philosophia.* I have a notion that it's something of this import which Goethe tried to say in those eight, great, and untranslatable lines, so musical, so haunting, and so full of singing overtones both in their sound and sense:

> "Alles Vergängliche
> Is nur ein Gleichnis,
> Das Unzulängliche
> Hier wird's Ereignis,
> Das Unbeschreibliche
> Hier wird's getan,
> Das Ewig-Weibliche
> Zieht uns hinan." [1]

[1] "Duns Scotus" is quite right in saying that these lines are untranslatable; but there is a paraphrase of their so-difficult compactness, made by H. W. Nevinson, which I think reaches well into their deeper meaning.

"All transitory things are but symbols of eternal truths; all that here is insufficient and incomplete finds its perfect accomplishment elsewhere; all mysteries beyond description in words are there realized and fulfilled; the eternal heart of womanhood, the Love that moves the sun and the other stars (as Dante wrote in his final line), leads us upwards into heavenly realms." M. L. D.

. . . A man can be alone, and yet forever be attempting to escape from his own inner self. That is the horror men call loneliness, an even more real horror in a city than in the wilderness; for in a city, numbers overwhelm humanity and "neighborhood serves rather to divide than to unite." But solitude is not the same as loneliness. In solitude one may discover his true inner self, not run away from him. In solitude you may find other selves beneath or over that one self you thought you had, and knew. Solitude is, rather, a kind of fodder for the soul—perhaps sweet, very often bitter, but chock-full of mental calories and vitamins if thoroughly digested. Tumult and disaster may be your lot, thereafter; but if you've eaten of this desert manna, the strength of solitude will be securely built into your bone and blood, a virus against many a crowd-infested malady. Aloneness is not loneliness. Rather, it may erect sure barrier against dread loneliness, by making friends for you of all the selves who live inside of you, moving about in worlds not realized.

For solitude holds up a mirror, both to the wilderness about and to the wilderness within—the visible world and all the wild surmises of the soul. The real adventure is the fight inside, the balance of those tugging opposites, the civil war of getting all this various crowd of selves to pull together—the crowd of diverse things that make up you or me into an integer. Our most dramatic moments will be those of utter tenseness, blinding vision, road-to-Damascus revelation, when we discover not so much a something from without but a new synthesis or understanding of something deep within. —And devilishly personal! Or, on the other hand, so godlike that we do not dare to call it all our own, but give a name like Conscience or like Duty to that spiritual trove—unnamable, whom we are yet forever naming—high instincts before which our mortal nature will tremble like a guilty thing surprised.

I realized that this was an adventuring heuristic, outside my science and along a strange, new road, approaching closer to a central problem of existence. But I had given half my life to physical science and it had left me half-way down the trail with strange dis-ease disturbing me, a sense of incompleteness and dissatisfaction beyond the probe of my own surgery. I knew a genuine want of that harmonious integration which keeps in health the insatiable mind. Those searching obstinate questionings of sense and plucking memory which Macbeth, Thane of Cawdor, put to his wife's physician fell beyond the reach of superficial leech-lore.

Wasn't man's pursuit of science itself, in very essence, a spiritual pursuit? What if I now devoted what was left of life—the other half that might be mine—to metaphysical research, the truth beyond the truths, as I had given all the other half to lower partial truths of physical? Perhaps I had to learn a deeper knowledge, go to a higher, harder school of thought, to understand such illness and dis-ease when spirit is the principal part that's needing treatment. If this physician were to heal himself, I'd have to find more things in earth and heaven than were dreamed of in the medical schools, or could be carried in my traveling pantechnicon. I'd have to learn the deepest springs of mental as well as physical control, learn how to use and exercise them.

Perhaps the fault was that I'd looked before on medicine as science rather than as art, the healing art. Perhaps I'd studied "how" and had forgotten "why." Perhaps I needed vision more than eyesight. Even Macbeth's physician knew, or guessed, that the mere giving of a medicine accomplishes but little, without regimen and reëducation, diet, and physicotherapy. My Lady Hygeia doesn't thrive inside a pill-box. In spiritual health there may be clogging, too, of metabolic products. I had great faith in the clean craft of surgery. Perhaps now I must cut down into and examine some tissues of

my own, to clear these symptoms of dis-ease by diagnosis, "cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff which weighs upon the heart." So I began to probe for what lay deepest hidden in that complex tissue, striving to dig up from the cellar of my own unconscious those black fantastic kobolds who had been making mouths of doubt at me.

Such probing, which began upon this journey, has since continued. To tell of it is quite the hardest task I know, for the mind of the individual keeps his own inviolate retirement. You must let the man of seventy years speak now and not the man of thirty-odd. For, just as you can not step twice into the same river, who can know that certain hour in which his habits were first sown, or point with definite wand and say, "This portion of the river of my mind came from yon fountain"? I am not speaking of departed preterite things, I am not weaving a mere fiction of what never was; but I must tell, or try to, of a something sensed then but realized more fully since, and use the terms of yesterday and now, woven together. Such thoughts are whirling fire, nebular, spiral, with long flame flying off in darkest space, integral yet stretching farthest miles from source. So difficult to catch, in cold calm words, the dizzy pinwheel of a fellow's thought that whirls in motion like the wheel of planet or the dance of atom, once set gyrating by some old creative thrust. The thing is liquid fire, is changing flux, each moment differing in heat and force—direction.

Within the first few years of life, a child possesses all the elements of his later experience. Those years are a rich reservoir, at least, in which to look for the beginnings of our thought. As a youth, a cousin of my mother sailed in an English ship for Calcutta, was made mate on the return voyage, and served as officer in the American Navy during the War between the States. As a boy, I used to love to hear him tell of his experiences. He built the *Albatross* and commanded

this vessel on voyages into distant parts of the Seven Seas. He invented a dredge which, I believe, is still used in exploring ocean deeps. I've often thought of him, these recent years, with a true kinsman's feeling; for I have come to believe that any genuine researcher into self is also an explorer of the saline " deeps." We grapple down, examine what is brought up from those older shore-lines of our lives—so hidden under the wide, open, surface levels—and make use in our safer and corrected charts of values and of outlines that we find there.

In my profession I must know—must also try to grasp the implications of such knowledge—that as an embryo I've passed through many stages in which I have resembled sometimes the amœba, the embryo of fish, amphibian, reptile, bird, lower and higher mammal. I have been each of these one time. And having been, I am; for yesterday lives in to-morrow. At each one of these fetal stages I have been endowed with all the needs and urges of that creature's special character. In my own self I have been—hence I am—a changing picture of the world in making. It is small wonder that the river waters hold converse with a living man, for living man was born of water. His first nine months were bathed in brackish water. Half of his individual existence he owes to a remarkably active swimmer. Here is a primal sympathy which, having been, must ever be.

> " Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
> Which brought us hither,
> Can in a moment travel thither,
> And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

As a physician—not as a poet, intimating immortality—I know that River spoke the truth when he told me that all life came up from, and must return to, the Sea. I know it by accepting certain facts pragmatically. I do not have to deal with

them idealistically, although I realize full well that poetry has a logic of its own, quite as severe as that of science because more subtle and more complex. I know the ancients wisely placed their wounded where the sea could wash and heal their open cuts; and modern surgery has merely rediscovered and relearned—made into a more chemically pure solution, for healing in our modern wars—that ancient wisdom. I know that in extremis, after a very severe hemorrhage, if there's no blood transfusion possible of proper category, saline solution can be poured into the depleted blood stream, and a man may live. The salt sea will revive his exhaustion, carry him through shock; his very heart will take, accept, and pump that patriarchal fluid as though it were its own. There is no mystery or magic to it, just simple fact—simple as the biologic miracle that air can lend its crystal to his lungs! For though a man live three-score years and ten, his body can not suffer greater shock than was that cataclysmic elemental change at birth, from water into air—demanding major readjustments which check all growth for days, are sometimes fatal.

There's something deep within myself, though maybe hidden, which has never quite forgotten those primitive experiences and stages, "fallings from us, vanishings," nor yet that primal labial language which is the lisping of ancestral waters. The dead rise in the living. "We are lined with eyes, we see with our feet." If the expression "self control" is to have any meaning, we need awareness of the beast, the child, forever sharing our own house of life. There are many strange potentialities concentrated in the nearly microscopic mammalian egg; and those many still-surviving-deep old selves who crowd my body, human and brute, live yet within my nerves and glands (even as the primal salt of sea dwells yet within my very blood stream) and they have something very vital and, I fancy, something quite profound to say about my preference and conduct. I have to listen to their speech, whether

or not I will, whether or not I understand it fully. They often cast the vote or veto of decision, when the whole clan of that strange kin called " me," related to the animal, the planet, and the atom, gathers in council somewhere inside my body to whisper in that echoing chamber of the human heart. Maybe Descartes wasn't so awfully wrong when he decided that a man's " soul " might lie within his pineal gland: three-quarters of a grain of reddish-gray, hiding behind the third ventricle of the brain, set in the middle of his skull—perhaps preserving yet the ancient wisdom of the serpent, there possibly presiding over destiny.

We have not solved as yet all the subtle relationships between electrons, atoms, molecules, and genes which give to living substance its peculiar, self-perpetuating property. We do know, however, that a man must live from the bottom up, since only when taken from the bottom can a man be whole. There's no true elevation for structure not erected on rock bottom. Yet how can I be whole, how can I know a genuine integrity, if I close up my conscious mind to all those many different creations, which I have been and still—vestigial or potential—am?

Our Saxon forebears had a fine old word for the top part of man, the wise-fool part which wills and wishes, stretches out gropingly into the unknown spaces and goes crusading after causes. They called this " inwit," and it seems a shame we've lost so good a word in modern English. If this Inwit of mine is truly leader worth his salt, and wishes to prove truly his superiority above and over all those other creature forces growing, living, in the body he calls his, then why not try to understand their strengths and yearnings, too—deem them not unworthy and unhallowed, but rather lift the animal being, refine the selfishness from which they spring, and so establish the autocracy of will to captain those clawing fingers? The mind I sway by can be king by kenning: overpower misrule

within and force obedience to an order, while at the same time giving play for individual faculty and genius to blend therewith, congenially. He can be priest, and teach a reverence for self and other selves and highest self. He can be prophet, if he have prophetic insight; for by his seeing further he can lead the surer. Prophet, priest, and king, Inwit can harmonize those deep-toned basic resonances, that breathe their own undying life, into a balanced and symphonic whole by grouping, by repressing, by reconciling the discordant elements, by leading out the individual performers to serve a flowing theme that grows like music.

A man is, in his own person, a veritable throng of witnesses —an army, a society, or a mob—depending solely upon his perception of that underlying harmony of warring opposites. He is " a fallen angel or a risen ape "—depending on his hope of glory. Because of this ingredient multiplexity, he is a being of unlimited and unpredictable possibility, capable constantly of transcending himself, insofar as he can take that dark inscrutable congestion and make them cling together in one society, make strife of opposites compose in harmony, make civil wars to cease. Out of it, somehow, has come something new, creative mind or inwit, quite differing in quality and process from the unthinking ways of a blind Nature: something articulate, and able to unchain the stupor of the dull inanimate; something knife sharp and surgeon clean, aware both of its ends and of its enemy. Through it, man may at least attempt to make those others his true allies and companions in his highest quest, crusading vassals under Inwit as their leader, in very search for the true cross.

Even though you have to grant there may be some tough fellows there amongst them, unruly and undisciplined, why can't these " kerns and gallowglasses " of the human body, primitive throwbacks, be persuaded to fight with and not against your highest inwit? Toploftical old Inwit—if he would

rule this outlaw gang and truly lead them, should he not either win their suffrages and sympathies, or beat them fairly at their own hard game, with their own methods, in a knock-down, drag-out fight, to keep himself top-side? He can't do that by shutting up his eyes and merely saying, "They're not there." They are there. You look into that mirror of the wilderness, and it gives you back in deep reflection your total self. You find yourself there, for the wilderness can only be what the inwit of man has brought to it—a man's ideal, will, vision, imagination, or any other word you choose to call the part which searches and which looks behind the surface.

We look long in the mirror of the wilderness and we see ourselves not only in our god-descended manhood, but looking long enough we see as well all that the unborn and the dead may know—the here and now, the then and afterward. Strange, wasn't it, that I who for so long had studied a profession supposed to probe the secret sources of man's life, should not have found that secret until I caught it in those days alone upon the silent and majestic River! Strange that I, who had dared write in books upon the biologic origins, had dared bring life to birth, had to come here to learn the simple secret which any child can know: that true being emerges only in solitude, that quiet and darkness as well as a retreat are essential to its brooding. Silent within Time's womb, man here absorbs the cosmos in mute intercourse. So, gradually, a soul is born, analogous to birth of body. Out of the depths and out of darkness, stars.

Here, in the mirror of the wilderness, in its reflection, I saw this man in new perspective. Alone, I saw that nothing in him was alone. I saw him as a part and partner of the sun, as focus through which something passes, shapes again, and passes on—as sunlight catches through a lens: a lens to make the near minute fact larger or more understandable; a lens, to draw the far stars closer, bringing the very rays of heaven to

a focus. I saw myself as merely lens or focus, alive if I be conscious of that shaping and reshaping, be conscious of what passes into me and on again, mysteriously reshaped, reformed —fact into thought, life into truth, giving to all the new arrangement of the mind. So simple, and so terribly essential, the lesson of my westward-flowing River, down from the mountains descended and drawing to itself the many colored waters from all the heights and bitter many tributary peaks, to hold them for a moment's flux so blended and then to give them forth again refreshed, back to the all-giving, all-receiving sea!

The lens behind the iris of my eye told me that I was parcel of the sun. My blood was tidal as the sea. Through time's effluxion, I was rooted in the earth, a whim of the dust, my very bone and flesh dissolvent into the same chemistry as are the bones of earth. "Dust thou art" can be reduced to chemical formula, the "dust" to which we must in terms of earth return being in assay the few cents' worth, the few pinches, of a mineral matter out of which, with binding of sea water, our little house of mud is built. The way of the eagle in the air, the way of fishes in the sea, the way of serpent upon the rock—some part of me had known all these. Seen in the mnesic mirror of the wilderness, they were not strange.

So, too, I am—or part of me still is—a man yet in the arboreal stage. For such an one is there, sly-hidden, grinning with concealed intent, whether or no I will admit him to my family conclave. He too can be a mighty helpful partner in a pinch and may be a good fellow to have around and friendly, when you have sudden need of him. I know it was some sort of primitive man, a primitive energy—not any fine M. D. from Edinburgh—who helped me in the two-man job of getting down the mast, that day upon the river near Nulato. I cried out for assistance—or Inwit did—and something out of primal forests leaped to help me there, and was a very fiend for energy.

I am not only earth and sea and sun, fish, bird, and beast, arboreal and Stone-age man—I am a woman, too. That's something very easily forgotten, but very true. A woman sits there in the council-chamber when I form my will, dream dreams, or fix my purposes. She's often helpful, very, in that inner council-chamber—helpful in putting down those saber-tooth and red-claw creatures crouching there. She helps

> "Redeem by love the individual sense
> Of anxiousness, with which they are combined.
> And thus it is that fitly they become
> Associates in the joy of purest mind."

Her voice is usually for peace and preservation. She loathes destruction, waste, or tearing down. Her thought is for the seedling, and she guards the seminal with a fierce care. Aren't full one-half of all that ancient family-council meeting in my body, women? For I had quite as many woman ancestors as men, and the old primal cells from which I grew knew sexual completeness, one-ness. All of us are bisexual in our embryonic stages and we can never quite get over that experience or forget it really, try as we will. Why should we try?

You know quite well I don't use the word "woman" as any synonym for weak. I've told you often my experience there; and no physician, surely, who has witnessed woman bear and do more than her bitter half of this world's work and passion, but knows *Das Ewig-Weibliche* means super-strength as well as super-vision. For pettiness alone is weakness, wherever found, whether in man or woman; and pettiness must lie beyond contempt or pity. No—but the all-male part seeks an instinctive happiness in the complete forgetfulness of self; his pleasures are the pleasures of getting out of and away from self. He flees from self, in fear. It is his weakness. He is afraid to be alone. The woman part is happiest in the things which bring a heightened consciousness of self, whereas a man

will fear self-consciousness as though a plague—unless he be a seer, a poet, or an artist. That is, unless he has made ally of the woman part of him and so become a whole.

Somewhere in myself, as part of me, I'm keeping all of the peculiarities of both the sexes, as vestigia; and since it is impossible to forget anything (although we easily mislay or falsely file those memories) these rudiments impel us to a vast degree throughout our life—mostly, perhaps, subconsciously. But why only in the subconscious? Why name our boat a woman name, why call Hygeia woman, or Science, Justice, or Philosophy, or any other loved and aimed-for good, and yet deny the woman part of any man—the part that makes him whole? To see the whole sum of ourselves, in thought and living, is to be truly wholesome—that is, a well man and intact, *integer vitæ.* " And the thought that was born to me in the quietness of that adventure—that in the wilderness, in uneventful solitude, *men for companionship must find themselves*—has come to be for me the truth. Maybe the only truth I know." I read those words in another man's Alaskan journal of quiet adventure, but in experience they are also mine.

To receive most vivid impress, the material must be inert, motionless, giving itself entirely to the pressure of experience: Gold underneath the die, sensitized film behind the camera's instantaneous shutter. Drama of what men do " when up against it " can not be motion-pictured. The essential drama is the secret structural change inside. —I am in such and such a fix. Very well. Stark alone, what have I *in myself* for ally, for resource to draw upon, for weapon? There is your drama of the North, as elsewhere. I know no other. Life is the more dramatic here, but not because of excess happening. Quite the contrary. Most of our Northern life is quiet adventure. It is a more essential drama only because more often met alone. We are caught alone on peaks of our dilemma,

and are forced more often to reach down into our own human souls—or wholes—for the answer and solution; or be lost in spirit and in fact.

Within that mirror of the wilderness my eyes looked on strange things, none stranger than my own, stripped, naked soul. I had held rivers in the lenses of my eyes, seen mountains moving, had reëmerged to rebehold each star. Yet what was great, what little? The littlest things were of such vast import if studied, so worthy of the deepest thought—the small things that confound the mighty. Tradition has it that a swinging lamp of bronze, so many centuries ago in Pisa, made Galileo both a scientist and a prophet.

"All the ways
Of moving things were challenges henceforth—
The shift of planets in celestial space;
A compass needle quivering strangely north;
The tide's soft answer to the moon's embrace.
Now no physician marks a fever's course
In liquid wisdom, save for that long scheming;
No polished telescope can ever force
A secret from a star, but through his dreaming;
No swaying pendulum has ever sung
A minute's life, but with that deathless tongue."

Philosophy has always leaned on Science, used the material finding of the day as fulcrum to move the physical earth a minim nearer heaven. Descartes learned from Galileo, as Bruno from Copernicus and Kant from Newton, William James from Darwin. But what was truly permanent in their philosophies has been quite independent, always, of that temporary fulcrum of scientific finding or hypothesis. The forward gain has not been lost, after the material fulcrum may have been broken in the bite of time. That's why the Spirit of Philosophy is not the fickle mistress which Material Science sometimes proves. Retraction is not part of her vocabulary, for

she does not seek to establish any fact or theory but merely to look critically into life's inner meaning, to reword our faith in life, to phrase our wonderment. Her systems are a living record of man's spiritual experience. Hence each new viewpoint adds, can not subtract; and what Philosophy once gains, she holds. The burning might of far stars seen remains, after the lens which brought it first within the realm of vision may have splintered. She speaks with those keen words of Metternich: *C'est toujours avec le lendemain que mon esprit lutte.* "It is always with to-morrow that my spirit struggles."

In journey down my River, fur men told me of the strange cycles that the fur trade knew. Some years were "rabbit years," and after that the whole fur catch was plentiful until the ten-year spiral began to swing through low again, and rabbits disappeared and other fur was not. It seemed a mystery, and was discussed by many a camp-fire. Yet now our men of science say that very likely all my Yukon's fur catch dangles on two points, one the sublime and one ridiculous. Fur years, they think, depend on sun-spots—and on ticks! For the Yukon's furry beasts are, even here, yet children of the sun, as all life must be. Our near star develops darker spots every ten years or so. These spots of surface change in that incalculable cauldron of heat, where very atoms must be tossed and torn, change both the quantity and quality of light and heat and even subtler ultra-violet solar rays that reach the earth. Beast, bird, and fish, as well as man, are ecologically affected, for there seems to be a causal interrelation of weather and sunspot cycles. Tularemia or rabbit-fever appears in similar cycles, waning with the number of the ticks each rabbit carries. In normal years the number is about four hundred. In tularemia years it jumps to many thousand—the reason astrophysical and lying somewhere within the body of the sun, again proving him our greatest key to earth phenomena. For we too live by combustion and our rate of living can be charted in

metabolic terms of heat produced. All life is tied, rivers and sun, rabbits and ticks and man. To each in turn I hold my lens, observe, and turn the observation in my thought. For there's no telling which may prove my factual fulcrum, to inch my weight of problem further along the trail I've chosen.

I look back to my boyhood and remember that grand old Puritan mystic, the prophet of my college years, who could find the Infinite even in "the meal in the firkin, the milk in the pan!" Parmenides of Elea, first poet among early Greek philosophers, chanted in gravely moving hexameters, "You can not amputate what anywhere is, from holding fast to what is anywhere." I turn to India and recall from the *Gita* a verse in which Srikrishna says, "I am the gamboling of the child, and the splendor of splendid things." But India is far. Though I was born there, my race is of a northern folk, a Scando-Gothic people—poured southward over Europe once to shake its early empires, found new kingdoms, and not stayed until their own kin stayed them with a barrier built of their own blood, the sons of former foray. A man of northern race, deriving greater part of speech and law and custom from that northern root, should find his heritage, his wisdom, in the north—be no outlander here.

And so, from treasure of the eldest North I take the golden Brynhild's given answer, when asked to tell the lore of mighty matters learned from the lips of Northland gods. Where were they written—sea-runes, word-runes, and runes of war, help-runes and thought-runes? "On the shield were they scored, that stands before the shining God; on Early-waking's ear, on All-knowing's hoof, on the wheel which runneth under Rognir's chariot; on Sleipnir's jaw-teeth, on the sleigh's traces, on the rough bear's paw and on Bragi's tongue; on the wolf's claw and on eagle's bill, on bloody wings and bridge's end; on loosing palm and pity's path; on glass and on gold and on goodly silver; in wine and in wort, and the seat of the witch-

wife; on Gugnir's point and Grani's bosom; on the Norn's nail and the neb of the night-owl."

—Am I ectenic, strained from a too long looking into the mirror of the wilderness? I have sight, but have I that runic vision? The River is my symbol, but my River is so great, so long. Once he was but a bratling stream, so tiny we must wriggle our small boat to get it through. He hurried then, with the unconscious energy of a small animal, a brooklet rejoicing in freedom, singing and laughing. Now he is becoming a weary River, old and gray and winding somewhere safe to sea, a wayward wanderer West. Soon, Time will quietly dissolve for him within the matrix of Eternity.

Under the aspect of Eternity, what runic difference, if any, between those sun-spots and the ticks on rabbits? One man of science, modern Druid, counts the one; another man of science counts the other. One holds a concave lens before his eye, one holds the convex; this man will focus on the structure of an atom, and that upon the structure of the cosmos. To both are sight—sight worthless without vision; vision that will gather the dual count to synthesis, leap the incongruous paradoxical divide, draw in one pattern both the sun and vermin, and provide portage 'twixt the threading sources of man's knowledge. So is the House of Science rising—

> "That interminable building, reared
> By observation of affinities
> In objects where no brotherhood exists
> To passive minds."

Silent, alone, receptive yet not passive, I must possess that quick alternate vision, which can not only gaze into the mysteries beyond supernal heights but can with equal steady eye peer closely down upon the prone dun plains of dull persistent fact: Two lenses, so to feast the eye upon the rarities of Nature's truth.

. . . There was a something waiting to be done, down where my old persistent self paused and awaited my return. It was a something which, for a reason, only I could do, if only I could do it. And now I knew I could. It meant a lifetime given to that doing, very likely; a dedication to one of those *Ewig-Weibliche* demanding causes or ideals that lead men upward into heavenly realms, if only they will study with divining eyes. Though if 'twere done, it meant a lifetime given to it—and a life lived alone, indubitably—that frightened me no longer and the way was clear.

The night when River spoke to me, he told me we should find new allies and companions further down, further beyond, coming from north and south to be our helpers. He knew it, and I found that he spoke true. Here, in the mirror of the wilderness, I'd looked and seen and found that in myself were helps and allies and a company of tributary comrades on whose assistance I could draw, should the black curtain of discouragement again descend upon my sequent toil, contending forward. The un-ease of my own aroused self-consciousness and doubt began to slip away, as Pilgrim's pack of burden from his back. I knew at last the freedom of full-made decision.

The River had been trying every day to show me that life was, in essence, an unceasing plunge into significance of fleeting moments hastening to their end, " each changing place with that which goes before "—not a condition but the very process. The mirror of the wilderness had given back reflection. I had held rivers to my eyes, like lenses. The Great Optician in the darkened room had fitted me with glasses to my need. What lay before so close at hand I could not focus eye upon it, I saw now with an almost fearful clarity. I knew what I must do, how I must do it, and that it could and should be done—alone.

Wind Upon Water

HALF-WAY between Nulato and Anvik are some titanic hexagonal prisms of columnar structure, far more impressive than those I'd seen once at the Giant's Causeway or in Fingal's Cave. Grassy holms were frequent here, flowers of many kinds were putting out profusion in a "blazon of sweet beauty's best," spiders' webs floated in air, the beaches of the river were shell-strewn. The south bank now becomes a simple flat, the north bank still remaining high and even mountainous in places. I thought, remembering my geology learned under Dana, perhaps here was the older river's mouth, its ancient entrance to the sea which the slow-moving hills have since filled in, exalting valleys in that immemorial process.

And so to Anvik, August ninth, first passing Kaltag where the winter portage over to St. Michael heads away. It's a short distance straight across, against the long way round I have to go by water. Anvik is but one hundred miles from St. Michael in a direct line, four hundred and fifty miles by river; but no human foot had ever traversed that straight line! Earth trails don't blaze themselves that easy way. To-day men fly that over-hop but I, a wingless creature heavier than air, was not allowed to trespass on those cloudy acres. My River will not let me take a short cut, even though now I know the ending. My way ahead was clear and I already fairly sniffed at times the final sea.

Anvik is a large Indian settlement, and while there I saw only two white men and one true white lady, all of whom were very hospitable. Your good friend Dr. Chapman and

his wife, those splendid missionary pioneers upon the Lower Yukon, have told you more of Anvik than I ever could from my brief lay-over. I realized while there, however, how very different, how clean and trim and much more well-disposed were Native settlements when near a mission house. The sight of a white cross never did mean so much of actual definite value in this world before. I knew a subtle feeling of security. I think that seeing that uplifted cross above the river bend and timber, gave me an even deeper thrill than seeing my own country's flag flying above the army post at Eagle. I did not fire off my six-shooter, execute the "coup de Colt," for I'd grown older with those days of River! However, I began to realize that missions here did wonders—and would do more if other whites, who were so far from Christlike, did not offset that teaching by their acts and do their best to bring demoralizing factors.

Dr. Chapman had known strange company in the winter of '97 and '98, when some of the gold-seekers who had foolishly embarked in poling boats for Dawson were able to ascend but these few hundred miles and then were forced to winter quite near Anvik—four parties of them here in 1898. Disappointment and homesickness made it a gloomy winter, Dr. Chapman told, after they had dug themselves in. So he organized regular social meetings for them, aside from his usual religious services; and these gatherings he recalled with greatest interest. One man had been a sailor upon the Great Lakes, another had been a guide in Yellowstone Park. One was a grocer from New York, one a former Pullman-car conductor, and a fifth he mentioned was an artist trained in Paris who has since achieved great honor. Each week they met, and each week one of their number spent the time telling of his personal experiences. A trader who lived near was an expert violinist and music was a usual part of the entertainment. Scurvy attacked three members out of five who wintered near,

though all of them later recovered. One of this group was a well-qualified physician. Dr. Chapman said that winters were severe here. At fifty-two below he was able to get butter from the barrel only with the aid of hammer and chisel!

Much of my time at Anvik was spent in listening to words of friendly warning. The good white people there were much alarmed for me, and begged me not to continue the journey alone. Two weeks before, a "cultus" Native had lain in wait on the shore some distance below on the river, and shot a white man for his outfit. The Indian renegade supposed the white man was alone, for his partner was lying asleep at the bottom of the boat. This partner immediately opened fire and the Indian took to the woods, but was still in hiding somewhere. Other stories of a similar nature were told to me, including the murder of a large party of Whites on the Kuskokwim River, not far to the south—a report which proved to be unjust to the Natives, as such canards often are when news is grapevined. The Kuskokwim expedition perished in a wreck of their boat. I verified this later from Dr. Romig, a surgeon then at Bethel Mission.

Just below Anvik is the last true Indian encampment, and forty miles further the Eskimo villages begin. They told me here that this was no man's border-land of tribal and of interracial trouble—trouble that began long centuries ago in strife between the tundra-dwelling Eskimo and the "tree" Indian; trouble accentuated and later fed by untold cruelties of the Russian fur-thieves, traders, Cossack blunderers establishing an empire here in blood. A century of witness to another way of life must pass, they feared, before that blood stain and blood feud would wipe away.

The friendly folk of Anvik begged me to wait and secure a trustworthy companion before continuing my journey; but I was fully resolved to finish, as I had begun, alone. I can't

say that my feelings were so very cheerful as I set out; but yet, judging from my observations of the Natives I had so far met, I did not see why the next tribe should change so much in their demeanor to me. At any rate I'd risk it, and promised I should take the precaution of sleeping as far away as possible from Native camps; and would fire off my revolver before retiring, to let any prowler know that I was alive, and armed. Later I was often amused at my own extreme—and quite spontaneous—politeness I assure you when, as often happened in the next few days, I might come suddenly on huge skin-canoes or umiaks laden with two or three dozen curious Natives who, for reasons of their own, were migrating. I remember quoting to the good people of the Mission my own father's "sailing orders," as he fondly called them: "By faith Abraham, when he had been called to go out into a place, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles." I wore an almost patriarchal beard by now; for weeks I'd sheltered in a makeshift "tabernacle." All that I lacked was Abraham's faith.

What faith I had was richly justified, however, for I still found my brown-skin river folk to be what I can only describe as "gentlemen." Soon I came to fear them little and really looked forward to seeing a thin column of gray smoke rising above the forest horizon at twilight, though for some time after leaving Anvik I knew a tendency to great civility and the frequent distribution of gifts whenever I met large companies. Nothing could have been easier than for them to pick me off from any one of countless thickets on the shore, or creep upon me as I lay asleep. This last they often did from curiosity, I know, for I was startled from sound sleep one night by a poke in the ribs. A too inquisitive Eskimo merely wished to know whether I was alive or dead! I grinned up at him and assured him I was a very lively corpse!

I never saw anything among the Eskimos but genial smiles which mirrored my own smiles to them completely; never experienced anything but kindness at their hands. It's true that in the upper-river country the Indians have been known at various times to shoot white men and take their outfits; but if these more than kindly lower-river Natives ever kill, I believe strict justification will usually be found in the insults so often offered by the white men to their wives and daughters. Jarvis reported how Native women ran to the woods when he approached their village—because of the known practices of traveling traders. Andrews has told me the same thing. And yet, not even years of treacherous dealing, exposed to the scum of whites who float among them at times, have been able to destroy the inbred friendly feeling of most Natives here.

The Yukon broadened once again to many miles in width, opening out frequently into large lake-like expanses with islands which must—some of them—be many hundred acres in extent. From Anvik down there is little growing timber, but always great quantities of driftwood. The ever right-bank mountains remain steep, rocky, naked of trees but covered well with a luxuriance of grass. From Circle City downward to the sea, nearly all the main villages are built upon this high right bank.

By August eleventh I note in the journal that nights are very dark, so that by nine-thirty I could no longer see to write. Yet even though it was so dark, I sometimes kept on going until ten or eleven, in my anxiety to finish the trip safely before a heavy frost should fall. Soon, however, I found night travel far too dangerous, and had to give it up and camp at sundown. The nights were now so chilly that I slept with the fur on the outside of the wolf-robe, thus securing a far greater warmth than when the fur is next the body. In sourdough parlance, "Trust the beasts to know how to wear their own hides!" —that is, with the hair side outside.

August 12, 1899. Reached Russian Mission at 2 p. m. Not much timber here. Mountains steep, rocky, and bare. Found a small Native town with two imposing churches of Russian style, painted bright red with white and yellow trimmings and green cupolas on which white crosses are mounted. The priest or "pope" as they call him is away at St. Michael. Talked with a half-breed who told me a lot about the "missie" which, so I gathered, still drew a sort of subsidy from Russian sources. So far, the Roman and Greek churches have eclipsed all others on the river, as Father Judge's does at Dawson. Some of the Natives I saw at Russian Mission to-day were almost as black as negroes. They are quite different from the upper-river Indians. There is but little activity here on the lower river. None but what these Natives display, cutting fire-wood for steamers. For many days past I have been out of the region inhabited by white men.

The geologic formation changes now, from hard blue slates to cliffs riddled with holes—volcanic stuff full of lens-shaped cavities. The rock is similar to that I later saw at St. Michael but is, I think, more crumbly. At Andreafsky the hills are plainly lower, my old friends spruce and poplar have definitely disappeared, and snags of driftwood rise in monster jack-straw piles upon the up-stream ends of all the numerous islands. The River is becoming a tremendous thing, no longer the nursling of the mountains but almost overpowering now in his immensity. And then one day I got a bit of comedy relief, in something a chance-met French-Canadian said to me. I had been thinking quite a lot about John Bunyan on this journey, for reasons you can guess. But this gay fellow told me about Paul Bunyan, of whom at that time I had never heard.

"Paul Bun-yán, he one great man. He dig out all these hill, log out all these valley. He make these River. Before come Indian, before come Eenglish man. He have one beeg

blue bull, for leetle puppy. He call heem and he come. Paul Bun-yán, he one great man!"

Threading my maze of islands here, I've quite forgotten to tell you anything of Holy Cross where Father Judge had spent the winter of '94 and '95 with his friend Father Crimont, now the Roman Bishop of Alaska. Holy Cross is one of the pleasantest places on the river but it is man, not nature wholly, who has made it so. The Jesuit fathers have erected neat wooden buildings, a chapel, a school, a home for the nursing and teaching Sisters. The garden and its circling fence run down nearly to the river bank, the buildings form a picture with the hills for frame. Potatoes, turnips, onions, cabbages, cauliflower, radishes, lettuce, grow in an orderly profusion that's good to see. I remember Father Judge telling that the Native children here loved raw turnips better than little Whites love candy! He said that health at Holy Cross was well assured, after the garden grew. At one end of the garden a statue of Our Lady is enshrined in an open-air chapel of evergreens, and a great cross rises upon the hill. Here where the Yukon is, as some one said, "too thick to drink, too thin to plow," the patient Roman church has built a barrier in the Wilderness that hedges, but that also flowers, perennially.

I recall Father Judge describing what great trouble he had known, on the lower river, teaching the Natives how to tell the days of the week, and so keep Sunday and Friday (though I had thought to teach a river Indian when to eat fish would be a rather coals-to-Newcastle task!). He took a little piece of board, cut it, marked it, and made a pin for peg to move down for each day. At the top was a triangle with one peg-hole in its center. When the peg stood there, that was God's day. Beneath the triangle were two holes for Monday, the second day of the week. Beneath these, in order, were three staggered holes for Tuesday, four for Wednesday, and five for Thursday. In place of six holes for Friday was the outline of

a fish, with one peg-hole that made the eye. When you the peg here, you knew that this was fast day. A row of seve holes made Saturday.

Now I remember once again Father Judge's graphic telling of how the ice moved on the lower river that year. It happened on a Sunday late in May, while the whole Yukon was a mass of ice. Suddenly a great cross appeared, passing down the very middle of the current, borne along by the ice and standing perfectly erect upon it, facing the bank where priest and wondering Natives stood. It was the cross that had been placed upon the spot many miles above, where Archbishop Seghers was killed. A portion of the bank had been ice-cut, and now the cross was moving down, tremendously impressive as with the dignity and solemn majesty and pomp of the great river it rode triumphantly to sea, white in the May-time sunlight in the midst of roaring waters, the glistening ice-floes. How far the cross was carried, he never knew; but as far down as eye could see, it rode majestically. And all the time while it was passing, the bell upon their little church was tolling.

Here's a journal line which I left out a while ago. I was a little hesitant about reading it. But I'll be honest. Here it is: *August 12. This country makes a fellow feel religious.* Not much of a sentence? Perhaps not. . . .

The nights were really dark now and I cooked by candlelight, after the day's work was over. Sometimes a duck, sometimes one of the myriad geese mobilizing for their soon autumn journey south, but usually king salmon or a brace of grayling formed my evening meal, while rolled oats set to simmer were my breakfast standby. My diet was meager, two meals a day with sometimes a bite of cold fish for luncheon; for I had learned to eat like an Indian, only when I was hungry. After a cold, perhaps wet, day of wind and work, I'd get my shelter up, my candle lighted, my kettle humming, my goose or duck or fish well cooked and eaten. Then, hastily, I'd wash my

er dishes in the river and lie down upon my robe, my feet the fire and my pipe in my mouth, to write a few lines in my journal—the sum of what the day had meant if, by a chance, alone, to-day, I had seen something truly, reflecting on my journey with emancipated mind. These little seasonings of animating thought sweetened the labor of my Yukon log.

There, in that richest moment before sleep, I looked up into the enfolding solemn shelter of the night and many times I caught a shaft of ancient radiance and heard the voiceless preaching of the stars, whose very names were music. I called those brightest names, from sight or memory: Arcturus, guardian of the bear—unguidable Arcturus with his sons; Aldebaran, "the follower" of the lovely Pleiades; Altair, that brightest star of northern Eagle; Sirius, ariser with the Sun; and Vega, "falling," that clear harp-note into which, through endless time, our sun-drawn group is pitched through stellar space. The stars seemed so much closer here than elsewhere upon earth! There were the small and faintly luminous stars, much older than our sun; and there were blazing, blue-white Titans, the youth of a family which can measure star-life in units of a billion years. A thousand years are truly as a day, in such cosmogony.

In silence and in steadiness they preached a navigational method for reaching haven, port, or Heaven—thoughts all brought closer now by a remembering of that simpler creed of childhood. Yet every learned scientist must have his ideal haven, a method of conducting life as a whole, its end written upon the tables of his heart. For no true science can develop without philosophy. Fichte challenged men, you know, to busy themselves with doubt, knowledge, and belief: the character and destiny of man, undivorced from the character and destiny of Nature. No man lives who has not known his god-like moment, sensing in some degree the empire we inherit as Nature's children through the strength of Nature, unrejected

by that great quintessence. Since the word "haven" can be applied to the whole voyage of life—the ending of the course, whatever course, human or cosmic—then why hesitate to spell it with a capital H? Upon the wind-swept, hungry river, the fires of all the stars were burning now, of nights. Here in this solitary place, man still was Nature's priest, tending the spark of heaven *living in our embers—fugitive spark, remembering.* Do you know those lines of Hagedorn?

> "Slave of a dream!
> What are the stars to you?
> I have the answer of the heights and deeps. . . .
> There is a fire in man, a fire whose sparks
> Forever seek their kindred. They ascend
> As the stone falls, by laws beyond the will's
> Propulsion or intent, escape their prisons,
> Ascend: through storms, ascend."

What can a man see, looking up at stars? All that astronomers can see or help themselves to see with powerful intellect and numerous symbols on a piece of paper; and yet the mastery of special mathematical technique, the wide expository talents of a Jeans, an Eddington, the coruscations of the Cambridge theoreticians, even all these can't help me truly to see the stars, if I forget that Mathematics grew from Neolithic needs and forget Science's self as a mere by-product of social crafts. The universe disclosed by science shows but a negligible fraction of the whole. A telescope is not the only lens through which to view the stars.

Back in the Yale Observatory, when yet quite youngish, I helped to pluck down Chronos from the very stars, made them control man's ticking little time, sent out their message on a coppery thread, tied Cosmos-born eternities to the ephemera of sun-day. Why could I not, as a mature man now, employ myself by fetching down a star-time for my own soul's timely guidance—instead of being, as I had been for years, a divided

person occupied with things? I must observe (alone, as observation should be) and contemplate (alone, as contemplation must) and win thereby more competent check and more celestial-born control for this fast-ticking mortal clock of mine, wearing itself away in cordal beat upon this darkened speck of stellar dust. It meant I must forego both practice and the practical, become true " fakir," searcher after truth. The noise of water splashing in the night, told me my place at home was not unfillable. The ripples came and went, the River's self ran on. My shoes, my niche in my profession, could be filled as well by others—perhaps better; but no other could find for me the right solution to my personal equation in humanics.

Some think that the astronomy of Shapley, De Sitter, Oort, van Rhijn—extending the circumference of our universe still further out into abysmal space—knocks economics cold, as a " dismal science." I don't. Some think of Euclid as a prig, " with his smart-alec Q. E. D." I don't. Some think the majesty of heaven " mere mathematics." I don't. Some talk about the space-time continuance in terms of " those frozen and illimitable legions " and " the tyrannous number of the stars "—our earth a mere dwarf planet of the dwarfish sun, slung in a giant galaxy of stars which is in turn but one of countless millions of such galactic systems. I don't, I can't. Stars don't appeal to me that way. I much prefer to forget those terrifying rows of astronomical noughts, a cosmos two billion light-years in extent, and rather catch the twinkle of the stars, discover both their strangeness and their loveliness. " Our vision puts a pattern on them," Ivor Brown says, " and the pattern is beauty." Only the uninformed imagine that philosophy is unconcerned with beauty. The love of wisdom is a trinity conjoined of three: one part concerned with truth and how to know; another with the good and how to seek; the ultimate concerned with beauty and how to open spirit eye

to see. The thinking part of man, his will, and his emotions—all three are here, " the guide of life." That's written plainly on your golden watch-key of the Society of Philosophers. And there's a hand etched in below, you'll see, pointing to seven stars.

We have our own terrestrial share in all the glory of those stars, if we but claim it. We can use stars to tell the time by, sail by, or to love by. We can be lifted by them, or be humbled. Their steady contemplation forces reflection, until man feels himself incorporated in this cosmos, willing to believe at last that his life, too, is somehow tied, committed, to something far beyond his daily finger-touch; willing to believe that the soul " hath power to know all things," because perhaps " the Soul that rises with us, our life's Star, hath had elsewhere *its setting and cometh from afar* " ; willing to believe, or to receive at least an intimation of, immortality.

I am Earth's atom, and our mother Earth herself is but a wandering spark from high among that silver throng. So we, the sons of Earth, are destined to be ever troubled by those dreams of stars, and forced to answers for the Hebrew writer's questioning of what is man, in the midst of such boundless creation. It seems to me that the truth-loving part of man can never keep from yearning toward the high exactness of the stars. It seems to me that stars are truly kindred to our purer mind and intellectual life. Our personal chaos may be germane to the universal chaos, the vastness of a boundless cosmos still may baffle; yet with the fundamental constant of the speed of light in travel, those far stars flash their steady message of the law and order which pervade a universe in motion—whirling electrons or rotating galaxy. The navigator wishing to understand life's river, looks up and is no longer lost. There's nothing soft or flabby about stars! They are positive, peremptory, stringent, exacting. There's manly virtue in their constant study and any mortal who has hitched his

wagon to the power and glory of a star has solved his motor problems for eternity. These blessed candles of the night help us to disengage the eternal from the temporal, to catch the universal in the singular. I think of them as harbor lights marking those ports of truth which we, in darkness lost, are toiling half our mortal lives to find. They lend a cheerful confidence in things to come.

Such looking on the stars makes human years seem moments, under the aspect of eternity. They teach us how to live; with other men and Nature; to take the straight and narrow way which leadeth unto life; to render up a really true account of talents; to love the lovable in other men as I would value any lovely thing in self; to be all-merciful to other's faults but merciless to my own swerving. Such gospel and the scientific gospel are but one, for Christianity and scientific outlook are of one mind upon the matter of a man's transcending self. Christ, like all true men of scientific thought, demanded quality. He had a way of being short. He was not given to soft words or qualifying. "Go, and sin no more," "Love your enemies," "Seek and ye shall find" are compact formulas for social problem-solving, more sharply crisp than Euclid at his best.

It was said of Halley, wasn't it—the Astronomer Royal—that while others, even his good friend Newton, could and did forgive his few mistakes, Halley could not forgive his own? To him, a blunder was a sin. He'd learned that from his study of the stars. In us, remembering, looking up to stars, there grows that obscure sense of possible sublimity whereto with every growing faculty we do aspire; feeling still that whatsoever point we gain, there yet lies something further to pursue. This autocatalytic force in man is part of the very credo of pure science, and of the very Christly credo, too.

His name was often in my mind, those days near Holy Cross; and all the little white-walled missions of this lonely land kept

speaking to me and reminding me of something far away and long ago and very closely knit into my memories. Christ, too, was part of India—or so I had thought fondly as a child; for it was as a child in India I first heard that unforgotten story, and dimly felt the mystery and beauty of human shape enfolding divine substance.

The name came to me always spoken in a woman's voice that flowed along my dreams, my mother's telling. She told me of a little boy who had got lost one day, and how his mother worried. Although so very small, I understood a little of that worry; for little boys, I knew, were lost so easily in the old, twisty, oriental city, if ayah wasn't always near; and too few years had intervened since Lucknow and the siege, which she had known, for mother's heart to be quite free of fear for me. Hers was the face most loved, the hand most clung to. She told me that the mother of the little Christ-boy found Him in a temple, talking to some elders. I thought that "temple" was a very pretty word, a word that sounded very white and lovely and had soft curves around it. She said a temple was the place where God lived. And because I myself had seen a something built by magic, not by man, close to our very garden—something so white and curved and beautiful, glowing soft and round as a great rajah's pearl, that rose in sweet reflection in Shah Jehan's garden near—I felt that it must be the temple, and God lived there. If any little boy, like Jamie, should run away from ayah and be lost there, he too would talk with elders. For Jamie knew what elders were. Elders were beards, soft, white, and flowing beards, that tickled but were nice. And elders sometimes told you stories.

And when she told of soldiers, who came to take Him in a garden, the soldiers were fine-coated British officers who jingled pleasantly and glittered with bright gear, were very soapy clean. I saw the soldiers come quite clearly; for that garden always was our Agra garden, or else it lay amongst

the rhododendrons of the hills. I was too young to know another land or any other place or time. I was the age when all was now and here. So Christ, too, was of India, a woman's voice telling an old, old story, in a sheltered garden overhung with beauty.

In later years, precisely as a tester of precious stones tries hard to show that they are false—solely because he loves them—so I attacked that Christian way. I brayed it in a mortar, assayed it by cupel, and gave it every test I knew, trying my level best so to destroy it. I freely say to you that I failed utterly in my severe examination, and so emerged with a complete intellectual honesty regarding the truth, the beauty, and the worth of the Gospel of Christ. The gospel *about* Christ is quite another matter. It seems to have little or nothing in common with that navigational attainment of a haven, possible to every wandering bark, which He so clearly and so simply pointed out. That is perhaps the trouble. If we might only keep Christ's self, the Carpenter of Galilee—in purity, in patience, in humility and superhuman grip on truth, as climax of divine investiture in man after his long, dim, groping search—and jettison the dark historical accretions! The true Gospel of Christ is far too simple, rational, severe, to suit the theologians. Rather, it is the scientific method glorified and humanized; for there is something genuinely implicit in true scientific thought, which is forever transcending this time and this place, forever reaching away from and out through the insufficiency of " natural " science.

Nor does the Christ's own way or word seem to me the least dependent upon any set of verifiable facts, though not of necessity or even frequently antagonistic to them. True Science and the Gospel alike have no existence save in the minds of individuals who, through following and keen investigation of the way, have become truly humble. My own reason for believing in immortality is, to-day, just the same reason that

the River knew the Sea—no better. The River gained my confidence by stating truly what came within the range of my then understanding. Therefore when he told me things beyond my comprehension I still believed him. Royce said, you know, that Nature as we see her in the gross is far too complex for our simple minds to grasp. She hides her secrets cleverly from untrained reason by revealing them all at once. She confuses us by her diversity, her richness, her complexity. We are like little children who, given one toy, are happy; given a hundred, we are dazed or wearied. So Nature's man-child whimpers, or falls asleep. The questioning mind, by patient, slow experiment will separate particular groups of fact, will take one " toy " off in a corner and examine it closely, alone. Experiment so stands as a sort of questioner or interlocutor to Nature. We ask of Nature, " *Is it so and so with you?* " If Nature, questioned through experiment, says " Yes," then our hypothesis is verified. Our questions knock upon the door of truth, and it is opened. Ignorance is indeed a very brisk lad, but pilgrims soon discover that he hails direct from the Country of Conceit!

Science is very humble these days. Only the most ignorant pretend to absolute knowledge and men have grown most doubtful about many things of which they once were very sure. To-day even the Law of Conservation of Energy, the very foundation-stone of that nineteenth-century physics I had learned at Yale, is found to be statistical and not exact, resting upon a still more fundamental quantum mechanics! No wonder that an Oxford wit defines once cock-sure science as " the continuous discovery of its own mistakes," while thinker Einstein says: " To understand is to draw one incomprehensible out of another incomprehensible."

Perhaps the meek are, after all, to inherit the earth in long-deferred beatitude; for Sir Alfred Ewing learnedly points to species which have perished through the very amplitude and

efficiency of their personal apparatus for attack and defense. After all, how can an acquisitive society, with the tribal customs of a nation of traders, continue to make individual possession the basis of life and yet hope for either peace or survival? A "saint" in India sees the paradox and can find rapture by relinquishing desire; for, from the point of view of India, it is difficult to reconcile the god-like with any notion of worldly acquisition. However, to the mass of men to-day, attempts to base life upon any foundation other than abundance of material possessions seem absurd. "'Give me not riches' is the prayer of one of ten thousand," said Bunyan, and if he were alive to-day he'd surely raise that figure several ciphers. Yet "whence came wars and fighting among you," but from that governance of greed?

The seeker loses, and the loser gains. The simpler life is pleasanter; it is to escape worry and to find freedom. The River gave me that, and more. Over the slow-moving River I bent and saw and heard. Sometimes the cost of something infinitely precious can only be paid in terms of freely given faith. I had myself come very far, in faith, to find the simple healing of my River; and like a certain Captain of the King of Syria's hosts, I too had doubted, questioned. Wasn't it foolishness to seek the muddy Jordan when the rivers of Damascus are better than all the waters of Israel? "May I not wash in *them* and be clean?" But like the leper, Naaman, I too had dipped myself there seven times; and though "ten talents of silver and six thousand pieces of gold and ten changes of raiment" might not recover me, my flesh became again like unto the flesh of a little child, and I was both refreshed and clean.

The "practical" man loves to sneer at the speculative man. As though one could be ever truly practical who did not look to see the way ahead, the metaphysical above the physical! I think the human mind needs terminal facilities. I don't believe

that the chief end of man is to be a good physical animal, or even a very superb animal. I believe he must be something better than the best animal. I believe in the initial statement of the old Westminster catechism—as I myself will to interpret it: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever": To glorify the God-like part which I can seek and find and know in myself, for I can know no other—and enjoy and cultivate as friend and leader that God-like part, forever.

Within this lonely land, this Jordan wilderness, companioned by its wind and water, the furniture of heaven pictured in those old prophetic stories gets set and fixed inside a man and so translated into universal characters that he can draw no line of demarcation between himself and timeless things. Instinctively he tries to set himself in tune with the spirit of truth, and for eternity. No other haven has attraction. I saw that the truth-loving part of my own spirit was something that to sin against could not be pardoned—by myself. What else was the philosophy, the science, of the Galilean? His cross had walked these waters where I stood. His crosses set on hills had forced a lonely man to write down crudely in his candle-lighted dark, "This country makes a fellow feel religious."

I could write no more that night, perhaps because an inhibition out of eldest India still held me: Objection very real to painting my true likeness, a fear that such a vivid likeness once set down would give away a dangerous control over the spirit of the portrayed person. There is a primal fear of old black magic latent in us, a dark unreasoning fear of the occult, which ties our tongues from speaking of the things of spirit.

You have that portrait, now—and yet, somehow, I have no fear. To-day I can renew that gesture, reaffirm that faith. There's no black magic—only the stars, shining through that dark which serves to make them real, unmoved above the moving wind and water.

Delta and Omega

WE are in Eskimo country now, and birch canoes have given place to kyaks and to umiaks made of walrus hide sewed "green" over a light framework. The larger, open umiaks will hold twenty to thirty people and are sometimes forty feet long. The Russians called these *baidaras* and you sometimes hear that name upon the lower river. Indians do not like this lower land, for it will grow no birch for their canoes, no spruce, no larch, no cedar.

While birch canoes are very easily handled and actually do "float upon the river like a yellow leaf in Autumn," still the clumsier-appearing skin boats of the Eskimos will stand enormous wear and tear, even though you can see the water straight through the bottom! The skins of which they're made are quite translucent; but though your feet depress that shell of hide as you step in—which gives you a queer sense of insecurity—that yielding, flexible, tough skin will bear up under a full ton of weight, amazingly. The seams may rip on rock or ice or snag, but can be sewn again; and on a journey every Native woman takes her sewing kit along, her precious needle-case and bits of gut and sinew. The frailty of birch would never do, here where the waters fill with ice so many moons of the year. Besides, birch doesn't grow here, but the walrus does! Just as the British Columbia and Southeastern Alaska Natives use the dug-out cedar because these trees are handy, so do these crafty people use what's growing in the pastures of the sea and close at hand. They perfectly adapt it to their purpose, nor do the Eskimos ever leave the seacoast

for any distance inland. The tundra is the Land of their Fathers, and they do not feel at home in a land of trees. Their umiaks of walrus hide are open boats, while kyaks are merely seal-skin canoes. Covered over and with circular hatches, kyaks shed water like a duck's back, each paddler—one to three of them—sitting snugly in his own manhole. My admiration is profound, both for their boats and watermanship.

Many times I delighted Eskimo acquaintances with small presents, such as mosquito-netting, kerchiefs, matches, or a tool of some sort. I have a warming recollection of their pleasure in these little gifts. Often I played my flute to them and let my bronze Eskimo friends look through my hand-lens or my little telescope—a source of wonderment to them and great amusement to me. Sometimes I overheard them call me "the man who wears two pairs of eyes!" I showed them everything I had, of interest.

While the up-river Indians accepted presents as eagerly as children, only once did they give me anything in return. I had been particularly generous in trade with one old fellow, who shortly came back and with great kindness of manner gave me some dried salmon. The Eskimos were much more open-handed and often made me little presents. The one I most treasured was a beautiful tobacco-pouch that had been very quaintly fashioned from the embryo of a seal. Some people brand the Eskimos as "beggars," but I never found them so. Andrews tells me he has known them almost to die in their igloos, or tupeks, not asking anything; and he was seven years among these kindly folk, nursed them through two serious epidemics.

In trading with the Eskimos I used tea, dried fruit, soap, and bacon. I always kept on until some one said: "You very good white man," or frankly looked pleased. Their faces were expressive, open as children's faces. Usually I added some trifling present even after they appeared satisfied, so that there

was no question ever of an inadequate quid pro quo. They were always hearty in their friendliness and often very helpful in giving me advice as to channels. I could see that, too often, white men have imposed on them by trickery; and when whisky changes hands here, there is apt to be trouble for any one who follows a little behind.

The Eskimo men were usually smooth-faced, though with occasionally an oriental-looking thin mustache or imperial; but, though their facial hair was scant, most of the men had great thick shocks of hair upon their heads. I found these people honest, friendly, not wanting in any family tenderness, and almost unfailingly good-tempered. They were usually quite sensible in preferring useful articles to something merely ornamental; but if they took a fancy to some novelty, there was no price they would not offer me in trade. The women were stout rather than fat, with blubbery but good-natured, smiling faces. Sometimes the only way I could distinguish sex was by the parka shape, the women's being longer and usually of apron design in front. I don't believe these women are the unfeeling, tough-grained and insensitive "primitives" they have been pictured. My eyes have seen a very different picture, and my ears have listened to a different story. Once on the lower river I heard a woman in labor, a long distance away, and the sound was practically the same as that of a white woman. I could easily diagnose the First Stage.

August fifteenth I passed by Andreafski which, though my map placed it on the Yukon, was really hidden away some distance up a tributary stream and so unwittingly I passed it—to my great disappointment, too, as I relied on filling up my larder there at the trading-post. A little below I stopped at a Native village and, after giving some small presents and sharing my stewed peaches and tea, I invited myself to shelter with them from the heavy rain, in their kashim or winter club-house from which a friendly smoke was rising.

To enter, I had to go on all fours for eight or ten feet along a half-underground passageway, for these clever Eskimos evidently discovered long ago that dead air is a poor conductor of heat and that warm air will rise. After pushing aside the skin flaps guarding both ends of the passage, I emerged into a single room containing many men and boys, most of them stark naked, lying on rather greasy wooden bunks which had been polished smooth by long use and were a darker brown now than their bodies. A smoldering fire burned in the center, the smoke escaping partly through a small hole in the roof. They examined me, talked about me, and laughed heartily both at and with me. For I laughed also, and we all quite enjoyed the novelty of the situation. I was just as soiled as they, and certainly no handsomer—which is saying very little—in my dripping rain-outfit.

The river Eskimo fishes in a different fashion from the river Indian—different, too, from the Eskimo on Bering Sea whom I saw later. Gliding quietly along over the water in his light kyak, he is incessantly watching for the annular ripples made by the salmon beneath, and he can judge the size of the salmon by the character of these circles. When he is satisfied that a sizable fish is causing the surface disturbance, out shoots his bone-tipped javelin, aimed with a seeming nonchalance; but when he draws it in, with line attached, that predestinate large salmon is almost always impaled there! Such judgment and such skill seemed to me beyond the feats of Indian jugglery. I knew from my own experience, shooting fish on the upper Yukon, how tricky distance can be when the object is refracted through water. Yet with the few, poor, scant materials at their service on this gaunt and naked delta-land, these folk have reached an acme of perfection in the construction and use of their tools and craft. I respected them, and deeply, both as expert fishermen and for their general manliness.

While far from being the " land of awful desolation " it has

been sometimes dubbed, the country upon either side has now become a vast and swampy moor of sedges, lichens, moss, or at most a scrubby willow fringe. The tundra sponge was a surrounding land of mystery, golden-brown in sunlight, gray in the rain, brightened at times with bits of autumn red and softened by the frequent spots of gleaming reindeer-moss. This is the velvet tundra, treeless plain, interminable and full of ponds and sloughs and hidden muskeg hollows, through which the muddy river rolls away—a sluggish river now, easeful, dozing in his last days here, so close to the ending.

Upon these lower reaches of the Yukon there's not even a hillock in view, as far as eye can see. This enormous stretch of double-delta country (for the great Kuskokwim is flowing closely parallel, only a little to the south) has a shore-line of over four hundred miles, that faces Bering Sea and lies so low that no shore at all will be visible from a ship's deck when out at sea in five fathoms of water. Last year a great storm drove the sea upon these flats and the poor devils living there had to sit on top of their houses for days—the ones who did not drown. We didn't think in terms of airplanes those days, but now I hear that is the favored mode of travel " down below " and that this Lower Yukon seldom listens to the chug of steamboat nowadays, but only to the putt-putt of an occasional gas-boat or to the drone of driven motors overhead. How such air travel would increase one's range, as well as lift one up above pestiferous insects! Even a seasoned tropical explorer quails before the peculiar hardihood of the Yukon breed of mosquito.

Hamilton's Landing was a trading-post of the N. A. T. & T. Co., about twenty or thirty miles from the mouth of the Yukon and kept by a Mr. Deane who was absolutely alone among the Eskimos. It was a very stormy night when I put in there, so I accepted his most hearty hospitality, and gladly, for a day. He saw so few white men that he declared he wished the gale

would blow a solid week, so that I should be really forced to stay! I got a sack of good coal from him, which proved much better than the wet wood I'd been burning and lasted several days.

While I was slipping through one of the many sloughs of the old river, in which the Yukon threads this region, a polite and intelligent little Eskimo with smiling, honest, brown features drew alongside in his kyak and traveled a short distance by my boat. He kept pointing to a group of tents on shore, repeating the word "Innuit." This is the Eskimos' name for themselves and means—again—"*the* people!" In the gathered dusk of evening he spied a goose floating near us; but when he shot, he merely wounded the bird, for they aren't nearly so clever with a gun as with a spear. On the other hand it was no fault of his, for the gun he had was really an antique.

At a much longer range, now, I shot and killed the goose—a lucky shot, for it was fast darkling on the river and that twilight air is tricky. The Eskimo cried, "Good, good!" and examined my gun critically. I said nothing about this being a lucky fluke and that I couldn't always make such shots, by any means. With a village so near, I thought it best to let him think me very expert. He went and fetched the goose and I bought it from him. Usually, on the river, I traded by barter only but I gave this boy half a dollar—the smallest piece of money they would look at here. I also gave my little brown companion a generous supply of tea, tobacco, fruit, and bandannas, as additional payment for his goose. The next morning as I was breaking camp several miles below, who should come paddling but my friend, fetching me the finest specimen of salmon I have ever seen—a true beauty. The flesh was a deep red in color and delicious to the taste, quite different from the paler-fleshed salmon caught further up-stream.

The Eskimos invariably put out to meet me as I passed their

camps and I was glad indeed to see them, for both intelligence and honesty were stamped upon those smiling, flat-nosed faces. I learned truly to love them for their goodness, their unruffled temper, untainted manners. They simply did not know what stealing is, it seemed; and though this was the very section where white men often were reported shot, I read nothing but kindliness in any face. I was not nervous any more, even when a flotilla of their immense hide boats thrust out from shore to meet me, loaded with a score or more of the tousle-headed men and accompanied by a mosquito fleet of rapidly darting kyaks. Time after time, all along my River, the Natives told me with pathetic iteration, "All Indian good; white man sometime good, sometime bad." One story upon the Upper River is an index as to which race had the more taking ways. When the N. W. M. P. reached Tagish House in 1897, they found this sign upon the door: "Gon to Youkon for 2 year. *White man leave alone*"!

As far as my own individual experience goes (and I say this for the Interior Indians, too) they neither stole from me nor lied to me. Among such kindly friends—for so I came to call them—I felt I had less cause for fear than from certain occasional white travelers of the class which finds it convenient, or expedient, hurriedly to leave the settled camps. I found the Eskimos quite as polite as Japanese, whom they so strongly resemble—always bowing and always saying beautifully and feelingly their low-voiced "thank you," *kai-ya-no,* a word which I had frequent good cause to return and to their smiling delight. It was a pleasure to be able to *say* "thank you," for in the Indian dialect between Nulato and Anvik the word for "I thank you" is, I found, quite unpronounceable. If you care to try it, here's how the good Dr. Chapman spelled it out—"in phonetic English," so he said: *noxwoqourcrigudastcet,* with the *x* and *t* sounds clawing and scratching like so many tom-cats!

Perhaps because it was so hard to say, one middle-river Indian did not say it to me. I had a home-made pipe which I had carved from native birchwood. It was of no value whatsoever, no great beauty, and only worth the few hours I had spent in making it. An Indian visiting my boat admired this pipe and asked for it. In sentiment, perhaps, I did not give it to him; yet when he left, the pipe was missing. I may easily have knocked it overboard, and I can not truthfully say that he took it. I like to think he didn't; but, at any rate, that was the only thing of all my gear and treasures that I missed, in all my long, long journey through many tribal territories, in contact almost daily with some type of Native. Do you blame me for saying I consider them models of honesty, when treated "square"? If there were "thieving Natives" on the river, as I'd been told so many times, then I just didn't happen to meet them. Perhaps with a froward man they show themselves froward; but there's a saying in the Orient, "If you make yourself friendly, where can you travel and not find a friend?" Some Yukon traders might well take for motto the saying of that queer old mystic, William Blake: "Always speak the truth, and base men will avoid you!"

The Eskimos I met were instinctively shrewd traders and knew how to drive a bargain as well as how to be both friendly and helpful. Sometimes they would point and ask for things as children do. In some ways they are children. The gift which gave most pleasure, of all my hundreds made upon the Yukon, was a *Yale Mixture* tin tobacco-box which I presented to an Eskimo young dandy. He fairly writhed with joy. Shades of old Eli!

In place of saying "so many days' travel" to a place, they said "so many sleeps"—shutting the eyes and lolling the head on the hand, as though sleeping. When I had shown them by this sign that I had traveled nearly fifty sleeps (though really much more, of course, from Lake Bennett) they were

amazed and looked upon me with considerable awe! Because their trade goods and the trading companies came from San Francisco, that word meant all the outside world to them. So, when they asked me where I lived, I said, " In San Francisco " —not considering that I lied in claiming as a residence a city I had never even seen.

The Aphoon or North Mouth of the Yukon runs out north-northeast, the others trending west or southwest. This is the mouth which empties nearest to St. Michael Island and so I took it, for that old Russian post is the one harbor in all this section and I must reach it. The Eskimos explained that Aphoon is distinguished slightly from the others by wiry willows growing on its banks. It's narrower than other mouths but crooked, and has a tide. The way was hard to find for many a cross-passage runs between the various delta streams. Sometimes in this tidal water my boat and I were stranded high and dry for ten or twelve hours at a stretch, but such mishaps occurred only when I slept. And I had to have some sleep although, in the wretched weather experienced here, eternal wakefulness was called for. A disabled ankle, the upset of my boat, or any little mishap in itself quite inconsiderable might—to a man alone—be fatal. The rain came down in torrents and head winds prevailed for days, blowing great guns so that my efforts to beat a way up through the narrow northern channel of the delta were not very effectual. In fact, for quite a time they proved futile! Yet in the moments when the wind was still, mosquitoes and black flies were a steady torment. In some ways and times, this Delta of the Yukon seemed the most uncomfortable place on earth. My Dawson friends had prophesied discomfort. They proved good prophets.

August 21. —I had not slept a wink the previous night and felt half sick with constant overwork and worry. Strong head winds blew, continuous cold rains had drenched me. I

was aching and sore from a rather severe fall, every joint was stiff, my hands and face were swollen with insect bites, and I suffered from a touch of lumbago. I started out at four a. m., about as weary as a fellow could be. It was a zero hour for me, I felt I had touched bottom. Some passengers aboard a steamer ploughing up-stream, rushed to the rail to see me as I passed and photographed me beating up into the wind. I caught a glimpse of faces, as I fought the wash to keep the luff. I must have been a sight! I wish I had that kodak picture now! I looked tough, and I was. I wore a complete suit of rubber, a black, rough beard, and I was sunburnt as only the North can paint a man. My face was lined with furrows deep as sailormen can get. Both face and hands were crusted by the sun, empatinated by the wind and rain and spray.

And yet that was a happy, a red-letter day. At eleven that morning I beat my way at last out into Bering Sea and Norton Sound and I am not ashamed to say that there was salt upon my face, although the spray of water was still fresh, still "Yukon dust." I felt a nervous exaltation at having navigated every inch of the mighty Yukon, from Lake Bennett down to the sea. Not knowing, then, the cranky witch that Bering Sea can be (the Natives call her Sedna, the Old Woman) I had the foolish pleasant notion that my troubles were all past. Toward the end of his journey, you remember, Bunyan came upon the Flatterer—a very black fellow, but clad in a most shining cloak. And how self-flattery can spread a net!

It's dangerous to brag—and I'm not bragging now. I've never talked to any one before of this experience. I couldn't. There were too many times during the days to come when I was truly scared and for good cause—when I was dangled like fate's puppet on the tip edge of disaster. There's no great shame in being scared, if you snap out of it. Fear isn't cowardice. They aren't at all the same. A man must know the uses and the nature of right fear. Not to be scared, may mean

a plain dumb-foolishness. I came to know the terror of clear seeing, across that knife-edge. I got mad with myself for being scared, and so came out the better, possibly, than if I had not been so very anxious.

Those times of stress are helpful memories, now. If I hadn't tasted the sour cup of fear there, I might perhaps have been a shade too cock-sure—and the cock-sure man is never safe. The gods take notice of his overweening and high looks. Then—poof! I almost felt that cold and fatal breath, before I reached St. Michael. No one had warned me that old Sedna, the witch woman, crouched in that open sea ahead, to cast her spell on little boats and careless mariners.

" Kai-ya-no—Pee-o-vah! "

HE water was extraordinarily shoal, fresh for at least ten miles out to sea where a vast domain of barely submerged land has been formed by the Yukon's detritus. The hills that have come down, moved from foundation by the River, spread out here fan-wise in the Sea and make the eastern half of Bering dangerously shallow so that ocean-going ships do not approach within fifty to a hundred miles, as I was later told. St. Michael lay eighty miles distant by the shortest water-route—a route I missed.

A favoring wind sprang up about seven that evening so I made an attempt to reach Point Romanof, a rocky headland about twenty miles away; but the tide fell when I was several miles from the Yukon's mouth and well at sea. Four times I brought up hard on bar-like quicksands and had a nasty time getting free. I put on hip-boots and shoved off by main force—and considerable awkwardness! A dozen times before nightfall I was all but dragged from my boat, and floundered helpless in the ebbing tide. The output of the river is so tremendous that thick muddy water spreads out here for many miles, and six miles offshore I dipped up water, which was all I had to drink that night, only faintly saline. Low tide exposed the most extensive mud flats, shifting and newly forming. When storms come up, the choppy seas of arctic autumn churn these shallows into a chocolate froth of mud. Romanof proved impossible, but at last I found a most uncertain shelter in Pastol Bay, a mere open stretch in the dreary and desolate strip of coast—treeless, torn by the full force of

ocean storms, bristling with a tangle of worn driftwood, harried continually by winds. It seemed that I had left the land of stars, for the sky that hung so low and heavy above my head that night was thick as black amber, and fairly smelled of murk.

I felt as though I hadn't slept at all, although of course I had, when I was wakened by the surf dashing my boat upon the beach. It was only five a. m. and I was stiff and wind-tired, hungry as a hound; but if the boat were not secured at once, I'd surely lose her. Finally I got her free from those hammering tide-strokes and nosed her into a fairly sheltered recess. In my too energetic efforts to push her off alone, however, I fell into the sea again and was drenched to the skin—fair dronkit, as the Scotch say! I built a fire and dried my clothes and spongy bedding as best I could, and this took several hours in the wind and wet. I was pretty well chilled through by then and began to have severe cramps in both my arms and legs; so I put on two pairs of thick drawers, two flannel shirts, and three pairs of socks which—even though they got wet later—kept me comparatively warm.

Under a double reef that afternoon I made splendid time, although through a quite rough sea. By dark I had rounded Point Romanof so I put in for shelter in a little cove where an Eskimo patriarch, his children and his grandchildren, had made their summer camp. On this leg I ran into a shoal several hundred yards from shore, where breakers dashed my boat and caused an anxious few moments. I was weather-bound at Romanof for three and a half days—the first two exceedingly stormy, followed by a day that, while gloriously cloudless, yet didn't provide a single pocketful of wind. It did give me a chance to dry my robe and blankets thoroughly, however, and cut enough fire-wood from the drift to last for several days. I filled up my two buckets and all my spare kettles with fresh water, so I'd not be caught again dependent

on the semisaline sea; and I ran a new halyard through the blocks, replacing the old one which was badly frayed.

The Eskimo family, within whose friendly cove I'd taken shelter, were kind to me as bronze-faced ministering angels. They showed by constant little signs that they were sorry for me, and gave me understanding help in every way they could. No master of a vast estate, no maharajah, no fine English country-gentleman, could have extended a more real or genuine hospitality or shown a greater breadth of sympathy. "Eskimo" still connotes to me an utter kindliness. *Kai-ya-no,* their sweet word of "thanks for service rendered," was often on my lips those days, and it still is.

Their summer home was built in part of driftwood, carried down by the Great River and cast upon this naked and truly treeless shore. So the Yukon still proved watchful and friendly, even though in stormy nights here I missed the rhythm of his lapping iambs which had suffered a sea-change now into the long hexameter, rising with cadence sonorous, upheaving in long undulations, the motion and sound of the sea. The Eskimo's seashore home was large and comfortable, and reasonably clean. There was a welcome fire built in its center, the smoke emerging through a hole made in the turfy roof on which their many dogs disported. The people rubbed dry moss in the hands till it was fine, saturated it with whale-oil and then spread this along the lip of a stone cup, where it burned like a wick and gave us a lamp somewhat dimmer than a candle. They fed me well with plover and with tomcod. The women, sitting high in the surf on large driftwood seats, pulled the tomcod out with bone-hooked lines, as fast and often as they chose to cast, fifteen or twenty a minute. I tried to repay these friendly people with presents of bacon, soap, tea, and matches. Their eagerness for knowledge, their ability and deftness were simply wonderful—equal, I should say, to the Japanese. I had commonly heard that the Eskimos are very

uncleanly, both in person and in habitation. I was impressed rather the other way.

At last the storm was over, I was well rested, and a favorable wind was blowing; but I was doubly sorry to leave, for there was trouble in the little camp of my People-who-smile. The patriarch's " eight-moon " baby granddaughter had died the evening before and, though I tried with all the science that I had, I knew no weapon to combat the angel men call Azrael. I was struck by their good sense in arranging prompt and immediate burial. A quiet, sad dignity marked all their mourning and I was strongly moved in sympathy.

On August twenty-sixth I gratefully said my last "*Kai-ya-no*—plenty *Kai-ya-no.*" A heartfelt and a sad "*Pee-o-vah*" we called back to one another until the drawing distance changed the parting words to hand-waves. " Good-bye " is sad to say in any tongue, and these were truly friends: pleasant-faced and honest people, kind parents, dutiful and joyous children—deserving, helpful, capable wards of any Government that would appreciate them. Yet who has?

Before I left Romanof, one of the Eskimos drew a chart for me on a piece of wood, showing the proper channel I should take to reach St. Michael through the short cut of an inland waterway or natural " canal." I'm sorry to say that either his map was distorted or I did not read it properly, for in the drawing it appeared that I should be almost upon St. Michael before pointing my boat into the special little estuary he had indicated and there were many similar indentations, a labyrinth of the most crooked passages, with high grass on the banks in which a horse could almost hide. So I went wrong and took the longer, steamer course, twenty miles further and at sea.

Four islands compose the St. Michael group, exceedingly rugged and rocky-edged except on the one sheltered side where lie the harbor and the town. The rough coast is a strange brownish-purple color, peculiarly forbidding when looked at

from that gray and sodden sea. There are plenty of Eskimos living on the main island who have been in contact with the Whites for a century or more, for Russians came here early and Russia still had flourishing missions among them; but night overtook me when I was opposite a remote part of this main island and I had to put into a rocky shelter. I tied up by the bow and anchored the stern with large stones, to keep my boat from bumping on the cliffs with the deep swell.

The next morning I set out hopefully at six and sailed along nicely until I came within sight of the town of St. Michael. Then the course changed abruptly and I had to point into the teeth of a very strong wind. With no deep keel, my little river boat made so much leeway on this leg that, try as I might, I simply could not reach the harbor although it was so tantalizingly near—the end of my long trek actually now in sight. Instead, I was roughly driven out to sea and far away, blown and tumbled, so it was hours later before I managed—by good luck and some lively work—to make another anchorage at last in another rocky cove on a small and barren, desolate and uninhabited island of the group. —There's no need telling you that I was rather sick at heart. I think I yearned for dry clothes, food, a bath, as I have never wanted such luxuries in all my life before or since. To have looked upon that delectable harbor lying so still and calm there—and then to lose it!

I'm ashamed of the next lines in my diary. They're far from smooth, are cramped, you see, are blurred and crabbed—disjointed words. One jotting only makes any sense to me, now. *Nota bene: Lead on the keel, the most expensive item of equipment for a yacht. Lead weight—dear bought—hardship—temptation—roughness—trouble—necessary equipment—rough voyage—real seas.*

My little river boat was not intended for stormy seas. She carried no lead. Joy may well be wind to fill her sail; but joy

is fickle and only leaden keel will weather such droumy waters. Dull lead, dear-bought, and to the uninitiated sailor a dead drag of weight—but so very necessary now, blown from the course! The Fates were three gray women, old and cruel, with tired, pinched fingers drawing out the threads. I felt that Atropos held her cold shears poised over my thin destiny. I could hear their snip as wind cut through my silly shelter, rain rose and drove.

I ate a little warmed-over macaroni, boiled some rice and tea, and felt a little better. But I was pretty tired and quite a little worried, for if the wind held too long in this quarter, I feared I might miss the last boat out from St. Michael. So time was precious now, and I had heard upon the river that ice began to run in Bering Sea early in September. Yet all day long the wind blew hard and much rain fell. I had to stay where I'd been put.

Two years before, to be in a like fix—alone and on a barren island in the midst of a near-icy sea—would probably have seemed a peck of trouble; but this was no real pickle for a sourdough, and I knew it. What if I had been disappointed? A fellow must accept and realize impossibles. That's part of it. So—I dried out as best I could, curled up and went to sleep, tying that certain knot of peace. River had told me the futility of worry and of haste, that all impatience is but childish and for younglings only. On pilgrimage you take a scallop-shell of quiet, a staff of faith, thought for an hermitage. I made a night-song from some phrases of a half-forgotten book. —Remember the days of old and he that brought them up out of the sea, that led them by the right hand with his glorious arm, dividing the waters before them; that led them through the deep as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble. —So I stepped firmly on the promises, my feet did not slip. I came out from the slough of my despond and slept soundly.

On the morning of August twenty-eighth I was up early to study weather conditions, but at five the wind still blew a gale, and still was from the wrong quarter. I had no water now and, until I found water, could get no breakfast. The night before, I'd been too foolishly disturbed in mind to think of water, or I might easily have caught rain in my tarpaulin. So I turned Crusoe and explored my island. After a long hunt through the tall, wet grass, finally I found some soggy moss in which I dug a hole with my iron spoon. My spade, with several other tools, had been given to my Eskimo friends at Romanof. They lacked one and I had thought I was so near the end of my journey there was no further need for such things, whereas to them they meant fortune. After a long impatient wait, enough water seeped in to supply my immediate needs. While I waited for my little well to fill, I went berrying and found quantities of cranberries, as well as delicious ripe salmon-berries. These resembled large, pale raspberries of a salmon-pinkish color. I whetted my appetite with the berries, and then felt more cheerful and could enjoy the sight of many daisies on my wet way back to the boat, where I prepared a simple breakfast and felt warmer.

The tide in my cove had a rise and fall of eight to ten feet. It was in part a wind tide, I imagine, for I noticed little variation in the other coves where I took shelter. Beautiful specimens of jellyfish swam in the clear water here and were festooned over the ropes which moored my boat. I saw three varieties of snipe and many ducks, but I did not shoot. I could not have retrieved them, in that wind. Aquatic birds, which I had never seen before, sported on my lonely island in great numbers and amused me greatly. Such merry grigs! At a short distance they looked exactly like parrots and they had the most provokingly cheerful countenances. Everything about the costume of these sea-parrots was rigged in a way to excite mirth, and they proceeded most amiably to stage a vaude-

ville performance for my exclusive benefit. Their every movement was clownish and the benign look upon those bizarre faces was comical as could be, especially since it was set on top of sleek black coats combined with purest white, as dignified as clerical vestment!

Their bottle-nose beaks were muticolored, red, blue, and yellow—curious in shape, flattened from side to side, very much furrowed, and appearing to spread much too far over the face; and their gray cheeks were outlined by a black band, adding yet another touch to that incongruous painted-clown expression. These tammy-nories seemed to be of two kinds. Small leathery and horny outgrowths bunched about the eyes of one species, while long, yellowish, and jaunty plumes streamed backward from the head-sides of another. The most remarkable appenages! *Ah-nah,* as my Romanof friends would have said: "Isn't that queer?" These aukish birds, when flying, spread orange-red web-footed legs against their tails so that, until I got a very near view, I thought there was a fringe of colored feathers there. They took the air awkwardly, as though tumbling for my amusement; but they were splendid divers, remaining a long time submerged and coming up not far away from where they disappeared. I dubbed them "sea-parrots," quite spontaneously, and found out later that this really is one of the puffin names—though locally the white men called them "Jew ducks" because of their prominent hooked noses. They certainly had a most laughable appearance, and I was grateful to them for their antics which greatly shortened the long hours of waiting.

At four that afternoon the wind veered just enough to make my cove untenable. Long swells rolled in from the open sea and dashed my boat hard on the rocks, in spite of my attempts to hold her fast with anchors. I well knew that my all but keelless shallop, built for the river, was very ill-adapted for tacking against head winds. I was compelled to do something,

however, so I hoisted a three-reef sail and made the attempt. That sensation of utter futility—making no headway at all in the desired direction, but being blown sideways, still further out in a rough sea—is not one I can recommend! I was told later by Kimball, the postal inspector, that dozens of Yukoners who came down-river in small boats by twos and threes that fall, heading for Nome, left their bones here in Davy Jones's locker. After my own experience in Bering Sea I could well believe him.

The wind held in that quadrant and refused to shift. My boat went to leeward like a crab. At length, though very late that night, with every particle of gear soaked through with the salt water we had shipped, I managed to make landing in another small protected cove, on the mainland and miles northerly from my desired destination. Torn by the storm and unseen in the dark, every weak thing on the boat had given way. Worst of all, the gooseneck of my upper spar broke, adding a good deal to my troubles. So I remained all the next day in my new shelter, knowing positively now that with my boat in such bad shape I must wait patiently for a fair wind before starting out again—or I'd be meat for Sedna!

Two Eskimo families were living near the place I landed, and all day long three small children from seven to twelve years of age played round my boat and clambered over it, watching my every move of carpentry, sewing, or cooking. They were not in the least bashful, and stayed out in the pelting rain all day with no head-covering but thick shocks of hair. Their fur coats or parkas were thoroughly wet through; but they minded this as little as ducks, and their mother seemed not the least worried about them. However, I thought that boys of the same age at home would have been taller, stouter, and healthier looking.

In the evening, as my food supply was low, I was glad indeed to accept a supper invitation at the tent of the Eskimos.

It consisted simply of tea without either sugar or milk, but with a kind of bread which one of the girls made very deftly. I was too tired to watch carefully just how she did this, but I know she rolled and baked it rapidly. I had seen an Indian at Fort Yukon bake a similar kind of bread, or bannock. One of the Eskimo men very generously gave me some plug tobacco for my empty pipe. In every way they were extremely cordial, and kept urging me to eat heartily. With my few words in their language, their few words of mine, and most expressive signs and gestures, we carried on an animated and amusing conversation punctured by rolling gales and gusts of laughter which outsang and mocked the rush of wind and water climbing with the tide outdoors.

If I hadn't been alone, I never could have had the chance for all this free and very pleasant intercourse with Native families, which I enjoyed so much along my journey. This fact in itself would have repaid me for the solitary weeks of work. It was a warming privilege to have this close and friendly contact with men who conform, not to the conventional outward way of " gentlemen," but to a much more admirable inward qualification. I found in them a genuine *noblesse de cœur*. That evening spent so pleasantly, after my weary hours and days adrift, is bright with friendly firelight in my memory. It was to be the last, of my long game of solitaire.

The morrow, August thirtieth, I woke at five a. m., my usual hour, to find a favorable wind ablow and I was overjoyed. Hastily dressing, not daring to stop even for breakfast, I set out at once and my weather-beaten sail bent willingly this time to shore. With deeply thankful heart and a real thrill of joy, I heard my boat's keel grate upon the beach of St. Michael later that same morning. I had spent nine full days making this distorted, wind-bent, sea traverse of an air-line that is less than fifty miles. I'd felt more than once the scratch of Sedna's reaching fingers but—*Deo gratias*—had slipped through them.

Get Your Man

AINT MICHAEL in 1899 was rendezvous for the North-Pacific whaling fleet. They left San Francisco in March for the Hawaiian Islands and, after a call at Oahu, skirted the coast of Japan, Kamchatka, and Siberia, trailing leviathan "on the sunset side of the sun-down sea," to meet July first in "St. Mike." Seven of them had been in the harbor here at one time, restocking their depleted stores from a supply ship. Then they sailed for Bering Strait and the Arctic, to winter at Herschel Island—if they could reach it!

I learned that one of the three discoverers of new gold at Nome, the camp now starting such another strike and wild stampede as Klondike, was a tailor from 'Frisco who had shipped—or been shanghaied, some said—on one of this same fleet. The story was that Lindbloom slipped over the bow, down the anchor chain, and swam ashore during a night-watch while his ship was anchored north of here. In company with a Lapp reindeer-herder and a Swedish missionary, he made the original gold discovery on Anvil Creek.

Michaelovski is an island of tundra, separated from the mainland by a strait four or five miles wide. It is a swampy bit of land underlain by clay, the sky-line relieved only by low, greenish hills of porous lava rock. The moors are thick with berries but St. Michael boasts no tree. However, the high prevailing winds pile driftwood on her beaches in the open months. By the end of September most shipping will have cleared for the south, though a stray whaler may later touch here on her way down from the Arctic. Ice forms in Norton

Sound early in October, for the sea is shallow—so shallow that a vessel frequently scrapes bottom on the sandy mud a mile or more out, and wind that blows offshore completely bares the sand bars at the river mouths and raises a rough sea—as I had found to my sorrow! The Sound will not be clear of ice until late June or early in July, and that ice barrier will reach almost across to neighbor Asia.

The town was founded by the Russian American Company in the year 1833, and built upon the model of a Hudson's Bay post. There was one long street, paved with wood—a neat street, lined with shops and warehouses. All that now was left of the Russians' Redoubt St. Michael, one time enclosed with bristling pickets and stout flanking bastions, was a lone blockhouse and one rusting cannon. Yet "St. Mike" was a busy place that summer of '99, with storehouses belonging to various companies trading up-river, a green-roofed Russian church with bulbous-tipped steeple, some unpretentious military barracks for our soldiers. Most of the steamers coming down from Yukon nosed a barge or two, and every square inch of boat and barge alike was filled with eager Argonauts, "hell-bent" for that newest gold strike at Nome.

The Alaska Commercial Company didn't have a suitable steamer to run from here across the Sound, and Norton can be nasty; so they took the *Saidie,* a big shallow-draft, side-wheeler, steel tug and built a house with thirty bunks in it, on her after-deck. Then they got a permit, I heard, to carry one hundred passengers. On sailing days the Company would sell one hundred tickets, then close the ticket office. The rest of the horde of gold-seekers would simply go down to the dock and walk aboard—no questions asked! The *Saidie* generally left at midnight, and often there was S. R. O. aboard her. The purser must have had fat pickings! The rumor running in St. Michael was that the *Saidie* earned ninety thousand dollars that summer, ferrying ex-Yukoners to the new pot of

"A lone blockhouse — all that was left of the Russian redoubt"

Kai-ya-no, pee-o-vah! — Thanks and good-bye to "The land that measures each man at his worth."

gold at rainbow's end. The men I met there told me, "The *Saidie* is a stand-up—and a hold-up!"

"The boys" in St. Michael were laughing over a recent incident. A half-breed had come into town from Kusilvak, an outer island of the Yukon delta. They didn't have any marshals, courts, or jails on Kusilvak, never having needed those charming devices of civilization. He wandered up and down the town and finally stood stock-still in front of the St. Michael jail, where he saw what probably struck him as the most curious sight of his whole trip—four or five Eskimos looking out through the barred windows. The man began to laugh. He laughed so heartily and long, a crowd gathered. Finally, some one asked the half-breed what the joke was. He pointed to the jail and chuckled, "All same fish-trap, catch Innuit!"

Among the principal attractions at St. Michael in '99, for many of the come-down Klondikers, were the canteens. As these were located on a military reservation, they were (theoretically) army canteens. As a matter of fact, the army had nothing whatsoever to do with them. Each of the two commercial companies ran one, and they sold beer only—at one dollar the quart. When Klondikers disembarked from Yukon boats and found one of these places, they went wild. They would drink a bottle or two and then go out to look for their friends. "Hey, fellers, what do you know about this? Beer only a dollar a bottle!" It had been two dollars and a half in Dawson. Then a crowd of them would order a barrel—in which the bottles were packed for sea shipment—roll it into the center of the room and "tie into it." There was only one bartender and he didn't have time even to pull corks! One man, who with the help of two Eskimos ran the A. C. Co. canteen, turned in eight hundred dollars for a day's business.

The harbor lay full of curious and varied shipping, necessarily moored far out from shore. The U. S. Revenue Cutters

Thetis, McCullough, and *Bear* were among them. The *Bear* had been built in Dundee and was intended for a whaler, but had been used by our Government since the Franklin relief expedition. St. Michael's beach was strewn with all kinds of articles of value—clothing, rubber boots, bedding, stoves, boats, tents, tools—a windfall to the Natives whose tents dotted the tundra. Really fine sea-going yachts and small river steamers could be bought for a song. Fifty dollars would have purchased a dredge or a smaller steamer of which the machinery alone was worth several hundred; but they were rotting and found no demand. Why? Because each incoming Yukon steamer carried "refugees" from Dawson, eager to return to the States or eager to start anew at the Anvil Creek camp, and boats and river gear were useless to them there. So all my equipments, of considerable value, were sacrificed too—though unregretfully, as they had served me well and long.

For there was haste. The steamer *Charles H. Nelson* was to sail for the States on the following day, so that I had not long to wait. I decided to have a hair-cut and a bath before going on board, for both were needed! There was a Chinese laundry connected with the hotel and here one could rent a tin-lined bathtub, which seemed real luxury after so long without such comfort. I decided to discard all my very maculate river-clothes so worn and soiled and, when I myself was scoured and clean, I left them hanging there on a wooden peg in the small bathroom. I hurried down to the steamer, vastly refreshed in body, and was just about to be taken out to her when I realized that I had forgotten something. I had hung my buckskin bag of gold-dust and nuggets fetched from Dawson (six or seven hundred dollars' worth) under that discarded clothing, and there it was.

Or rather, there it wasn't! I hurried back, but the Chinaman swore he had not seen the gold, though my clothes too were gone. I rustled the U. S. marshal, Vawter, and he and

I both grilled the man and Vawter put some pressure on him. To no avail—I sailed without my gold, the only material gold the Klondike gave me.

But somehow I was lighter hearted without the heavy burden of that poke. It was not gold I'd mined with my own hands and so, perhaps, it was not ethically mine, though legally it was. If it had been quite mine, then how could I have lost it? The gold for which I truly went, real sourdough gold of living wisdom through experience, I got. I had found gold a plenty of that spiritual assay. I had been fabulously enriched, over and over again, and I still possess the whole of that real treasure, stored in a safety-vault to which I only know the combination. I'd found the true gold of the North in the enduring pay of self-knowledge, " a memorial," as Horace put it in his Carmina, " more enduring than brass and loftier in structure than the royal pyramids,

Quod non imber edax, non Aquilo impotens
Possit diruere aut innumerabilis
Annorum series et fuga temporum.

" which neither devastating rain-storm nor the impotent North Wind can destroy, nor yet the uncountable succession of the years and flight of seasons. —I shall not altogether die," concluded this great Roman. " The better part of me will in the end elude Libitina," that goddess who can lay claim merely to the material corpse of man.

Since I had found what I had sought—a something which had come to me out of the North, which could be used forever but not spent, invested capital not cash, possessions that were solely mine—why should I, greedy, be permitted by the Fates to take out *aurum* too, which I had never really sought there? I had not scaled the Chilkoot's rampart of snow, shot the wrath of White Horse Rapids, looted the beds of Klondike creeks, for

"Gold, gold, gold, gold!
Bright and yellow and hard and cold.
Molten, graven, hammered and rolled;
Heavy to get and light to hold;
Hoarded, bartered, bought and sold;
Spurned by the young, but hugged by the old
To the very verge of the churchyard mold;
Price of many a crime untold;
Gold, gold, gold, gold!
Good or bad a thousand fold!"

Virgin gold itself is pure enough, innocent enough. It is not gold but love of gold that is the root of evil—as it's not learning but the love of learning that is the guide of life. I could not lose the gold I'd really found. I could not all my life consume this entail, though I could live in comfort on the legacy my River left me and each succeeding year has paid its dividends on those securities. I had gone North for education and I got it, in that university of Cold Weather, Warm Friends, and Hard Knocks. My heart was happy that I had not absolutely flunked, although I knew I had not passed with honors. "Klondike Jim, the Futteguhr Fakir" was no longer a cheechako, which is a lower grade to sourdough than is subfreshman to the don. We who have been depressed under avalanches can not be further depressed. We got our baptism and our purification under the doctorate-conferring Yukon.

The golden metal of the Yukon was pouring out, that year, and clearing through St. Michael. Before the White Pass Railroad was completed, most of the gold affreightment came here by river boat and was loaded at St. Michael on to sea ships. It surely was amusing to watch how preciously they guarded here that same gold I had seen left carelessly in open cans, on shelves of miner's cabins, up on Eldorado, Hunker, or Bonanza, where

"Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows;
But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the owners."

The gold was packed for shipment in wooden cases holding two hundred pounds, put together with screws—every screw countersunk and covered with a wax seal. At St. Michael, one end of a forty-foot length of new, five-eighths-inch rope was firmly attached to the cases. On the other end a five-foot piece of pine, two by six inches, was made tightly fast. If the ship's sling should break and spill the precious gold cases into Norton Sound, you see, these floats would place them and they could be recovered without a diver. I counted as many as ten longshoremen emerge man after man from the company's office, on sailing day, each pushing his truck with a two-hundred-pound case of gold.

I had word of the Nome strike way up-river at Fortymile, you will remember, and the accounts were good. My steamer from St. Michael went across to Nome—or Anvil City as they called it first—but anchored a long distance offshore. I watched while many others of the backwash from Dawson were lightered ashore, but I was not tempted. I think the early settlers at Nome were a much tougher crowd, in some ways, than the Klondikers. Great numbers of them coming in were cheechakos, who landed from the ocean steamers on Nome beach without having first acquired any lead upon the keel, in preparatory hardship. I imagine that many were of the same class as those at early Dyea and Skagway, for I saw the same frenzy, the same excitement and unthoughtful plunging. Somehow, I couldn't get "all het up" about it. Just another gold strike.

There was a thing which only I could do, and I was on my way to do it, having learned how in the Yukon's school of preparation. I had a will, as Milton said, to do "something of highest hope and hardest attempting." Hereafter I would

steer my own course, by the light of certain stars I'd found here in the North; but for many nights to come I slept unsoundly between comfortable sheets, wakening often and with horrible nightmares, dreaming that my precious boat was drifting from her moorings into unknown dangers. I found it hard, even for a time, to give over to others all responsibility for navigation. Either in fact or fancy, I stood upon the pilot's bridge.

I even missed my own unpretentious cooking—which you may find incredible. You see, I'd learned that sometimes a really wholesome thought, warmed through and edible, jumped from my shallow fry-pan into my—well, let's simply say my brainpan! The full liberty I had known within that wilderness, the deep discipline I had experienced, and the fuller peace of faith without disillusion might be a dream; but it was surely the type of dream that lingers. My solitary journey was a revelation of how a man's own primal versatility provides companionship: not only the capacity for being but the fact of being several things at once. Disciplines, other than self-discipline, provide him little sustenance—for many reasons, but mainly because objects of his study must lie within his own experience, and a man can believe only what lies already in his spirit. The Yukon gave me wealth more than I asked, a self-respect and an acquaintance with myself which I don't think I could have gained in any other manner. The super-values that I found there far exceed those cases of metallic gold the longshoremen were loading at St. Michael.

Invisible, intangible, they've lived inside my heart. They've been my *Himmelsschlüssel,* keys to heaven. They've been my *scala cœli,* a ladder to the skies which rose, you will remember, up from a pillow made of stones set in a wilderness. Jacob wasn't sleeping on down cushions, when heaven opened for him. I know that if it hadn't been for old Bob Cook and the hard discipline he gave us on that Yale crew, I never could

have navigated the Yukon alone. Each year since deepens what I got from both those interlocking disciplines—mellower years that force me into "daring," in Horace's jewel-like phrase, "to be wise"—the highest human daring, in which we try to steal their fiery secrets from the very gods, Promethean.

Before my journey to the Yukon I had known only the material sciences, which can be meaningless and empty as the witch-doctor's abracadabra. If no appreciation be given to the overtones of research, to valuation of an orderly and dependable universe, to wholesome interlocking with other realms of thought, then empirical science is helpless to understand even its own problems. The Colossus of Science can not be free and powerful to utilize his total sum of strength, unless he recognizes and respects his own working limits, "about which (as your friend Münsterberg once said) Philosophy alone decides." Without this super-vision and relation, Chemistry will hide her bright face in the outworn cowl of alchemy, Medicine will pick up once again the feathered sticks and magic-box of shamanism, astrology and not Astronomy will peer up at the stars. If a man does not attempt to see beyond empiric finding into the drive which urges men *to* Science, then he is merely groping in material mire with a muck-rake, looking no way but downward, whereas above is a "Cœlestial Crown"—as good old Bunyan wrote it.

I caught a glimpse of what that overhanging light might mean, those days upon the Yukon. Since then I've dared to broaden and to deepen my researches into those avenues of thought which help explain a man unto himself. These avenues have high-named portals: Logic, Anthropology, Æsthetics, Ethics, Sociology, Philosophy, Religion. Although perhaps forbidding and austere in distant aspect, they have proved pleasant-vistaed, wide, engaging, and enlivening in pursuit. Such humanics are the doors that open up for man an under-

standing self, let light and air into both the storeroom and the throneroom of his nature, releasing him from horror of locked chamber and of echoing corridor, taboo and blindness, and all phobia.

While in the common and more narrow usage of the word, my skepticism died upon the Yukon, my skepticism in the realest sense was born there as my old self died. To knock upon the door of truth and to inquire is to be skeptic. The Greek word pictures some one shading his eyes: to cut extraneous objects from the field of vision, and to allow the pupil of the eye to dilate when shaded from the glare of too much sun. Your microscopist is a typical skeptic, focusing his lens upon one brilliantly illuminated point—no more. All real scientists are skeptics, through painstaking search and survey. Christ begged men to be skeptics—to knock, to seek, to ask. Always, to ask. "We lose by want of asking for," was Bunyan's comment. A pilgrim's progress must be full of such inquiry, or it is footless.

Awe and reverence, too, were born there on the Yukon, to echo ever after in my brain with rainbow-toned and retrospective clarity. The honest man stands face to face with the unknown, and he is reverent. I learned upon my lonely journey that, while I had been generously educated, I'd seldom ever really thought before, cracked through the husk of fact to bite into the meaty kernel. In those past months I'd traveled both an inner and an outer journey, and both the trails had carried me quite far.

I'd known the thousand-prickled sting of a cold fear. I'd known swift flame flying beneath my skin, which call to desperate action sometimes fetches. I'd known the tightened pull of muscle upon loin, the ache of facial cord and neck after long tenseness of tremendous physical endeavor, vis-à-vis with stark necessity, alone upon a wine-dark sea: Necessity, stern primal master to whom, the wise Greeks said, even the highest

gods must sometimes bow. Yet I had found that on a mere earthly voyage a man could chart his journey from the stars, tie time and space by tugging at their far-borne truth, their light so ancient-long in passage. Away for a while from the oppressive force of conventionality—the sluggish mob-mind so hostile to all that is original—here one could catch a glimpse of ampler and untrammeled pressor living, " things higher and finer and fuller and happier than the shabby compromises of life."

I had come North upon a mission, a mission such as the Canadian Mounties knew, to " get my man." The lonely forty-seven days upon the Yukon set me further forward on that quest than did the many various pleasant associations which I formed, with other companions. Do not misunderstand me. I am not antisocial; and surely then, at least, I was no " hermit," as you please to call me, teasingly, sometimes. A man who despises humanity, despises himself—has not a tri-dimensional human heart. If I have lived alone it is because I had a work to do, to which aloneness was essential. Perhaps an even more compelling motive, although a sounding paradox, is that in relative aloneness I see the highest human terms more clearly and with more sympathy than on the crowded curbs, where human life is poured in hoppers.

While I have left the many, I still hold to the few. Real people, fresh of spirit, vibrant to the winds of living, actually alive, are glorious company. Such I have sought, as treasure; and such I also hold and keep to-day, jealously guarding them more carefully than pokes of Yukon gold. But tell me now, and frankly, how many such real people you will find in casual contacts, how many such you know without long seeking. Gold has always been one of the most difficult elements to find, in large quantity. Even in great proved gold-fields like the Rand, now supplying half the world's gold flow, one-third troy ounce of precious stuff to a ton of barren rock—one part

of metal to about seventy thousand parts of waste—is a good average. Or so the mining engineers tell me.

Are not real people precious flecks of gold, discovered after sifting tons of gravel? Think over all the persons whom you meet in any " normal " life—where those tall cities of America grope upward with their twisty spires, their pagan pylons cyclopean—and check off all whom you must frankly classify as mediocre: insectiferous joiners, greeters, mere mixers, dull rolling stones of non-precious gravel. I think you'll be surprised at the scant number remaining, who are stimuli rather than depressants. If this be true—and can you dis-prove it? —isn't it well then to avoid the latter?

Aren't dully stupid people the real outcasts, our real untouchables or depressed classes, living in mental basements of intellectual poverty and sometimes even muck-raked filth, because darkness is preferred? " Against stupidity, the gods themselves fight in vain." —Don't misunderstand me. I don't in any sense refer to the uneducated. I mean those only who are stupid by wish and inclination, who revel in stupidity, desire no larger outlook, actually struggle against illumination. And there are many such—too many. If you would keep the Brahman state of *saucha,* cleanliness, avoid the congregation of untouchables!

Mental outcasts can do your spirit nothing but real harm, are but a drug that drags. To be with them in daily company seems to me quite as much a subtle drug addiction as opium. One loses personality thereby, capacity for thought, for concentration, for willing. Nerves are edged, time is frittered. The total result is evilly depressant—viciously, I think. And depression is dis-ease while, on the other hand, there can be no depression or dis-ease for those who walk in company with cosmos.

—Mind you, I'm stating my own personal diagnosis, my individual prescription. I got pretty well acquainted with myself,

those days alone; found my own necessary regimen, adapted to my need and work; discovered there a mental diet, satisfying my inner hunger. I do not recommend my personal way as any universal panacea. Rather I am describing to you merely a clinical case-history, the one I know best, my own. The wilderness way proved my salvation, my all but perfect cure from my dis-ease. It might prove death to many another. "Wild and wide are my borders," you read in *The Law of the Yukon,* "stern as Death is my sway." Wildness, wideness, and sternness happened to be my medicine. I'm free to grant —indeed I know—they might prove fatal poisons to some other, of differing metabolism.

As I began to get acquainted better with myself, one of my first discoveries was that my goal wasn't gold but something more durable. And if I didn't find my man there in the North, at least I found a someone I could live with, through thirty years and more of intimacy and with a reasonable content. The road to life is through a bone-tight portal. The gate to death is entered single file. Two at most may walk the way of happiness together and many (even of those blessed few who ever find it) discover suddenly that they are walking solitary on its not-too-well-blazed, twisty trail. In all a man's most real moments, "neither his class nor his kind nor his trade may come near him." The only ever-present company is something that is born and dies inside you. The Kingdom of Heaven, the place where in the end you find out happiness, must be an inner reality or else it is not real at all.

A man may change his body. He does. A man wears many bodies between birth and death, for the cells of the body know continual growth, multiplication, and decay. But the cells of your brain exist from birth. You have to put up with those you started with, for the whole sum of life. So there's a keen, deep, biological basis for the old Greek dictum, "Know thyself." A man's own mind is all he can know, actually, for

absolute insulation is the basic law. Each is a memory to himself. All else is seeming and all else is change. The Greeks knew that—it's not a new discovery of science or of modern psychology. You couldn't fool those Greeks, they were true skeptics. Their eyes were wide apart, spaced, and they kept their bodies fit and running to match their nimble-footed minds. They said that only in the things of mind will one find permanence. " Know thyself " is deep wisdom, both science and religion, chart and star. It makes for tough integrity (oneness, unity) of character, and cuts one loose from trivia which splinter, cut, and shiver wholeness. The ultimate realities are yours alone, incommunicable. The instant that you cease to be alone, you move by so much out from that reality into a world of mere appearance, to speculative guess rather than genuine hypothesis.

The Greeks didn't know that the very mechanism of memory is dependent upon those cells which can not be changed, can not be renewed; but they had the overnotion, the philosophic hunch, of which the biologic fact is merely proof. It's logic as well as biologic; for if brain-cells changed, replaced themselves, where then would memory be? One can use or one can abuse that changeless, god-like function—employ it like a god, or let it lodge within one useless, though it be truly " death to hide." What is senescence but disuse or rust of mental function? And what is childishness or immaturity but its un-use?

St. Michael was the end of my long trail to which I'd come at last, more serious and more happy than the person who set out from Dyea a year and a half before. I had found the man whom I came North to seek. A poor finding? He was the gift of the Yukon to me, a gift no other corner of the earth had granted though I had sought it from the coral strands of India up to the actual icy mountains. I've found no other

treasure so well worth the search, as that so-personal gift from my River that ran West.

And I still hold his gift, irrevocably mine, inalienable much more than Klondike gold; for no man can transmit or lose such gift, once it is his. I came back to the world, but was not swallowed by it. I had seen and felt and knew the value of pure gold—knew fool's gold for the pyrite that it is.

End of a Yukon Log

'VE reached the ending of my river journey, my Yukon log; but, as that door swung closed, another and a wider door was opened. The Yukon was my graduate course, preparing me for special life work. When you finish school you, rightly, speak of your leave-taking as " commencement." My journey's ending here was true commencement.

The time was autumn, 1899. The din of a lost century was passing, a new was just beginning. For such of it as I should know, I vowed a different approach to life. The turning of the century was a fit time to check the ledger, itemize accounts, balance the arrears and resources. I'd been to school again, and what is school but learning—not any set of rigid facts, but ways to look on life that make it understandable? A school should open windows in the mind, point out new vistas through wide-open doors by which the seeking spirit may find egress. My River had been such a school to me, unbounded in horizon, sweeping the psyche clean of dusty cobwebs underneath those elemental winds. This was true education, not of drill but of creation.

The Yukon made a solipsist of me! That word's a Latin twin of which I'm very fond, because it means " a person who believes that only knowledge of one's self is possible." I don't use the word in a strict Kantian sense, as he delimits it in his philosophy, but purely in its roots: *solus*, a man alone; *ipse*, himself. I see the problem in these simple terms: I have but five avenues of approach to material things; these five very im-

perfectly adjusted sense-organs, with a few ounces of gray matter stuffed convoluted in the space between my ears, make up my sole equipment for gaining notions about the outside world. Of necessity, therefore—or so I think—the most real part of the great cosmic panorama is my idea of it, since all conclusions drawn from observation must be but circumstantial evidence—unsound bases for hypotheses.

The gray-cloaked mind remains forever caged behind those bars of insubstantial steel through which the hooded prisoner of flesh may peer into the mysteries beyond, but never can escape the five-barred immemorial barriers of sense and actually lay hold on outward things. Heraclitus twenty-five centuries ago discovered that " Eyes and ears are poor witnesses to men, if they have souls that understand not their language." My brain is the House of the Interpreter, its furniture is symbol. I give names to the filtrates which may enter there but what I call by name as " things " are only disembodied spirit-forms of things, since no material thing has ever entered into or been actually touched by the mind of man. Muffled in the senses, baffled by the seeming untranslatable, how can I really know anything very definite or certain about exterior matter or its motions? So I am forced to look within in order to find anything approaching absolute values, since " Only so much do I know as I have lived." Our evidence, our theory, our verification, must all be built upon our own experience; for " neither proximity in space, nor similarity of quality and content, are able to fuse thoughts together which are sundered by this barrier of belonging to different personal minds." The skeptic mind of William James could see this, clearly, and see why the hardest and the deepest of all problems slips forever into terms of the equation, " Know thyself."

Hard? Yes. But no astronomer, geologist, biologist, or any other specialist can master more than an infinitesimal fraction of his subject. Are we not merely then in the same

class as all the other searchers after truth? And while it's very true that those who attack such difficult problems can never hope to exhaust them, yet no one can deny that the honest searcher finds out much more than do those who never question. We know that out of desert forty days and forty nights have come great impulses, great dedications. If, as the psyche-wise have learned, the human spirit dwells forever in a solitary place, an actual isolation—because there's no such thing as merging consciousnesses—why not provide a setting for it that is suitable, out of the beaten, crowded way and face to face with the companionship of cosmos? Away from the noises of the market place, where slaves of Time are driven as with whips, one may look up—or in—and find new pattern and progressive powers, a more intensive fitness; so to obliterate or purge the old confusion, yet not by Macbeth's " rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug."

Crowding, herding, massing do strange things—things we don't fully know or understand—to the human spirit; but we do know there is no uplift in a mob. There is a pretty fable not framed by Æsop or Lafontaine but written yesterday in terms of science, by a research man at Durban. He told how solitary and almost amiable grasshoppers change color, size, and appetite when herded, and soon turn into ravening locust mobs—mob life actually transmuting species, and very much in the wrong direction! It doesn't take the grimness of a Schopenhauer to trace a parallel. When human masses press too closely, as in the terrace upon terrace of our modern cities, evolutions most unpleasing to the student of behavior are quite apt to emerge. Locusts from grasshoppers!

A counsel of removal is not the selfish doctrine that it seems on surface, for there's an obverse: We can know others only as we know ourselves. In blazing lonely trails, we may just possibly discover some pass or ford or portage through the wilderness, useful to ourselves but useful *non nobis solum*. Emerson

long ago pointed out that the deeper a man delves into the privatest, secretest presentiments of his soul, the more completely will the better part in other men respond, feeling " This is my music, this is myself." If you delight to think of men as *differing greatly*, then touch your finger to the outer contour only, epidermal texture. Never probe deeper into vital and organic matters, with him who " trieth the hearts and reins." Under the skin is brotherhood.

The mirror of the wilderness gives more than self-reflection. " We do not tend a lamp whose lustre we alone participate." If a man really learns that it lies within his power to enjoy a personal relation with the universe, he has found something with which to reach deep into other men. If Very Son of Very God were unprepared to help His fellows before He learned the schooling of the wilderness, then by what logic can the Sons of Man deny the virtue of such discipline?

Psychology, the wisdom of the soul, appears to me the first and primary wisdom. I do not mean psychology interpreted as physical science. I do not mean that bastard and misnamed psychology which turns down into study of the apes and insects, to biophysics and to biochemistry, for its *ultimates*. In so doing it betrays its very birthright—that psyche which it claims to seek—or digs that psyche underground. The language of the sciences is not by any means the language of the soul. We turn to natural science to find out what is of the earth and earthy. To find what lies above the earth we must turn elsewhere. Life constantly eludes attempt at complete definition in terms of biochemistry, the whole being perpetually greater than the sum of parts. It's very true that life has its certain base upon the physical and chemical, so that they will quite adequately describe the roots; but they can not touch the flower. They compass the beginning, not the urge or end.

I feel that any true psychology or knowledge of the soul lies deeper than a geographic fact, is stronger than an economic

pressure. What you are is so much more momentous than anything that happens, or where. I saw that on the Chilkoot. Man isn't shaped so much by the event. He shapes it. Of all the thousands in that Klondike stampede, there were no two to whom the stampede meant the same, though happenings on the trail and sharp vicissitude befell them equally. I saw the blow that broke the strong man, rouse the weak—where strength and weakness could be measured by any physical test. Not the event but how the event was met, made history in the Klondike. Character was fate. Overcoming, and not happenstance, made personal drama there! As a man thought in his heart, so was he on the trail. Avalanche and whirlpool were as much a figment of his thinking as were the perils in John Bunyan's dream of pilgrimage; and those who thought they could not overcome, really and truly could not. There were no differences in men by race or skin or age or previous condition, so real as were those differences of thought. The Trail, the Arctic Winter, and the River tested those thoughts and proved them.

Do you remember Bunyan's quaintly phrased *Apology for his Book,* "wherein is discovered the manner of his setting out, his dangerous journey and safe arrival at the desired country"? He said that he had tried to make his homely truth "to spangle," by using "Types, Shadows and Metaphors." I too have used similitudes, in telling of these fancies of my younger manhood that still stick in my mind, like burrs. How could I tell you of my vision except in visionary words? For I was in a dream, yet not asleep. Some love the meat, some love to pick the bone. I found my marrow in a metaphor.

The Arabs call the wilderness or solitary place a lovely name, "God's Garden," because they recognize it as the region where flowering thought on timeless things has space to fruit and grow. It seems to me it matters very little what you call it—whatever metaphor or symbol you have given to the place

of your experience. What I call River, you may call most anything—desert or mountain top or what you will: That place where the beginning of self-knowledge haply came; that time when, deeply tense, you gripped yourself and looked back into your own eyes, within the living mirror of the wilderness; that moment of revealing, when you knew your true self either in a depth-stirred bitterness, or peace, thereafter. That moment has a meaning, is a symbol. River is such a word to me.

You'll say, perhaps, I've called the Yukon something which it is not. I'll answer: "What is not?" If things aren't something other than they are, or seem—than they appear on surface—they have no real existence for they lack significance, dimension. And that's a notion old, at least, as Plato! . . . I knew a strong man, once, who paled and nearly swooned, passing a lovely garden whence the scent of lilac crept across the wall. That dizziness was real enough. What was the cause? Merely a breath of scented air? Or something drifting from Mnemosyne's garden—a whole lost way of life, a perfumed paradise, caught in that lilac odor?

"The Yukon is a long, mean, treacherous, muddy river, and full of snags and snarls and nastiness"—to some. To me, it is no river but a thought, a notion, an ideal, a way of life, a symbol, a passage from one world into another. It is an odor from the past, evoking much. When, at your wish, I opened up these little books and read, from this locked drawer, I showed you highest meed of friendship. From that locked drawer old memories have been released, and they both bless and burn. I've heard again the beating drums of Oudh, the drums of yesterday and echoes of old clamor. I've caught again those lost Himalayan fancies, full of such beauty that they hurt. A man's heart is a harp of many strings. It seems to me that detail and the episode of travel and of travail are alike inconsequential, provided the resulting memories are vibrant and live within the sense they quicken like vistas

glimpsed upon a mountain height, from which come pleasure-pain.

I'm pained because the whole sum of that vision still lies so far beyond my lag of understanding. The feelings so evoked are so far greater than I am myself, they go so far beyond my personal expression, I haven't dared or cared to tell this story of my Yukon trail, before. I am more used, these-days, to thinking words than uttering them. They draw up clumsily, as in an unused leaky bucket from a deep, deep well. Much of the freshness of the thought they spring from has been spilled before they reach the surface and pour out.

You can not talk of miracles in terms of science. One thing I know: Once I was blind, now I can see. By my experience there I was converted, turned around, headed completely and for always in an opposite direction. Since then I've followed what the navigators call a loxodromic line, steering consistently toward a fixed point of compass. —Saul never told just what occurred upon that road near Damascus. He couldn't, though he had a cutting mind and words as sharp as poniards. Those who rode with him upon that journey " heard not the voice of Him that spake to me," yet Saul became another man that blazing noonday.

The Yukon isn't just a river, in all these reëvoking memories of mine. It is a turning-chapter in my story; it is a friend; it is a meaning set to life, a harmony which makes the theme song clear. The river's factual self, great as that river is, remains the very smallest part of my real River. It was a drama, an arena. Perhaps, it was a dream.

These little books of mine are real enough, in conscience. All that I've told you has come out of them—yet nothing that I've really told is really written in them. The things worth while were too worth while to find a place there. Happily for me—and, I dare think, wisely—I gave up one life and I found another. You call me Duns Scotus, though in a jest,

I know. I will admit the Scotus for I couldn't well deny the name of Scot; but I know myself to be sub-duns. The real Duns Scotus had a nickname, *Doctor Subtilis.* I do not, can not measure up to the subtile Scottish scholiast; so call me rather a *Duns Scotus non subtilis:* a wise fool who found himself in losing of himself, beneath the atom and beyond the stars!

I know it is an old, old tune I'm humming—a doctrine old as Buddha, old as the Christ—yet one that's far more often preached than tried or tested. I abandoned practice and went off into the wilderness, after my brilliant start in one direction, if I may be allowed to call it so. I fought it out there in the silence of the open, under a roof of space uncircumferenced except by light-years. In my own estimation the experience was a glorious success. To me, it was by far the best thing that I ever did. What do I care if those who do not understand speak to the contrary! A fable to some, I know only too well that there are many to whom my notion of *integer vitæ* is merely a mockery, or a challenge. They wouldn't care for old Thomas Campion's paraphrase of Horace:

> " Good thoughts his only friends,
> His wealth a well-spent age,
> The earth his sober inn
> And quiet pilgrimage."

I've told you mostly about things, yet things did not comprise the strange year and the contradictions of my Yukon journey. They were but crust and edge to it. The meaty filling was no thing, was so intangible I can not even put a name upon it, explain its shape or size or taste for the imagination's drawing. In art, the masters say, the life of line, its excellence, lies in the content it creates. Because you, bitter-sweet in sourdough kinship of our North, have listened for more years than I beside the Yukon's lengthy course to hear the

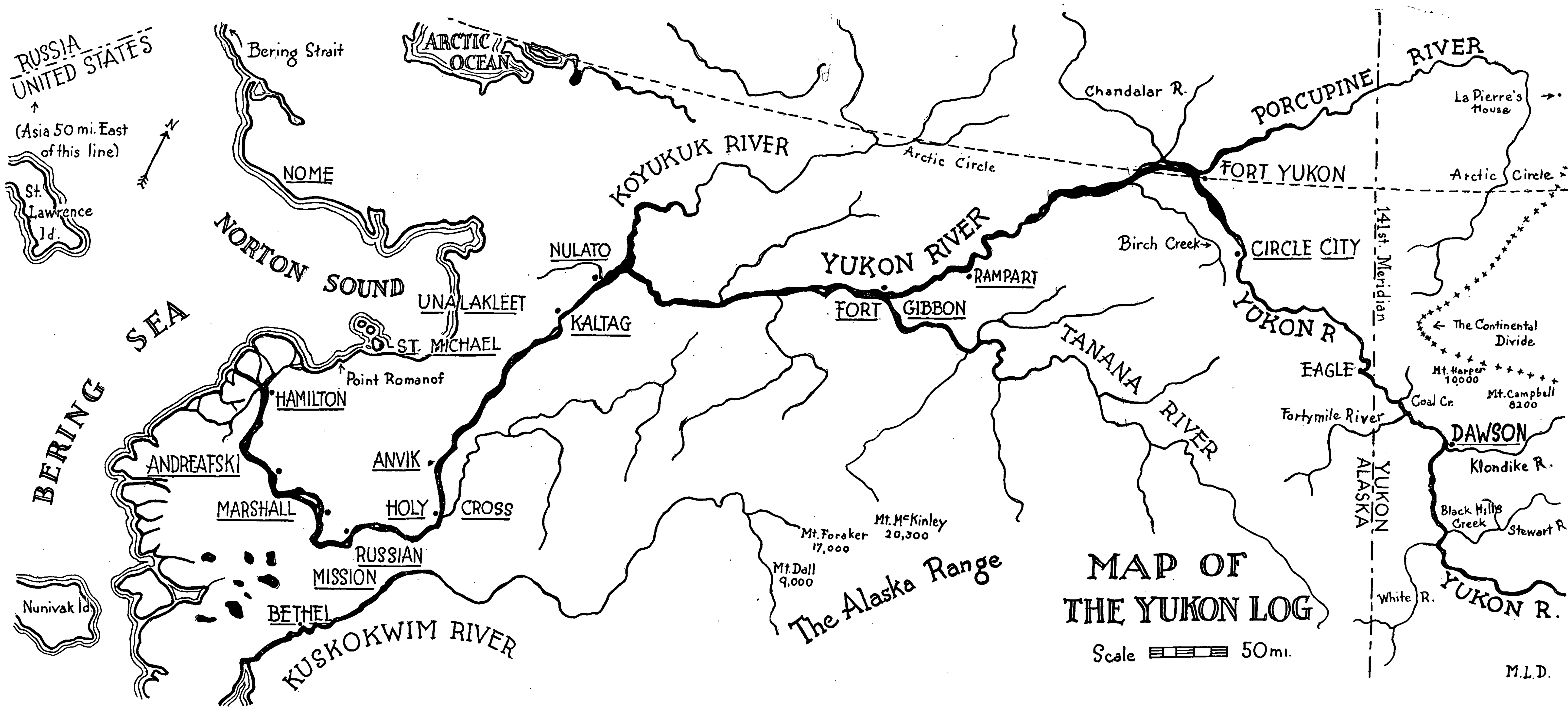
River speak, your friendly ears will catch the overtones in my thin flute-notes, your friendly eyes will fill the empty interline of story with true perspective and right color, translating what I thought was wordless into words. To any other reader, my bald journals would not yield their locked-up meaning, yet all that warp of inner story and the threading river-journey are truly woven here together, each as real as the other. Both were mine, were happening to me there; both changed me in irrevocable ways. Even to-day, with many years in vista, I'm living still, in memory always, with my eternal River whose flow, even when my own is ebbing, remains so undiminished. I dare say we can grow by what we feed upon, in memory as well as caloricity. The flame that burns my candle out is warm and colorful and steady.

Let us put back and lock again the books in black and red. In these long hours of talk together, I've tried to tell you some few of the thoughts I had in those past days, to which the jerky jottings of the journals are a text, an anti-text, a context. I can't begin to tell the long thoughts since, the years of work that really count, when tasks which in those hours of insight there were willed, have been within a measure since fulfilled. Maybe I had not really found my man. At least I found a trail that man could follow, and not be fearful that the end of it would mean betrayal.

. . . . A Scotch boy in the Dawson bank was writing verses thirty and more years ago, about the unforgetting, unforgotten Yukon spell, in which young Robert Service had been caught, and taught, even as you and I:

> "And so, dear friends, in gentler valleys roaming,
> Perhaps, when on my story you may look,
> Your fancies by the firelight may go homing
> To that lone land that haply you forsook;
> And if perchance you hear the silence calling,
> The frozen music of star-yearning heights,

Or, dreaming, see the seines of silver trawling
Across the sky's abyss on vasty nights,
You may recall that sweep of savage splendor,
That land that measures each man at his worth,
And feel in memory, half fierce, half tender,
The brotherhood of men that know the North."


RUSSIA
UNITED STATES
(Asia 50 mi. East of this line)
N
Bering Strait
ARCTIC OCEAN
St. Lawrence Id.
NOME
NORTON SOUND
BERING SEA
UNALAKLEET
ST. MICHAEL
Point Romanof
HAMILTON
ANDREAFSKI
MARSHALL
RUSSIAN MISSION
BETHEL
KUSKOKWIM RIVER
Nunivak Id.
NULATO
KALTAG
ANVIK
HOLY CROSS
KOYUKUK RIVER
Arctic Circle
YUKON RIVER
FORT GIBBON
RAMPART
TANANA RIVER
Mt. Foraker 17,000
Mt. McKinley 20,300
Mt. Dall 9,000
The Alaska Range
Chandalar R.
PORCUPINE RIVER
FORT YUKON
Birch Creek
CIRCLE CITY
YUKON R.
141st. Meridian
La Pierre's House
Arctic Circle
The Continental Divide
EAGLE
Mt. Harper 10000
Mt. Campbell 8200
Coal Cr.
Fortymile River
DAWSON
Klondike R.
YUKON
ALASKA
Black Hills Creek
Stewart R.
White R.
YUKON R.
MAP OF THE YUKON LOG
Scale 50 mi.
M.L.D.