

MY
SEVENTY
YEARS

BY

MRS
GEORGE BLACK

M.P. FOR THE YUKON

As told to
ELIZABETH BAILEY
PRICE

Mrs. George Black was the wife of the Speaker of the Canadian House of Commons, and, after he retired, was elected, at seventy years of age, as M.P. for the Yukon, one of the pioneer woman members in that assembly.

The main part of her story deals with her adventurous life, during the early years of her womanhood, on the Klondike goldfields.

She was in London during the Great War and made many interesting contacts with British people at that time in the limelight.

Here is a racy record of a most remarkable life, which begins with an announcement that Mrs. George Black is now about to begin a new career !

MY SEVENTY YEARS

Frontispiece



Mrs. George Black (Martha Louise Black) ; taken February
27, 1936, my 70th birthday.

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By MRS. GEORGE BLACK, F.R.G.S.

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With Sixteen Illustrations

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PROLOGUE

I AM seventy years old. I have lived the allotted span of life—threescore years and ten. The rest of my days, I realize, will be what is frequently called “borrowed time.”

Two weeks before my seventieth birthday, as the “Honourable Member for Yukon,” the second woman to be elected to the Canadian House of Commons, I took my place in the “green chamber” at Ottawa.

Ever since my election I have been inundated with these questions :

“What did you do to reach this high point in your career ?”

“What do you intend to do to further your career ?”

My career ? I never had one ; never wanted one. Furthering a career at the age of seventy ? It is ridiculous. I don't know what to do to further a career !

Then, after I have laughed that off, during the long listening-hours, while “the House sits,” I think of careers, their making and furthering.

Across from me is the Right Honourable, the Prime Minister, W. L. Mackenzie King, who is at the very height of a career—for was he not elected to power with a majority unequalled in the history of our country ? I know that he has given a lifetime of service to reach this eminent position. I am an eye-witness to his success—that he is seeing the enactment of legislation and the establishment of principles for which he has worked all his adult years.

To my right, two benches away, is the Right Honourable, the Leader of the Opposition, R. B. Bennett. He, too, has worked faithfully and unswervingly toward a fixed ambition to which he has given a sincere and ardent devotion, even to the detriment of his health.

Near me is my colleague, Miss Agnes McPhail, who, at the age of thirty-two, was the first woman to be elected to the Canadian House of Commons, and who has been returned term after term. I know that she has deliberately sacrificed love, marriage, and a home, that she might give herself entirely to the parliamentary advancement of Canadian women, a cause she serves so well.

None of these things have I done. Yet, like every Commoner taking his seat in Parliament for the first time, I confess I am inspired by this high calling. I will devote all my time and energy to it—and no one realizes more than I do the limitations of my “borrowed time.”

I made no pre-election promises, nor gave any fiery orations. My campaign was almost entirely personal canvassing. In fact, at one of my few political meetings the most popular part of my speech consisted of only four words.

“What are you going to promise us when you get to Ottawa?” someone shouted.

“To do my best!”

“Atta girl! Atta girl!” was the response.

After my campaign, when I was resting from the fatigue of it (and at seventy we pay these tolls with interest), I asked myself, “Why did you want the men of the North (for the Yukon is a man’s country) to send you as their member to Ottawa, when you should have been spending this time that the poets call the ‘sunset of life,’ knitting, resting, reading, or pursuing your best-beloved hobby—

gathering and studying wild flowers? Why and how did you do this ridiculous thing—a woman of seventy in parliament?”

And then I am confronted with echoes of long-forgotten incidents of my life, in those early, stirring days of the Klondyke. . . . “Do you remember when you lived on the flats,” I hear someone saying, “the night I asked if I might live in one of your mill cabins?” You said, ‘Sure, but that one is so dilapidated, it isn’t fit for a dog.’ Then I cut my foot. You came over to help me, and every day you sent your son with food. . . .”

“Do you remember the fall I came to your house to turn off the water? You said, ‘You look half frozen; come in and get warm. I’m just making a cup of coffee for myself. Come and have one with me.’ . . .”

“You’re such a damned good cook. You got my vote because you could bake beans better than any woman I know. . . .”

“It’s the only blow-out I ever get,” said a friend from the creeks, who comes to Dawson each year. “Always a bunk and a feed, and ‘sit as long as you like.’ . . .”

“I didn’t want you a damned bit, but you’re George’s wife. No matter what hour of the night I went by your house, I could always open your door and call up:

“‘George, are you in?’

“‘Hmph?’

“‘Anyone in the spare bed?’

“‘No!’

“Then I’d turn in and come down to those thundering good breakfasts of yours with the family. . . .”

“It was those election night parties of yours, to which ‘all your friends were invited,’ supporters and non-supporters. Remember the only time George lost, and I

went over to commiserate—but came away vowing I would never again vote against ‘The Blacks’? . . . Always open house . . . someone to tell your troubles to . . . a meal and a drink . . . some new stories. . . .”

I’m not telling you this to dramatize myself as a good fellow, but it just goes to show how sometimes the very smallest deeds, all in a day’s work, may have a hundredfold return. They may even get you into the Parliament of Canada! I’m sure that my Sourdough pancakes and baked beans played a big part in my hundred and thirty-nine majority.

Yes, that’s the only key to this so-called career of mine. It’s the life I’ve lived—my day-by-day living.

My people have always been what the world calls “comfortably well off.” There has been the wherewithal to follow the pursuits which interested me. These have led to places of hardships and tragedies, to the humblest and to the highest in the land—to Sourdough shacks of the Klondyke and to Buckingham Palace and the White House. Before I was thirty I was thoroughly disillusioned with youth’s ideals of life, and miserably unhappy. I have spent weeks on end in a little northern cabin, where I was lonely, poor, hungry, and cold. I’ve been faced with the hardest trials that any woman could face. I look back now and wonder how I got through the months of mental anguish in 1898, before my baby was born. Night after night I prayed to die. The greatest tragedy in life is to be so beaten that you long to die; that every day you feel you cannot endure life any longer.

I’ve been lucky, too, in being endowed with a zest for adventure—a zest so great that I could work night and day when I was on one of my quests. I have cooked for sixteen men, run a saw mill with working hours from 7 a.m. until

2 a.m. next morning, and I have tramped miles and miles, over mountain trails, in the Yukon and British Columbia, picking wild flowers.

Like thousands of mothers of the Great War, I have spent many, many anxious, watchful, prayerful hours of suspense, when the satisfaction or glory of patriotic service, of the distinction of the right to wear "one gold and three silver stars" could not alleviate the agony.

I have been privileged to occupy some of the highest places in the land—chatelaine of Yukon Government House, wife of the First Commoner (the Speaker of the House of Commons), and now, in my old age, I am the second woman to be elected to the House of Commons in Canada—a tremendous honour.

These positions I owe largely to the fact that I am Mrs. George Black; that my husband had given over forty years of political service to Yukon and to Canada. At this moment I would be the happiest woman in the world if my husband, who could not accept the nomination because of illness, had my seat in the Parliament of Canada. I was eminently satisfied in being the wife of a parliamentarian. I enjoyed to the uttermost such an ideal setting which brought me in touch with a host of interesting personalities and brilliant minds. It was one of those joys I had hoped would go on and on.

But "there's a Divinity that shapes our ends." My husband became ill; too ill to carry on the work to which he had given the best years of his life. He had won so many elections in Yukon that our friends said it was logical that the nomination should be given to me. It seemed preposterous that I should begin a public life at seventy—but there was the material angle of earning a living. We had served the cause, not wisely but too well. Not only

did we give faith and energy, but practically all we had of this world's goods.

I accepted the nomination, hurled myself into the campaign.

And here I am, asking myself : " What have you done to go down in history as the second woman to be elected to the Canadian House of Commons ? " Yes, after long consideration, *it's the life I've lived.*

Like a moving picture, it unreels before me : the Chicago Fire of 1871 . . . the prosperous '70's and '80's . . . the gay and frivolous '90's . . . the World's Fair at Chicago . . . the Spanish-American War . . . the Klondyke gold rush and the Trail of '98 . . . staking claims, panning gold . . . running mills . . . years of happiness with George Black . . . Government House at Dawson . . . the Great War . . . overseas service . . . back home to Dawson . . . Ottawa . . . a back-bencher's wife . . . the Speaker's wife . . . and now, at the age of seventy, I take my place in Parliament ; Member for Yukon ! Yukon that I love—that vast, rugged country of cruelties and hardships, of lure and loveliness ; of fun and friends ; the place where I have spent the happiest time of my life.

But let me begin at the beginning of my seventy years !

PART I—CHICAGO

CHAPTER I

I AM BORN

THE first story told about me concerns my birth. This was related by Aunt Agnes, Father's eldest sister, who, standing by the bedside of a frightened sixteen-year-old mother, said, "Susan, shall I call George?"

"Yes," whispered the tearful, exhausted girl-wife; "but I am so sorry. He won't be pleased."

Father came into the room and kissed Mother gravely. He looked at his twin girl babies and said, "Susan, I am disappointed. I expected a boy."

"Yes, I know, I am so sorry."

"If my husband had said that to me I would have thrown those two babies at him," I afterwards told Mother. Her eyes filled with tears as she quietly remarked, "Not at a man like your dear father."

I am sure that Father did not mean to be hard or cruel, but he had the fixed idea of the men of that day, that woman was created for the sole purpose of ministering to the physical comfort and desires of man. He admired intelligent women, but at the same time they annoyed him. He expected women to be good housekeepers, wives, and mothers.

I am a member of the ninth American-born generation of Mungers. According to the *Book of Munger*, which is a record of my paternal family tree and traditions, Nicholas

Munger, the progenitor of the name in United States, came to America in 1645, at the age of sixteen years. He was one of the first settlers of the Guildford Colony, in what to-day is the state of Connecticut, and his particular farmstead was situated on the north bank of the Neck River. Although this land has not been continuously in the Munger name, I believe that to-day a relative, Arthur D. Munger, lives in a house on the original site, in the village of Guildford.

My forebears fought in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Civil War. Among them were pioneers, patriots, slave-owners and abolitionists, farmers, industrialists, preachers, teachers, poets, sailors, and soldiers. Father's great-grandmother, Abigail Button, was a connection of Button Gwynette, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Several Mungers served in the war of 1812. One, James, who lived in Madison County, became a captain in the Light Infantry Brigade, commanded by General J. N. M. Hurd; another, Horace, was taken prisoner by the Indians at Fort George, Canada, and was started for England as a prisoner of war, but the vessel became disabled by a storm and put back to Halifax. He was transferred to a prison in Montreal, where he remained ten years before being discharged.

Father must have inherited this soldiering bent, as during the Civil War he enlisted as a private in the Guthrie Grays of Cincinnati, and later was commissioned lieutenant in Company G, Eighth Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry.

One of Father's family traditions which thrilled me exceedingly in my younger days was a story of great-great-grandmother Stebbins. She, her sister Cynthia, and chil-

dren were left at home while the men went many miles to Boston for supplies.

The house, so my grandmother told me, was built on a hillside, which formed the back wall, the front and sides being of logs on a stone foundation, and the roof of sod. The one entrance was through a door to the cellar, which had one small window, both having strong barricades. The upper storey, or living quarters, was reached through a trap-door in the floor, its opening made the more difficult by the heavy home-made furniture placed upon it.

The women, who were spinning by candlelight, heard noises below. Great-great-grandmother took the candle, lifted the trap-door, peered into the cellar. To her horror she saw an Indian wriggling his body through the one small window. His tomahawk was on the floor. He had evidently thrown it in first. Like a flash she was in the cellar. She seized the tomahawk, striking the Indian's head again and again. The two women, fearful that there might be more Indians, dragged his dead body through the window into the cellar. They then securely barricaded the window and retired to the upper floor to wait three long days for the return of the menfolk.

Another story concerned Aunt Sophronia, several generations removed. She was beautiful and had such a way with her that, at the age of seventeen, she was accused of being a witch. She was thrown into prison, tried, and condemned to be burned at the stake. But the jailer, his wife and children, all came under her spell, especially as she had helped them nurse their sick baby. They became so attached to her that they helped her to escape. She lived with the Indians, and it was she who took the news of the Deerfield massacre to the settlers. She was re-tried, rewarded with her life on condition that she married a man seventy-

two years of age. I have thought since that this indeed was a life sentence—that a girl of seventeen might even prefer being burned at the stake.

I do not know as much of Mother's ancestors, as they did not keep such complete records as Father's people did. But she has told me that they did take an active part in the pioneer and political history of the South—one reaching the eminent position of state governor.

I have always been proud of my people and their service to their country. I feel honoured indeed that I inherit from them the proud distinction of the right to be a governor's daughter, a Colonial Dame, and a Daughter of the American Revolution.

Mother was the daughter of John W. Owens, owner of a large plantation and several Ohio River packets—a member of the family which founded Owensville, Kentucky, where she was born. Her mother was Mary Ludlow Cummins, of Ohio, after whom Cumminsville was named. Her grandmothers, Jeanette Cummins and Susan Ludlow, were accredited to be the mothers of the first white boy and first white girl born in Cincinnati. For years portraits of these grandmothers, bequeathed by Grandfather Owens to the Young Men's Mercantile Library Association, hung in the Cincinnati City Hall.

When Mother was very young her mother died, and at the age of six she with her two elder sisters Martha and Edith, accompanied by a negro mammy, were sent to Europe to be educated. This was due probably to the fact that mother's cousin, William Dean Howells (later to become famous as a writer and diplomat), was at that time connected with the diplomatic service in Europe. He had married a friend of the family, who wrote enthusiastically of the advantages of continental education. Mother spent

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My Mother (Susie B. Owens) at 16 ;
taken when at School in Germany.

four years at a girls' school at Stuttgart, Germany, and five years at the convent of the Holy Cross, France. She was taught all the "ladylike arts"—fine needlework, painting, and music, both vocal and instrumental. She could speak German and French as fluently as English.

On the death of her father in 1864, to settle his estate, she and her two sisters were brought back to Owensville by Uncle and Aunt Mary Ann Howells (parents of William Dean). It was during the Civil War, which had considerably depreciated her father's property, and the three orphans went at once to live with Aunt Fanny Fosdick (wife of Admiral Fosdick) and Uncle Henry Pearce in Cincinnati.

At the time Father, who had been wounded at the battle of Seven Pines, was convalescing in this border city, where Northerners and Southerners mingled.

Father met Mother, and they fell in love. Shortly afterwards, in the face of bitter opposition, they were married—Mother, a Southerner, barely sixteen, Father, a Northerner, twelve years her senior. It was a "Yankee" marriage which aroused all Mother's kin to fury. Father could provide neither a home nor the comforts to which she had been accustomed—as he was now a "mere labourer" working for his father in the oilfields at Mercer, Pennsylvania. Even this living failed him after the first few months of married life. The oil refinery was burned. He then moved to Chicago, the "Western Wilderness," to work in the linen department of Ross and Gossage (now Carson, Perie, and Scott). Out walking one Sunday with George Wilson of Wilson Bros. Men's Furnishings Co., they noted a "For Sale" sign on a laundry. Father had always deplored the poor laundering of the shirts and collars where he worked. The outcome of the Sunday

stroll was that, backed by Wilson, he purchased the laundry. This was the worst social blow of all!

But Mother shared these vicissitudes lovingly and trustfully. She uttered no complaint about going to Chicago, and here in February 1866 my twin sister and I, Martha Louise Munger, were born.

I never knew my twin sister as she lived only a few hours. Many times I have longed for her, have imagined the good times we might have had together, the companionship, the unity of understanding, the love that is the heritage of twins.

Mother was slow in regaining her strength. Now I can see that her youth, her early training, her sheltered life, were poor preparation to meet the hardships of the middle west as the wife of a poor man.

Other children came so quickly in those first four years. All these, save myself and my little lame sister Agnes, who lived to be three, died in infancy. I have often heard mother say, "In four years I had five children."

There was no general knowledge of birth control then. It was unpardonable to discuss such an idea. Think of what scientific knowledge of child-spacing would have meant to a woman like Mother, who really wanted and loved children. Think of the poignancy of her grief, to have snatched away from her those precious little ones so soon after she had felt that overwhelming surge of mother-love, which we mothers all know, when first our helpless new-born babes are laid within our arms.

Such records as the survival of one baby of five, all born within four years—common records of past generations—should silence for ever those who condemn birth control, especially the male objectors. Let these men cry to high heaven that a prevalent knowledge of birth control

will mean that the majority of women will not have children. That is not true. The maternal instinct is still the strongest within most of us. It is true that there may be fewer children, but they will be better children.

Father and Mother had many definite theories of child-training, and I, their eldest, bore the brunt of these; many possessing the wisdom of all time, for no matter how each age progresses, children's untrained human nature always will have to be disciplined. My quick temper and imagination were always getting me into trouble. I was never slapped, but I received my share of spankings. I was never put to bed supperless, but my supper was only bread and milk.

One of Father's pet sayings was, "Some day one of my girls may be the wife of the President of United States and live in the White House, and I want her to know how to fill a position like that. On the other hand, one of my girls may have to work for the President's wife, and I want her to know how to do that equally well."

Now I realize that I had a wonderful father and mother. I know that they did all they could to make my childhood happy and to fit me in every way to meet life. My greatest wish for the children of to-day is that their training may be as balanced a combination of discipline and pleasure as mine was.

CHAPTER II

A COW KICKED A LAMP

MY first vivid childhood memory is a mad race before the fierce flames of the great Chicago fire ; of our family fleeing for safety to the sandy shores of Lake Michigan. I can scarcely breathe. I am coughing, sputtering, and my eyes are stinging almost unbearably from the smoke. (I was five years old, and it was the morning of the second day of the fire, Monday, October 9, 1871.)

I remember that the night before I was awakened by an unusual commotion in the house. Our Irish cook, Hannah, had come home from church crying. A fire had started in a barn near by, had spread quickly to her church, and burned it to the ground. I recall sitting on Mother's knee, in a rocking-chair, in the big bay window of our West Van Buren Street home, watching the sky grow redder and redder, and seeing high tongues of flame shooting through great black smoky clouds, and huge burning brands carried through the air by the terrific wind that shook the house.

There was no sleep for anyone. Father went down town to see our fine new laundry building (of which we were all very proud). The flames were roaring toward that part of the city.

In a few hours Father, Uncle Pliny, and Cousin Gordon came staggering in, their faces black like coloured people. (I was never allowed to use the word "nigger.")

“Will Father be black foreveran’ever?” I ask.

No one listens to me.

“Hurry! Hurry!” Father is calling to Mother. “The whole town’s afire. We must run for our lives. We must get to the lake shore as fast as possible. We just got across Madison Street bridge before it collapsed. Dress the children in their warmest clothes. We can’t save anything. I have no money. They want five hundred dollars for a wagon.”

“I have the money,” says Mother.

Father, frantically grabbing coats, did not hear her.

“George, will you listen? I have the money.”

“You! Where did you get it?”

“Remember the gold you gave me for my sealskin jacket and velvet dress? I haven’t bought them yet.”

Father hurries out. He hires a one-horse wagon. My little invalid sister, Agnes, who had never walked, and who was always in her carriage-bed, is lifted, bed and all, into the wagon. I, tightly clutching my favourite coloured rag doll, Louisa, in one hand, and grandmother’s silver spoons in the other, am placed upon a pile of bedding. Mother gets in beside me. Our dear Auntie Edith, who has been ill for weeks, is helped in. Hannah and our men-folk go on foot, keeping up as fast as they can a steady dog-trot.

Through a haze of sixty-five years it is hard to separate my actual memories of one of the greatest fires in history from the many stories told in my home so often. But I do remember some of the horrible sights of that ghastly flight. People with black and blood-stained faces, dragging or carrying frightened, screaming children . . . sick people carried on stretchers . . . others pulling baby carriages, wheelbarrows or hand wagons, loaded with a few precious

possessions . . . families like ours, who had the ready money to hire carts or wagons. All hurrying, hurrying, as though pursued by a demon. And what a terrible demon it was ! We could feel its hot breath suffocating us, stinging our eyes to tears which ran down our smoke-blackened faces.

I still recall the awful noises : the roar of the fire . . . the frightened crying and hysterical sobbing of children . . . the screaming of stampeding horses . . . the bellowing of cattle, broken loose from the stockyards.

At last we reach the lake shore . . . as far away from the fire as possible. . . . Auntie Edith has fainted and is lifted from the wagon and laid upon the sandy shore. . . . Our men build a fire, while our women sort bundles. . . . I am frightened by the many horses running around and among us.

The sky is darkening. . . . The wind from the lake makes me shiver . . . We huddle about our fire. . . . It looks like rain and we are glad, for that will put out the big fire which still rages in the distance. . . . There are soldiers everywhere. . . . I see one give Father a gun.

A little girl is crying at the top of her voice, "I've lost my mother. I can't find my mother. I want my mother !" My own mother goes to her. "Then, dear, wait here until she comes. We are going to have some supper. You have some with us." She stays and we play.

If it weren't for the smoke and the cold wind it would be fun to eat outside, to cook meals over an open fire, to be guarded by soldiers.

"But why does Auntie Edith sleep so long ?" I asked Mother. "She has never moved since we came. Let us wake her up. She shouldn't sleep so long."

"No, dear, do not do that. She's very tired," replies Mother gently.

“ But why is her face covered ? ”

“ The light from the fire will hurt her eyes.”

Mother went often to little Agnes's carriage, but as usual she was good.

“ Oh, my baby, my baby ! At last I have found you,” I heard, and I saw my new little friend in the arms of her mother.

A howling dog raced madly toward us. Father raised his gun and shot it.

“ Oh, George, why did you do that ? ” exclaims Mother.

“ The dog is mad ! ”

“ Oh no, dear, the poor animal is only frightened.”

“ He might have been mad, and, if not, he would probably have gone mad from hunger.”

We got ready for the night. We were to sleep under the wagon with our quilts pegged down at the sides, for it had begun to rain. I had a fine sleep, and when I awoke I looked toward the city, which no longer flamed, but still smoked. I looked at Auntie Edith, who still slept with covered face as we cooked our breakfast over the open fire. After eating, Father and Uncle Pliny lifted Auntie Edith into our wagon, while Mother's eyes filled with tears.

“ Where's she going ? ” I ask.

“ To her heavenly home. She will not have any more pain and will be happy for ever, as she is with Jesus.”

Immediately after the fire Grandfather Munger, who had purchased a drugstore in Galva, Illinois, where he practised his profession of apothecary, came to find us. I remember that he drove us to the burned city, and the many charred carcasses of horses and cattle along the roadside are still vivid in my memory. We passed by the

Ogden mansion, located in the centre of beautiful treed grounds, which occupied the space of a block. The family was away and the house was closed. Yet, by some strange freak, it had come through the fire untouched.

We drove to the ruins of the Fairbanks-Morse building, for Charles Morse was my uncle. I can still visualize the company's safe, wedged within a high, partially burned corner of the building. Later, when a drawer was opened, there was a shower of ashes. Some bank notes had pulverized into fine ash. Uncle Charlie preserved these ashes in a small glass box, which became one of his prize souvenirs of the fire.

We lived three days in the open on the lake shore. Our men kept our fire going night and day with wood from wood piles which grew bigger every day from the many logs and kindlings dumped upon them. I liked this life. I had always wanted to live outside. I liked getting all our food from the big wagons. I liked baking potatoes in an outside fire, and I always asked Hannah to let me 'tend them

The nights grew colder and we lived in tents until our new house was finished. As fast as possible the city was building small houses for the homeless on Wapense Avenue (now 37th Street), and we were to have one of four rooms to ourselves, because there were seven of us. Father was angry that they were already calling the district "Poverty Flats."

In after years my parents filled in many gaps in my memory. The fire broke out at 9.25 p.m. in O'Leary's barn, on the west side of the river. Whether or not it was actually started by Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicking a lamp, when she was said to have given it a second milking, has not been proven to this day; but this is the generally

accepted story. Mrs. O'Leary never wavered from her evidence that she had not been near the cow after she milked it at the regular time, five o'clock. A broken lamp, found among the ashes of the stable a few days later, was probably the foundation of the legend, and certainly the inspiration of the popular song, "There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town To-night."

Be that as it may, the fire started in this district of "shanties and shingles," a terrific south-west wind was blowing, and it was at a time of the worst drought in the history of this part of the country. All summer long there had been innumerable fires, not only in the city but on the surrounding prairies. Only the day before there had been a three-quarter million dollar fire, and the firemen were utterly exhausted.

By ten o'clock all Chicago was aroused. The flames which I had watched from Mother's knee were a hundred feet high and, as the night wore on, miles in width. The fire, swept along by that strong south-west wind, licked through the dry wooden shanties as fast as a man could run. It crossed the river to the south side, and swept steadily to the north-east, through the business section, demolishing everything in its path. It ate its way on every side into residential districts, until it had burned itself out.

The people went mad with fear. Those of the underworld, whose dens had been burned, and thieves released from jail, kept just ahead of the fire, looting unmercifully—even dead bodies. Added to the general chaos were the innumerable runaway horses, which filled Chicago stables in those days. Many broke away from barns and drivers, stampeded through the streets, and, crazed with fear, ran back into the flames, to be burned alive. Hundreds of squealing rats, smoked from their holes, were trampled to

death. Thousands of refugees, like us, raced before the fire to safety on the lake shore.

Looking up statistics, I note that 98,500 people were burned out, 21,800 down-town residents were rendered homeless, more than 250 counted dead, and approximately \$200,000,000.00 of property destroyed. The charity of the American people and of other countries was unprecedented. Food, clothing, and supplies of every kind valued at over \$7,000,000.00 poured into the stricken city.

The spirit of the Chicago people was undaunted, and rebuilding began at once. Within a year a far greater city, with fireproof buildings, sprang phoenix-like from the ruins.

To-day some of my most cherished possessions are grandmother's spoons, and some fine pieces of linen, now yellow with age, which had been hastily thrown into the wagon on the occasion of that mad race for life before the Chicago fire.

CHAPTER III

POVERTY FLATS

FATHER resented bitterly the turn of fate—the Chicago fire—which had wiped out every possession he owned. He was deeply humiliated that it was necessary to take his cultured Southern wife, and his children, to live in the shanties of Poverty Flats. He had been so elated when, on the completion of his new laundry plant, he had been able to give Mother a thousand dollars in gold to buy a sealskin jacket and a velvet dress. They were more than just fur and plush. They were to be symbols to her family that her marriage to a poverty-stricken “Yankee” was turning out all right; to Mother herself, that her faith in him had been justified.

Of course Mother did not need any such reward for her belief in and her love for him. She accepted Poverty Flats calmly and without complaint, as was her nature. “No lady ever talks of money, whether she has it or not. Look at all the nice people around us,” she would observe.

The district across the street had escaped the fire, and there were some fine houses on it. One day, sitting on the tiny stoop of our house, I saw some children playing there. I ran over. Then I heard a voice calling, “Amelia, Frances, Jarvis, come right in. And you, little girl, go back to Poverty Row. No ragtag-bobtail children can play here.”

Highly insulted, I marched home with my head in the air.

My day came.

Shortly after, Uncle Charles and Aunt Martha Morse returned from the Paris Exposition. They brought me many gifts, a beautiful large Paris doll and a trunkful of dresses which buttoned and unbuttoned, which I could take off and on. The doll could walk and talk, for when squeezed in the middle it squeaked "Mama" and "Papa." They brought me many lovely dresses too.

Again I sat on our stoop. I was wearing one of my new white embroidered dresses and playing with my doll. Amelia, Frances, Jarvis came over. I arose, gathered my treasures, put my head in the air, and said, "If you won't play with Mattie in her gingham dress, you shan't play with Mattie in her white dress."

Years after, Amelia and Frances were fellow-school-mates, but I always found it difficult to be polite to them. It is a mistake to dismiss children's troubles and griefs with the idea that they will soon be forgotten. Childish griefs can be as deep and bitter as those of adults, leaving scars that are not effaced in a lifetime. I am seventy years old, and I still feel that affront to my pride.

Perhaps this led me to draw upon my own imagination for playmates—those over whom I had absolute control—and who, of course, never offended me. These imaginary beings were Mr. Po and Mrs. Abadon, who always called upon me when I was alone. Mother told me years afterwards that she was greatly puzzled over them, and used to wonder if she should not intrude upon these conversations, which always began, "Good-afternoon, Mr. Po and Mrs. Abadon. I'm all alone. Do walk in and have a cup of chocolate" (we served chocolate, instead of tea, in

those days), and ended, "I'm sorry, but you must go now. Other people are coming in," whereupon I opened the door and allowed them to depart.

Our Poverty Flats shanty was indeed a contrast to our storey-and-a-half frame house on West Van Buren Street which was burned in the fire. Well do I remember the latter, especially the parlour, for it was there I had my best fun. A mahogany set, with hand-carved backs of grape design, upholstered in green horsehair, was a part of its furnishings. I remember Mother telling Father that her father had brought it from the old country. It was unique because Chicago, the country town of those days, did not boast much English furniture. It was all the more remarkable because most "parlour sets" were covered with black horsehair, but the explanation was that the original white horsehair had been dyed green. I have travelled far and wide, and have yet to see green horsehair again. But in those days I particularly enjoyed the long slippery slide which began at the roll cushion at the sofa's top and ended on a plump feather pillow, which I placed on the floor at the bottom and which as a bumper can never be equalled.

There were two easy-chairs, one a rocker the other with arms, four occasional chairs, and one needle-point fireside bench. There were two corner whatnots, a high-boy, and a large mahogany table with enormous claw legs. This table stands clearly etched in my memory, for upon it, on two occasions, rested tiny coffins: first, when a baby sister died, and then when my first brother left us. Father did give this brother such an odd name—"Gaius Moses," and I recall distinctly his annoyance when I shortened it to "Gay."

There was also a large comfortable sitting-room, which Mother called the "family room." Each had a corner or

special niche—Father for his easy-chair, Mother for her sewing-table, Agnes the bay window for her special carriage-bed, and I a place for my little chair, doll, and linen picture books. In spite of illness (which I think to-day would be diagnosed as infantile paralysis) Agnes was a happy baby, and I do not remember that she ever cried. She always laughed when I danced before her a coloured rag doll, which had the funniest kinkiest hair.

Our ornaments were after the mode of the age. There were wonderful pink seashells on the whatnot, or holding the door open. When I put these to my ear I heard the sound of the sea and wanted to go to its far-away shores. There was a large crystal which showed people going to church, and the least motion would give the effect of a gentle snowstorm.

There were stereoscopic views—pictures of Niagara Falls, scenes of France and Germany, which Mother had brought home from Europe. Particularly do I remember the picture of the yodellers, for Mother could yodel. When I looked at this I would say, "Oh, Mother, do yodel for me!"

There was the alabaster figure of a nude woman in a graceful pose, protected by a glass cover. Grandmother Munger so deplored this sinful exhibition of a naked woman that it became the custom either to remove this ornament or cover it up when she visited us. Years afterwards, when grandmother came to see me in my own home in Chicago, looking over my pictures and ornaments, she said, "My dear, I have lived a great many years, and I have never found it necessary to have either a picture or the figure of a naked woman in my home."

I have always felt that I am fortunate in belonging to a family which had so much of the Scottish clan spirit—a

connection is a connection, whether rich or poor, in success or in adversity. I am sure that Father's and Mother's relatives were pillars of strength to them in those dire days of Poverty Flats, especially the Morses, who lived in Chicago.

Uncle Charles Hosmer Morse, son of a Vermont clergyman, was certainly one of America's self-made men. I have heard him tell of the time he began to work for the Fairbanks Company as an office sweeper in their New York office. He was wearing a homespun suit, and his fellow-workers crowded around him calling him "country bumpkin." They made fun of his clothes, saying, "Why don't you put some sugar on your boots to coax your trousers down?" But when he died the "country bumpkin" was president and 90 per cent. owner of the Fairbanks-Morse Company.

His wife, Aunt Martha, Mother's eldest sister, came to see us often. She was my ideal of what a lady should be. I've heard Mother say, "If our dear dead father appeared before sister Martha, the only effect it would have upon her would be an unconscious twitching of her chin, as she said, 'Father, I had not expected to see you to-day. Won't you take a seat?'"

She used to let me go through her jewellery box, and what a treasure trove the well-filled jewellery caskets of the '70's and '80's were. While Mother had beautiful cameos and corals, a set of garnets (of which I now have an ear-ring), exquisite brooches, bracelets, and rings (all saved from the fire), there were no family jewels like Aunt Martha's. The most fascinating pieces to me were a necklace and ear-rings, made of tiny heads of South American humming birds with ruby eyes, mounted in gold. There were magnificent diamond and pearl "sunbursts," jet orna-

ments, coral sets, flower hair necklaces, hair brooches, heavily jewelled rings, and the finest of cameos—jewellery collected on trips to all parts of the world.

Grandfather and Grandmother Munger insisted that we visit them at Galva, Illinois, after the fire—probably to remove us from the “lowering” atmosphere of Poverty Flats. It was at this time that I experienced my first real tragedy. My mind swings back to a beautiful June day. Grandfather is teaching me to play croquet. Mother is making me the loveliest new dress, of pale primrose delaine, patterned with black stars, with a low neck, puffed sleeves, and a jacket. It is trimmed with many tiny brass buttons, and right now Mother is sewing rows and rows of black velvet baby ribbon on the sleeves of the jacket. How I picture myself in it! How I love it!

These pleasant thoughts are rudely jarred by the arrival of a little neighbour girl, Janey Jarvis, who has been invited to play with me. I’ve always hated Janey Jarvis. She’s so good, always saying, “Yes, Ma’am,” and “No, Ma’am,” never speaking, save when spoken to.

I look at my lovely dress. Won’t I lord it over her when I’m wearing it! I look at her with contempt. At this very minute she is saying, “Yes, Ma’am,” and making a small curtsy.

A black rage wells within me that peaceful June afternoon. Without an instant’s warning I fly at her. I scratch her face and shoulders. I don’t know why I did it, unless that most children, in the raw, are young savages. I still feel the horror of what I have done, the horror of my people. Mother, always deliberate, arises and leads me away, amid the piercing screams of Janey and the shocked silence of everybody. I am taken to my room, and left there until Mother “thinks” what she will do about it.

The long hours pass. She comes back. I can see that my act has hurt her terribly, and I am so sorry, for I can love as fiercely as I can hate.

“Martha Louise, you have done a cruel and wicked thing to-day,” she says sorrowfully. “Janey may have scars all her life. Her face and shoulders are going to take a long time to heal. I am going to give Janey your new dress! The jacket will at least cover her arms.”

I am numb with grief. Janey wearing my beautiful dress! I can't bear it. It goes on for days. I get feverish and really sick.

Then grandfather takes a stand, right before me too. “Susan, Martha has been punished enough.” I am coaxed back to eat . . . all my favourite dishes. I am promised another dress. I get it too; but it never, never takes the place of the primrose delaine with the black stars.

I remember this incident as vividly as if it had happened yesterday. To-day I am grateful to that dear mother of mine who so wisely showed me the unhappiness that inevitably follows ungovernable passion, vanity, and covetousness. Of course, being naturally hot-headed and vain, I was not cured for ever of those faults. Wouldn't life be easy if we could shed our innate vices after one lesson!

CHAPTER IV

CHILDHOOD DAYS

WE did not live long in Poverty Flats. Grandfather Munger and Uncle Charles Morse came to Father's rescue financially, and he re-established his laundry business. He had an exceptionally good business head, and the setback of the fire aroused his fighting spirit and challenged him to greater efforts. Business boomed again, and we moved to "our nice new house" on North Franklin Street, near Lincoln Park—a brick English basement house, with brownstone trimmings and a cupola.

Opposite us lived Levi Z. Leiter, one of the founders of Marshall Field, which was originally Field and Leiter. Across a hollow lot were the Vaughans and the Buschs, one of the Anhauser Busch firm. Father and the heads of these three families united in having their various hired men flood the hollow lot to make a skating rink for us children.

Joe Leiter, later known as "Six-footer Joe," then a gangling swarthy youth in his teens, at least six years older than I, was my first great love . . . but he did not know it. Joe Leiter taught me to skate, and I adored him. But one day he brought a strange girl to the rink. I was consumed with jealousy. In my rage I grabbed his coat-tail and her pigtails and hung on to them as they circled the rink. Joe asked me politely to stop. I would not. Then

he gave me a good slap, which I richly deserved. We had a hearty laugh over this fifty years later, when I reminded him of it. In '97 and '98 he was the talk of the grain exchanges of the world, when he attempted to corner the world wheat market, and was reputed to have lost millions.

I used to admire the elegant Miss Mary Victoria Leiter, who later, as the wife of Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, became an important social leader. Mary Leiter was a fine young woman, and I remember the gossip at the time of her marriage, that she, with her beauty and millions, had made a poor match, because at that time George Nathaniel Curzon was only an under-secretary of the British Legation at Washington, had no title, was not popular, and was said to be poor. However, his rise to the position of Viceroy of India followed within a decade. He was the standard-bearer of the Indian Empire at the coronation of the late King George and Queen Mary. Queen Alexandra stood sponsor for their fourth daughter, Alexandra Naljera, who married Major Edward Metcalfe. On the christening of their son, David Patrick, Edward Prince of Wales stood sponsor. So Mary Leiter did not do so badly for herself or her descendants.

In these childhood days my quick temper was always getting the better of me in the most unexpected places. One occasion was during the visit of the great evangelists, Moody and Sankey, who held revival services in the basement of the old Congregational Church on Ann and Washington streets, a few doors from Uncle Charlie Morse's home. Allie Goodwin, son of the pastor, was a playmate of mine. I suppose the religious fervour of the preaching-singing evangelists spread to the children, for we liked to play church. Allie, my two cousins, Charlie and Bess Morse, and I fogathered in Allie's father's empty church.

Allie, befitting his background, was Moody, I was Sankey, and my two cousins the audience. After the sermon, we sang, "Pull for the shore, sailor," Allie passed the collection plate, and in my zeal I placed on it two cents. Then Allie said the benediction and church was over.

Immediately getting out of character, I demanded my money back. Allie declared he had earned it. I insisted on getting it back, and, forgetting the sacred setting of this argument, proceeded to scuffle with him over the collection plate. I did not stop until I had my money in my pocket, whereupon I left the church triumphantly. Was it then the beginning of what is known to-day as the "material age"?

It was during this period of my life that my graveyard complex flourished to its greatest degree. Most children love the dramatic moments that are inevitably connected with death, especially the ceremonial aspects of funerals. Only the other day I heard a six-year-old daughter of a friend of mine interject into our subdued plans of attending, together, the funeral of a mutual beloved friend, "You lucky things! Going to another funeral, and I've never even seen one."

I recall the first funeral I ever attended, that of the grandmother of a little friend. She was laid out in a black shroud with a white collar and cap. Her nose and chin almost met over her sunken mouth, giving her the appearance of that figure familiar to all children, the witch who rides the broomstick. Thinking back, I am sure she was not as old as I am now. One thing we do owe to modern times is the discovery of innumerable aids for maintaining a youthful appearance. Mother wasn't seventeen when I was born, and yet, until I had children of my own, I always considered her old. It was the clothes women wore, and

the quiet lives they lived, that chiefly promoted this old-age atmosphere. Grandmother always wore black dresses, and lace or muslin caps. There were few parties, and everybody usually went to bed at ten o'clock. This is surely a mighty digression from the advice of a noted psychiatrist of this day, who says, "Women over fifty should wear bright colours and live dangerously."

But I was telling you about my graveyard complex. In after years Aunt Fanny Fosdick told me of a terrible scare I once gave mother and her. Looking through the window one day, she saw the hearse drive up to the door, and the driver walk up the steps. Hurriedly she called, "Susan! Prepare yourself for a shock. Something dreadful has happened. The hearse is at the door." Mother, all atremble, hurried to the door. This is the conversation:

Driver (holding me by the hand): "Is this your little girl, Ma'am?" Mother nods.

Driver: "Then, Ma'am, I've brought her back to you. She stopped me down the street and said, 'I've driven in every kind of a ve-hick-le except a hearse.' She asked me in nice polite words if I would drive her home. I said, 'Well, Miss, would you like to ride inside or outside?' She said, 'Outside this time.'"

I have still to take my inside ride.

Our neighbours, the Vaughans, had a new baby, but he lived only a few months. As I shared their French governess, I was allowed to attend the funeral with the other children and the governess. We were in the hack, *en route* to the graveyard, all crying but Louis.

I stood this as long as I could, then I whispered:

"Louis, you ought to cry—you've lost your little brother."

"I don't want to cry."

“ Oh, Louis, cry ! It’s the thing people do at funerals.”

“ I’ll not cry—and you mind your own business.”

“ You *must* cry,” I said, feeling my temper rising.
“ I’ll make you.”

And with that I hit him a good slap on the face.

Needless to say, confusion reigned amid the mourners, and I was speedily hustled to another seat.

And, of course, the grand moments I had, attending my own funeral. These came with those long hours of solitary confinement over a bread and milk supper. I’ve seen myself laid out—at last attaining my ambition of wearing a hoop skirt. (I had been promised this as a compromise in my passionate plea for a hoop skirt.) I am looking so white—but oh, so sweet, with a lily in my hand ! My relatives come, one by one, to look at me. The tears are streaming down their faces. They look at each other and say, “ How could we ever have been so mean to her ! I just cannot bear it that she will never be with us again, never play and skip about in her sweet innocence. Only the good die young.”

And here I am—seventy years old !

Skulls had a particular fascination. Our house was near the old Lincoln Park cemetery, which, shortly after the fire, was dug up, and the coffins removed to a new cemetery, in order to enlarge the park. To me this was a fascinating occupation. My enthusiasm led me to the point of running home to ask mother if she would like a nice shiny skull for a doorstep. Pursuant investigation resulted in my being forbidden my graveyard playground.

Perhaps this complex of mine was kept alive by the fact that my grandparents’ Galva home was on the road to the cemetery, and all funeral processions passed that way. Grandmother had the loveliest old-fashioned garden, abloom

with verbenas, tuberoses and moss roses, and lilies of the valley in summer, while the bow window was a bower of flowers in winter. Never a funeral passed that she did not arrange for someone, if she could not go herself, to stop the mourners' hack and hand the sorrowing ones a bouquet. Many a time I've done it, saying, as I made a small curtsy, "With grandmother's sympathy."

My grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Lyman Munger, played an important part in my early training. They had moved from New England in the early years of their married life to the oilfields at Mercer, Pennsylvania. After the fire there the year I was born, they took up residence in Galva, Illinois, where grandfather practised his profession of apothecary in his own drug store.

They visited us often in Chicago. They took me to my first circus when I was eight years old. I recall that it was the captive balloon that fascinated me more than anything else. You could go up for a quarter and get a flag besides. The conversation went like this ;

Mattie : " Oh, grandfather, please let me go up."

Grandmother : " Certainly not ! "

Grandfather (*weakening*) : " I don't think it would hurt."

Grandmother : " Certainly not. My granddaughter going up with these people ! Come, Mattie, you can have a ride on the merry-go-round."

We all went away.

I could not get the balloon out of my mind . . . grandfather and grandmother were looking away . . . I had my own quarter . . . I hurried back to the balloon . . . I got there just as it was ready to go up . . . I bought my ticket and got my flag. The balloon ascended, and I was thrilled to my innermost being. I looked down and saw my grandparents looking for me. I shouted and waved

my flag at them. The balloon descended, and I was met with an ominous silence. I was taken home immediately. Grandfather escorted me to the little arbour (the scene of all corporal punishment) where I received one of his mild spankings—the kind that never really hurt.

Even now I boast that never could a person get more for a quarter: a balloon ride, a flag, and a spanking. "That's your money's worth," say I.

When my brother George Merrick was born, because of Mother's long illness I went to live with my grandparents in Galva. Every afternoon grandfather read two hours, his favourite authors being Scott, Thackeray, and Dickens. I used to sit on a small stool sewing my "stint," a perforated cardboard motto with wool cross stitch. Many a "God Bless Our Home" and "Welcome to Our Home" I've made.

I have never known table seating arrangements like grandfather's. He and grandmother sat opposite each other, in the middle of the table, with the family members to the right, and the servants—two hired girls and two hired men—to the left, or "below the salt." When my youngest aunt, Harriett, became engaged to Charlie Cox, a son of Governor Cox of Ohio, she was greatly disturbed over this arrangement when inviting her fiancé and his parents to be house guests for the wedding. She was sure that the Coxes, who had lived in Washington, were not accustomed to have the servants at the table.

Grandfather soon silenced her by saying, "What's been good enough for my grandfather, my father, and me, is good enough for the Coxes." During their visit the servants sat "below the salt."

As I look back, I see that my grandparents were very patient with such a stirring child as I was, and very sym-

pathetic with the childish customs of the day. One was the giving of May baskets and June boxes, filled with flowers of their respective months. In May the donor would pick the first wild or garden flowers—violets, mayflowers, hepaticas, fill a pretty basket, and place it on the front doorstep of the chosen one. He or she would then ring the bell and run away. Similarly, in June, one would do likewise, except that these would be prettily decorated boxes, sometimes sealed. An admirer of mine had given me a beautiful May basket. In the meantime we had quarrelled. The time of June boxes came. Our door bell rang. I hurried to the door, opened it. As I picked up the June box I saw my "boy friend" scurry away. I took it into the parlour to show everybody, feeling elated that I had not been neglected. I opened the box, only to let loose a dozen or more big black June bugs, which sent the adults scrambling to catch them.

An instance of grandfather's intuitive knowledge of child psychology comes to me. My Uncle Charles Morse had given me my first diamonds, at the age of fourteen years—a pair of pin-point diamond ear-rings. My vanity rose to that; and I must have my ears pierced.

Mother was goaded to the point of making it an issue; that it was utterly preposterous for a girl of fourteen to have her ears pierced and wear diamond ear-rings.

Grandfather, who was visiting us at the time, said, "Susan, I think you are a little hard on Mattie. I'd let her have her ears pierced. But, you know, it is a very delicate business, and sometimes ears get infected. You remember the case in the paper the other day of a girl who had to have a poisoned ear cut right off. I myself would like to pierce Mattie's ears, to avoid any possible danger of blood-poisoning."

I beamed on grandfather.

“ Now, Mattie, we’ll do this on a Saturday, which will allow you Saturday and Sunday to get over your suffering, because it will hurt. But you won’t mind that, because you want to wear your diamond ear-rings, don’t you ? ”

I nodded.

Saturday comes. Grandfather prepares. When I arrive, I see a log, a three-cornered sail needle threaded with a piece of heavy waxed silk, a wooden mallet, and a piece of leather, over which grandfather has placed a small piece of linen. I look at this.

“ Now, Mattie, come here. I will rub the lobe of your ear until it is numb. You will then place it upon the linen, and, with one blow on the needle, and a quick jerk of it to pull the thread, the trick is done. Your ear will not hurt for a few seconds because it will be numb, but you will suffer, and you must be prepared to stand the pain and soreness for at least two days.”

I think of the skating party that afternoon.

“ Grandfather, couldn’t we wait until next week ? ”

“ Certainly,” he replies.

And so it went on for days. “ Mattie, have you time to-day to get your ears pierced ? ” was the daily question. In the meantime all the horrible details of painful piercings, even fatal results, were incidental bits of family conversation.

Time went on and on. Then one day grandfather said, “ Now Mattie, since you never seem to have time to get your ears pierced, wouldn’t it be nice to get your ear-rings made into a pretty brooch ? ” I acceded joyfully. To this day it is one of my treasures. And I haven’t had my ears pierced yet !

CHAPTER V

MY HIGHER EDUCATION

WHEN I was thirteen Father sent me to Michigan Avenue High School. It was a mixed school, and then, as now, "puppy love" often proved more interesting than studying dry textbooks. I recall a fad of the school—passing along love messages in a skull used for illustration in physiology lessons. I had received one, which I concealed in a textbook. I was absorbed in reading it, when, like the crack of doom, I heard a voice behind me saying, "Ahem. . . . This will interest the class. Miss Munger, will you kindly stand up?" I, blushing to the roots of my hair, obeyed. She then proceeded to read aloud:

"My beautiful *Angle*," saying, "I suppose your admirer means angel, for you certainly resemble no *angle* I ever saw." This was insult added to injury, for I was well aware of my plumpness and my longing to be "pale and thin."

After two years in high school I was placed in the Lake Forest Select Seminary for Young Ladies, to be "finished." Looking backward, I think I nearly finished those in charge of the "Select Seminary." I was continually getting into escapades. I was not disobedient, but my troubles arose from my zest for adventure. When seized by the urge of a particular quest, in pursuit of it I forgot all rules and regulations, thereby upsetting the discipline of the school.

My teachers complained so often that finally my parents became too distraught to defend me and I was taken out.

It was then that Mother thought of her convent education, under the supervision of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in France. She talked over this type of school with Father, who agreed that certainly some more effective discipline was sadly needed for me. There were schools, directed by this same order of Sisters in the United States, the Mother house being St. Mary's of Notre Dame, Indiana, a school of high repute throughout the country. They decided to send me there.

Father in person entered me. He told Mother Lucretia that his decision to send me to a Roman Catholic school had been made in the face of bitter opposition from his relatives, who were all Protestants, that personally he had no objection to the Roman Catholic Church, and he thought that the religious aspect and strict regulations of convent-training were essential for my temperament. He realized that I was emotionally unstable, that I was greatly affected by ceremonies of all kinds. "She might like to join your Church," he continued, "and I have no objection to that. Let her join the Roman Catholic pupils in their study of the catechism and Church history. If, one year after her graduation, she decides to be a convert, she shall have my full permission."

This viewpoint was a terrible shock to the family, all but Grandfather Munger. Two aunts declared, "I would rather see Mattie in her grave than become a Roman Catholic." Grandfather remained calm, saying, "If it is written that Mattie will be a convert, nothing can prevent it."

I spent five of the grandest years of my life at St. Mary's. I was thrilled by the beauty of its setting—the loveliness

and fragrance of the "mile of lilacs" driveway—the woodland paths, the winding St. Joseph's River, and the beautiful flower gardens.

I was deeply interested in the traditions of the school; that during the Civil War sixty Sisters, under the leadership of Mother Angela, became volunteer nurses; that these white-capped angels of mercy brought peace to tortured souls and comfort to stricken bodies. Had not my own father served in the Civil War?

I made regular visits to the historic first log chapel—to the Grotto Shrine. I even knelt to the Holy Mother while tapers flickered in the sheltered cave.

My adolescent years were inspired by the high ideals of womanhood exemplified in the lives of the Sisters themselves—their devotion to their Church, their calm, deliberate acceptance of every day's problems, their kindness, their sympathy and firmness. To-day I would call it a "spiritual motherhood."

How we girls of the '70's and '80's who attended St. Mary's were "protected." Arriving at South Bend, five miles from the school, we were met at the trains by "Old Man Shickey," who watched us like the Sisters. He hustled us into his carriage-hack, and never left us until he had delivered us to the Mother Superior. As he grew older his sons helped. Although we were not so strictly guarded by them, they too had to "toe the mark," for it was common knowledge that their father had trained them for the job, even to the application of the big stick.

We wrote letters home twice a week, Wednesday and Saturday, the latter being obligatory. They were written first in our copybooks, taken to the Sisters for supervision, then copied on note-paper. Very occasionally we were allowed to write and mail a private letter to our parents.

To-day the girls mail unsupervised letters to whom and when they please, in a post office box at the school.

Great stress was laid on our "deportment." We were trained for every kind of social function, especially a royal drawing-room, as most of the girls hoped to be presented at Court. I suppose I have made a thousand curtsies to the picture of Queen Victoria ! With sheets pinned around our waists with safety-pins, to form court trains, dear little Sister Ignatia, our deportment teacher, taught us to make a low curtsy and retire several feet gracefully. I have been glad of this training since.

Of all studies, I enjoyed elocution most. I still have my old elocution book, one which had been Mother's. It is inscribed with her name, "Susan Owens," in fine delicate penmanship, followed by my small vertical, round, "positive" signature—our handwriting significant of Mother's reserve and my aggressiveness.

From my modern viewpoint I chuckle over the themes of these various "recitations." Yes, I learned them all : "Curfew shall not ring To-night," "Asleep at the Switch," and "Rock me to Sleep, Mother, Rock me to Sleep." I refresh my memory on "The Flirt's Defence," the chief object of blame being a man :

" Who played me a game untrue,
When I staked all my love and lost.

.

But now I love to lure them on,
And make them slaves to my gaze,
Like serfs to a conqueror's chariot,
Like moths to a candle blaze.

.

And forget mid the dizzy tumult and whirl
The woman I might have been."

I see "The Model American Girl" described in rhyme as :

" An honestly-courting young girl,
A never-seen-flirting young girl,
A quiet and pure,
A modest, demure,
A fit-for-a-wife young girl."

The second subject of interest was botany, and St. Mary's grounds were a floral paradise. As a child I had always loved flowers, and was for ever picking them and hunting for four-leafed clovers. I remember once telling Father I could find a hundred. He, thinking to impress on me the folly of exaggerated statements, said, " Daughter, I do not agree, but I will give you a dollar for every four-leaf clover you find." Before the end of the second day I had gathered over fifty. Father paid me the money and asked to be released from his bargain, declaring he had enough good luck to last all the rest of his life.

Father was now yearly becoming more prosperous. His first laundry expanded into a string of steam laundries. He had invented and patented laundry machinery (some in use to-day) which paid handsome royalties. As his business became more successful his generosity to his family increased. His visits to St. Mary's were gala events for me and my friends, as he always brought boxes of glacé fruits, fancy biscuits, pound and fruit cakes.

Father and Mother, both naturally hospitable, encouraged me to invite my schoolmates home for week-

ends and holidays. Indeed, ever since I can remember, if "sudden company" appeared at meal-time, Mother always invited them to share the meal. "Always ask a meal-time visitor to eat with you—even if you are only having baked potatoes," she impressed upon us. "Remember, what is good enough for the family is good enough for a guest—and never, never apologize for simple meals."

Father arranged many happy holiday times for me and my friends. He took us regularly to hear Stoddart's lectures. Once he had a party at our home in honour of Sir Henry Stanley, who visited Chicago after one of his African trips. A prized possession to-day is an autographed copy of *In Darkest Africa*, bearing the inscription, "To the Young Daughter of my Friend George Munger."

Father always insisted that we be fully dressed for our eight-o'clock family breakfast, as he hated "Mother Hubbard" wrappers. If we were tempted to excuse ourselves, pleading sickness, we remained in bed all day—not much fun for young, lively girls.

No matter how many servants we had, he also insisted that we cared for our rooms. This was in accordance with his theory of teaching neatness. He kept a watchful eye on my room, and from time to time visited it and looked into the dresser drawers.

I recall another of Father's lessons at this time, one to teach me self-control. He drove a beautiful trotting team and light carriage. As we went bowling along, under the subway, the horses took fright. In my excitement and fear I grabbed the reins. In a few minutes, after he had the horses under control, he stopped them and said, "Daughter, please get out and walk home"—it was four miles away. Later, he took me out again; and again the horses became restive; this time I never moved.

During holidays I was allowed to go to a few evening student parties at the homes of relatives and family friends, but until I was eighteen I had never been out later than midnight. Mother, being very delicate ever since my brother George was born, could not chaperone me, but Father always took me and called for me. When I was telling this to a young woman the other day she remarked, "And now we go for the fathers !"

It was at one of these parties I met handsome Will Purdy, a student at the Morgan Park Military Academy, and son of Warren G. Purdy, president of the Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railway, and prominent in military and masonic circles. We at once became friends.

At this time our family usually spent summers at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, a favourite resort for Chicago families. I met "Al" Spalding of baseball fame here. I was his partner in the tub races, the trick being to paddle to goal without getting upset, which we certainly did several times.

My five years at St. Mary's flew by, and I graduated in June 1886, the proud possessor of an elocution medal with three bars, an essay medal with one bar, and the honour of having the best herbarium and of having been chosen class poet.

On my graduation day an old schoolmate of Father's, who was considered queer because she believed in votes for women, asked him, "George, what career have you selected for this dear girl ?"

"The career of a wife and mother," replied Father quickly, with evident disapproval of the question.

The joke of it was that I was educated for neither. I danced, played and sang a little, recited "with so much expression," did fine needlework, painted china and water-

colour pictures, made "wonderful" lemon cream pies, angel food, and salad dressing. Because Father made a hobby of mathematics I had been taught geometry, algebra, and trigonometry, which had involved me in the mazes of calculus, logarithms, binomial theorem, permutations, and combinations. I remember nothing about them to-day except their names. I even had learned to typewrite—a novel accomplishment those days. The school possessed a Remington typewriter, which to me was an ever-fascinating plaything. The Sisters taught us to type our essays, which were on such topics as "Lives of the Prophets," "Greek Philosophers," and "Works of Washington Irving." Father was very proud of mine, and had them bound in red morocco leather. I knew how to dress for and act at receptions, dinner-parties, musicales, and dances.

I could play tennis and ride, but to-day I think how little I knew about proper clothes for these sports. For tennis I wore a high-collared starched shirtwaist, long skirt, at least three starched petticoats, and other "unmentionable" undergarments, all belted around my tightly corseted eighteen-inch waist, a small sailor hat held on the top of my frizzes with two hatpins, long cotton stockings and high-laced or buttoned boots; for riding, a high silk hat and tailored habit—the skirt gracefully draping the horse as I sat on my side saddle, or sweeping the ground as I walked.

Such a training to prepare me for "a wife and mother!"

No such thoughts as these, however, troubled me when my graduation day dawned—that beautiful June morning fifty years ago. As the class poet, I had my poem ready. It was called:

SPES UNICA

This life is not a summer sea
Neath azure skies,
With white sails fluttering free. . . .

I fancied myself, too, in my graduation dress. In the beginning it was not one I should have chosen. I would have liked a more sophisticated "gown," with low neck and short sleeves, like those of two classmates. Mother did not think this fashion appropriate, and had Marshall Field make me a frock of sheerest Swiss lawn, with raised hand-embroidered roses from the deep hem to the waist. It had long sleeves, a high back, a surplice neck, and a beautiful wide white moiré silk ribbon sash. Before the final exercises we had a dress rehearsal before the Mother Superior. She insisted that my two friends fill in the low necks of their dresses with blonde net. Mother had been right.

The only jarring note for me came with the presentation of the conduct wreaths—gold leaves for the blameless, silver for those not so good, and green for those who just "got by." The heads of all the class, save one, were adorned with gold and silver wreaths. I received the green.

However, my chagrin was alleviated considerably on the presentation of bouquets from relatives and admiring friends. I received one which was the most beautiful of all—a dozen calla lilies, the yellow centres removed and each replaced by three tiny tea roses, entwined with maiden-hair fern. It was from Will Purdy, my favourite beau.

CHAPTER VI

I AM A YOUNG LADY

NOW that my education was finished, I had become a young lady whose chief mission in life was to wait until the "right" man came along to marry me.

Father, not yet fifty years of age, had established seventy-two laundries in various parts of the country. He had travelled round the world. He had bought a sugar plantation on the Isle of Pines, one of the West Indies. He was now planning to retire on a two-thousand acre ranch on the border-line of Kansas and Oklahoma, in the dry belt, the soil of which he hoped to reclaim by a vast irrigation scheme.

While negotiating the purchase of this he took me west with him to visit his sister—my "Aunt Ione," wife of John R. Hanna, president of the City National Bank of Denver. She was one of the advanced women of her generation, and later attained the distinction of being the first woman to be elected a member of the Denver School Board.

Susan B. Anthony, the noted woman suffrage pioneer, was also a guest. I recall her as a silver-haired, motherly, pleasant woman, not at all the Carrie Nation window-smashing type. I looked upon her as a super-creature, and had a great shock when I wandered into the sewing-room and saw her sewing brush braid on an old black alpaca skirt. I had never dreamed that the great could so descend to the common things of life.

Aunt Ione was a friend of Frances E. Willard, founder of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, who had given up her position as dean of women of the Chicago North-western University to fight for prohibition. She had been Aunt Ione's guest when she visited Denver on a lecture tour. Aunt Ione told me that Miss Willard was a very nervous person, and took "Peruna," a popular patent medicine, pleasant to taste and widely advertised by personal testimonies as "good for the nerves." Heaven forbid that I should cast a slur upon the unblemished reputation of a great and good woman, but later disclosures are said to have revealed that Peruna had a surprisingly large alcoholic content. Apparently the great temperance reformer unconsciously was a victim of a slogan of to-day, "It pays to advertise." Anyway, the medicine gave her great relief!

Helen Hunt Jackson and her husband, Dr. Jackson, were frequent visitors at the Hanna home. "Helen Hunt" was an invalid, and Dr. Jackson generally carried her from their carriage into the house. One of her chief topics of conversation was the injustice of the white men to the Indians, which is the theme of her best-known literary effort *Ramona*.

Ben Lindsay, now internationally known as the originator of the juvenile and domestic relations courts, and exponent of companionate marriage, then a very young man, was also an always-welcome guest.

During my Denver visit, Cherry Creek went "on a boom," this being the second time in its history (this has happened only once since). It occurred one hot July afternoon when all were taking "rests." Suddenly I heard a rushing noise, like the sound of oncoming wind. It startled us into wakefulness. Uncle John shouted, "Get

your hats. Cherry Creek's on a boom!" We rushed into the street. We joined the ever-increasing crowd which had mounted to thousands when we reached the bank. Looking up the dry bed of the creek, we could actually see what appeared to be a swiftly moving wall of water coursing madly down—a most awe-inspiring sight. In a second it was roaring past us, a flood of water filled with whole trees, logs, parts of cabins, barns, screaming horses, bellowing cattle, and struggling poultry.

In the twinkling of an eye a jutting log caught a small boy, hurled him into the air, to the horrified groans of the crowd. He took two complete somersaults, then miraculously landed on his feet, in safety on the bank. A man dashed to the little fellow, turned him over his knee and spanked him, then burst into tears, crying uncontrollably as he led him away. He was evidently the father, and I heard afterwards that the boy was an only child. The crowd roared with hysterical laughter at the ridiculousness of it.

That fall of '85 I was introduced formally to society by Father and Mother at a large evening reception at our home, a spacious twenty-roomed house on Vincennes Avenue on the south side of the city. This was followed by a dance, the carpeted floors of our double drawing-room being covered with canvas.

Preparing for this event was a thrilling experience. We did not have beauty parlours those days, but I had given my hair a champagne rinse, using one of Father's magnums—a rare brand too. When he discovered this he was exceedingly annoyed, and investigation of my toilet articles led to his throwing away a three-dollar box of French powder. "Only fast girls paint and powder," he stormed. "Your mother never used this stuff."

I was to wear my first evening gown. Father had brought it from Cuba, and it was made of pink surah silk, the tight-fitting laced bodice covered with embroidered pineapple tissue in colour-tones of pink, which was pleated around the decolleté neck and fashioned into frills on the three-quarter length sleeves, and three flounces on the wide skirt.

I look back on this event as one of the happiest of my life. There was everything to make it so—youth, wealth, pretty clothes—and Will Purdy was there.

Father was particular about the men who paid attention to me. He strongly disapproved of one young man—John—because he was “addicted to liquor.”

One evening after I had retired and was in that first deep sleep of night, I was awakened by a knock at my door and Father saying, “Daughter, put on your wrapper and come down to the library immediately.”

I hurried down. There, stretched on the couch, was the inanimate form of a young man in evening clothes. Mother was present and she was crying.

“Now, daughter,” he said sternly, “I have called you down to see this disgraceful exhibition of drunkenness. A few moments ago I answered our knocker, and when I opened the door your friend John fell in. I dragged him to the sofa. Witness for yourself this humiliating scene. If you marry a man who does this you will have many, many unhappy hours. Think, too, of the disgrace you will bring upon your family !”

I moved nearer to the couch. I looked closely at the unconscious form of that good-looking young man.

“But, Father,” I exclaimed, “this man isn’t John! I never saw him before in my life.”

For a moment Father was disconcerted. “Well, it’s a

good lesson anyway," he replied shortly. "Go back to bed."

It was a gay winter, and I met Will Purdy again and again. He had finished his military education, and was working on the "Rock Island" Railway in the paymaster's department. Our friendship soon deepened into love, and with the approval of my parents and his father (his mother was dead) we became engaged.

I was now absorbed in preparations for my marriage, which was to take place in the summer. I made many fancywork articles for my "green trunk"—silk-embroidered cushions and centre-pieces, and gros-point coverings for chair seats, stools, and an ottoman. I painted china and water-colours. I ornamented several small pieces of furniture with poker-burning, a so-called pyrographic work. I monogrammed dozens of various articles of table and bed linen.

I was delivered into the hands of dressmakers. I remember some of my prettiest hats and gowns—a black challis, printed with tiny pink roses and green leaves, trimmed with many rows of black lace gathered on with pink ribbon, and a black pancake hat, faced with pink roses; an afternoon frock of fine baby blue lawn enhanced by dozens of yards of Valenciennes lace insertion and small frills, with which I wore a wide leghorn hat trimmed with blue flowers and carried a dainty white silk parasol with blue ribbon bows and streamers. I had two nun's veiling tea gowns with flowing sleeves and long trains, my favourite being one of deep blue, banded with folds of wine-coloured moiré silk.

I presume that it is the ambition of every American girl to visit the White House. I was fortunate in having this thrill at this time. Flora Payne Whitney, wife of the

Secretary of the Navy, under the first Cleveland administration, was Mother's second cousin. She invited me to spend ten days in Washington as her guest. Among the many delightful affairs which I attended, memorably the most exciting was a luncheon at the White House, with the president's beautiful wife, Mrs. Grover Cleveland, as hostess. At the time I did not appreciate the traditional charm of our "Executive Mansion," and told Mother later it seemed more like a large hotel than a home.

Recently, on a tourist trip, I revisited it and was far more impressed by its historical significance, the stately dignity of its architecture and the artistic simplicity of its furnishings. This is not to be wondered at, as I understand that, aside from the personal property of each president and his wife, no article of furniture—gift or replacement—is ever allowed in the White House now until and unless it has been passed as suitable by the Art Commissioner. Furthermore, each gift must be formally accepted by an Act of Congress. Such artistic care did not exist in the '80's. The grounds are far lovelier now—but Mother Nature can do much over a span of years, especially if assisted by expert landscape gardeners, and there was almost a half-century between my visits.

In the summer as usual we went to Lake Geneva, and here I owe it to the younger generation to tell this incident—to divulge to them that "necking" was not entirely unknown in the days of the middle '80's. My maiden Aunt Sarah and I were sleeping in a bedroom opening on to the veranda of our summer cottage. We were awakened by this conversation :

"Darling, let me bite you."

"Oh no, you mustn't."

"But, darling, do let me bite you."

“ Oh no, I just couldn't.”

“ But I won't hurt you a bit—I just want to bite you.”

By this time we were thoroughly awake—and knew the voices. Aunt Sarah could stand it no longer. Sitting bolt upright in bed, she called out :

“ Ethel, for heaven's sake let him bite you and be done with it.”

CHAPTER VII

I AM MARRIED

MOTHER was not well enough to arrange a big wedding, so Will and I were married quietly in August 1887, in the little Memorial Church on the shores of Lake Geneva. I wore a tailored suit of grey silk-warp henrietta cloth, both coat and skirt lined with grey silk. In accordance with the latest fashion of curves and "rustling" I had a stiff grey taffeta silk petticoat and a "five-wire bustle." My matching grey hat was trimmed with a pair of grey wings, and was held in place by two hatpins with large pink knobs which also served as part of the trimming. My high-laced boots and gloves were grey, and I carried a bouquet of pink roses.

We went to Chicago on our honeymoon in father Purdy's private car, and there relatives and friends entertained us royally.

After this we settled down in our suburban home in Walden, ten miles from Chicago on the Rock Island Railway. The house was Father's gift, and it was completely furnished with wedding presents from relatives on both sides.

Will was now assistant paymaster, and his salary a thousand dollars a year. In addition he had an "expense account," as he had to be away ten days of each month in the pay car. (Railway employes those days were paid

in cash from a car.) This was sufficient to cover his entire personal expenses, while I had the salary to pay the household bills and the coloured hired girl (five dollars a month). Grandfather Munger declared that with such a start we should not only live well, but save money besides.

My first thrill of freedom came with my marriage, when at last, unchaperoned, I could go to the Vienna Bakery, a place with a naughty reputation. I remember my first visit there with two other young matrons, and my deep chagrin when one of my uncles walked in with a "blonde." For some reason or other the very word "blonde" conveyed the meaning of "fast woman."

Each day I was through my few household duties quickly and had plenty of time to write bits of verse, which were published sometimes in the Chicago papers and copied by other papers. In my scrap-book I find this poem which appeared in the Chicago *Tribune* during this period :

ONLY

'Twas only a bright "good-morning"
That was called from over the way,
But it left its cheerful memory
Through a long and weary day.

'Twas only a gentle handclasp
That was given in sudden mood,
But it made all earth seem brighter,
So that even work was good.

'Twas only a bunch of flowers
That grew in a garden fair,
But all their hidden beauties
Were seen by an invalid there.

"Tis only a word or a gesture,
An act, or a thought of ours,
May prepare for unborn millions
A path of thorns or flowers.

Now and again we invited friends to play euchre. Sometimes we took the old "dummy line" and went far out beyond Hyde Park (enormously valuable property now) for a picnic, and I spent pleasant hours looking for wild flowers for a collection which I had started.

Thinking of how Chicago has grown, I remember that at this time Uncle Pliny Munger bought land on what to-day is 33rd Street and Rhodes Avenue, and wanted to build a home on it. Aunt Belle, his wife, was heartbroken at the thought of going so far away from the city, but he bribed her with a spanking team of light bay horses with cream-coloured manes and tails. In my young days a woman would give in considerably for a reward like that.

My first son, Warren, was born within the year, and I was very happy with my baby. Even to-day, when I am embarked on a so-called career at the age of seventy, if given a choice, I would gladly be the mother of a large family. All my strongest desires are connected with running a well-ordered home, presiding over a table around which would sit many sons and daughters, and having plenty of money to give each a good start in life.

My family had now moved to their Kansas ranch, which Father called "Catalpa Knob." He was absorbed in his new irrigation venture, planting trees, crops, and gardens. How I missed them! But father Purdy did his best to take their place. He insisted that we spend every week-end at his beautiful home. Being a railroad president, he moved in a circle of prominent men of that industry.

Two personalities stand out in my memory. The first is George M. Pullman, president of the Pullman Car Company, then a multi-millionaire and getting on in years. He had established his model town of Pullman, a workman's paradise, with well-built cottage homes, a church, a theatre, parks, and all that goes with such an enterprise. I do not know why it was not a success, unless it was that Pullman was too far ahead of his time. I do not think he ever gave up his dreams, however, and I recall that, on his death, he left more than a million dollars to found a manual training school for the sons of poor men. He himself had begun life as a poor boy, and had had a hard struggle in early youth.

It was at father Purdy's home I met the brilliant young engineer, Andrew Onderdonk, contractor for the construction of the British Columbia end of the Canadian Pacific Railway, from Port Moody on Burrard Inlet, near the mouth of the Fraser, to Eagle Pass, through the mountains. When I met him he was engineering the construction of the city waterworks tunnel under Lake Michigan. His wife was one of the Hilmans of New Jersey. She accompanied her husband to Canada, and afterwards, when I lived in British Columbia, old-timers told me what a fine pioneer she was, and how she gave all strangers who came to Yale, the construction headquarters, such a kindly welcome that it has become a tradition.

Will's greatest friend was Eli Gage, son of Lyman J. Gage, president of the First National Bank, whose name is interwoven in the history of the "windy city" for his expert advice in the financial panic, and later for his philanthropic work.

Will and I accompanied the Gages on the occasion of Eli's marriage to Sophy Weare, sister of the president of

the North American Trading and Transportation Company, which had established trading posts in the far north, and operated a fleet of boats on the Yukon River.

It was not very long, but it seemed so then, until Warren was kindergarten age, and I took him every day to Miss Ann Harrison's kindergarten, one of the first to be established in Chicago. My systematic housekeeping allowed plenty of time to stay and help her with the children, as she taught them to weave coloured paper mats, sew perforated cards with coloured wool, and play children's games.

This pleasant work was discontinued because of the birth of my second son, Donald. Warren, however, was very thrilled with his new escort, the twelve-year-old son of our "hired man," who, for fifty cents a week, mowed our lawn and looked after the garden in summer, shovelled sidewalks and tended the furnace in winter, and fed Warren's pony both winter and summer. This was his own price for work per family in a block of houses, one being his own. The pony was a gift from Colonel Hooker, one of the famous riders of the Pony Express, and a friend of Buffalo Bill Cody.

Like all mothers of small children, I was engrossed in the work and care that goes with motherhood. Analysing the various ages of the average woman's life, I would say this period, when she is getting her little ones started physically, and teaching them to form their first habits, is the most difficult to weather. It is then she realizes that the first glamour of romance has gone; that she must settle down in earnest to the business of living. She must figure out the adjusting of the ever-increasing living expenses to an income which, with most, does not increase in proportion to the mounting costs of raising a family.

Even in this enlightened age it is not easy to become adjusted to the physical aspects of motherhood—the accompanying illnesses and nervousness—the mental whimsicalities. Much too as we mothers love our children, and agree that the reward is well worth the pain and trouble, attending to their many needs day and night without a change does become monotonous.

This is the time, too, when young husbands feel most neglected. No longer do they behold in their wives their beautiful sweethearts. They weary quickly of “giving a hand with the baby,” of the eternal “baby” conversation, of their wives being too tired or too anxious about the “baby” to go out to the odd party. If they are good-looking, as my husband was, they may wander away to more interesting pursuits. There are always many “other” women waiting for, and wanting, the company of handsome men.

But soon (too soon, I say now) my boys were in school. Will was promoted to the position of paymaster; we were better off; I did not have enough to do at home, and I looked for outside interests. Chicago was booming. My immediate relatives were making money “hand over fist,” and I was soon caught up in a whirl of life outside my home.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GAY AND NAUGHTY '90's

IN June 1890 Father sent for me to go to his Kansas ranch to help Mother and him with the celebration of their silver wedding anniversary. For three years they had been planning for this event. Father had arranged the planting of every kind of fruit and vegetable which would be in season. Mother had ordered from Ireland hand-woven linen—a design of sunflowers (the Kansas state flower) and catalpa blossoms. Accommodation had been provided for forty house guests, as it was to be an old-fashioned family reunion.

“Catalpa Knob” was fulfilling Father’s dream of being a place of beauty and plenty. By damming a stream to make an artificial lake and installing a pump there, he had converted open prairie land into a plantation with thousands of timber and orchard trees, cultivated gardens and fields, and hay meadows. He was known throughout the country as “The Tree Planter.”

More than two hundred sat down to the wedding banquet, served by caterers from St. Louis on the long verandas of our ranch house. I can see yet the flower-decked tables, the wicker trays of huge luscious strawberries, the lavish supply of every kind of food. For the first time in my life I saw wax phonograph records made—as Father had us all “recorded” in song or recitation. One of the

lovely gifts, which I have inherited, was from Cousin William Dean Howells—a complete set of his books, bound in white and silver.

On this visit I met William Allen White, editor of the *Emporia Gazette*, and popular because of his clever “comebacks” to a series of “knocking” articles on the droughts, grasshoppers, and dust-storms of Kansas.

I liked to recite one of his “booster” poems :

“I’ve bin off on a journey, I jes’ got home to-day ;
 I travelled east an’ north an’ south, an’ every other way ;
 I’ve seen a heap o’ country, an’ cities on the boom,
 But I want to be in Kansas when the
 Sun-
 Flowers
 Bloom.”

I met him unexpectedly during wartime in London, where he was attached to President Wilson’s staff. He knew me at once. “George Munger’s daughter,” was his greeting.

Father had two Kansas friends who were particularly interested in his irrigation experiment and who visited him often. One was John W. Leedy, state governor, who appointed him regent of the Kansas State Agricultural College, and the other Frederick L. Vandergrift, political editor of the *Kansas City Star*. John W. Leedy afterwards moved to Alberta, Canada, where he became one of the founders of a political party—the United Farmers of Alberta. Frederick Vandergrift followed Father’s work for twenty-five years, and on his death wrote this tribute :

“. . . Our Tree Planter’s life and work at Catalpa Knob will make a chapter in the history of Kansas for he

pointed the way for others and by his example more settlers have come to this state. The cost was manifold greater than the revenue, but there was for our Tree Planter the pride of doing a share of the great world's work. . . . It may not be told in song, but it will be in legend, by future generations. Indeed, old friends and neighbours, and the younger generations coming along, already, when they come to the Country Club, into which the big house and lawn, and the lake, and much of the meadow have been converted, are recalling the story of George M. Munger, and the visions he had of the transformation of the surrounding landscape by the application of intelligent industry.

“So long as youth comes there to dance, to swim, to boat, or to skate; so long as old men come to tramp the golf links; or old women come to sit in contemplation; there will be now and in future, legends told of our Tree Planter's undaunted faith in Kansas; of Catalpa Knob and of the gaiety and hospitality of the Big House, ‘when the Mungers lived there.’”

To-day I hear much of irrigation and reforestation schemes which would beautify and reclaim the drought areas of the western prairies. Father proved it could be done, but he lost so great a sum that they called Catalpa Knob “Munger's Folly.” Yet he blazed the trail in reforestation and irrigation in Kansas, and I know he spent many happy hours in doing it. Are there not in America some wealthy public-spirited men who might still experiment privately as Father did, men who would not expect a money profit, but would find satisfaction in the promotion of schemes which would benefit posterity?

It was in the beginning of the '90's that men and women leaders of the local “Four Hundred,” business and political circles mooted the idea of the World's Fair, to be

held in Chicago. It opened in 1893. Mrs. Potter Palmer, president of the "Board of Lady Managers," and her sister, Mrs. Fred Grant, known as "the beautiful Honore girls," were close friends of Aunt Martha Morse, and for that reason I was included in many social and other affairs which revolved around them during the Fair. I became a glorified errand girl for Mrs. Potter Palmer, whom I so admired, and was delighted to be at her beck and call. I was present at the dedication services when she opened the Women's Building, driving a golden nail with a silver hammer.

She chose me as one of the attendants upon Lady Aberdeen, wife of the Earl of Aberdeen, who later became Governor-General of Canada. Lady Aberdeen had been instrumental in raising funds for the Irish building, and had come over specially to open it.

I was a guest at a reception given by Mrs. Palmer at her palatial home on the north side, in honour of the Princess Eulalie, an aunt of Alphonso, the present deposed King of Spain. At first Princess Eulalie objected to being entertained by an "innkeeper's wife." (Mr. Potter Palmer was the owner of the Palmer House.) It was said that the Spanish ambassador insisted that she attend.

There was a quarrel in the Board of Lady Managers. Women were just beginning to be recognized as publicly important, and this resulted in the clashing of various opinions and prejudices. I was all for Mrs. Palmer, who with her culture and training smoothed over many difficulties tactfully and graciously.

I was at the Fair that July day when the cold storage warehouse caught fire, and fifteen firemen were trapped in the tallest of the three towers. I can still hear the groans and shrieks of that huge crowd watching those brave men face silently the horrible death of being burned alive.

Our family was particularly saddened the last day of the Fair by the assassination of Carter Harrison, Chicago's grand old "booster mayor," who was a warm friend of father Purdy's.

After the World's Fair there followed a period known as "hard times." Factories closed, stores ran with greatly reduced staffs, and hundreds of breadwinners were out of work. The city organized relief schemes on a huge scale, but in spite of that it was a winter of misery, especially for women and children.

With other young women I helped Jane Addams at Hull House. This famous social worker had come to Chicago in 1889, and with Ellen Gates Starr had leased a house, owned by a man named Hull, and made it their headquarters. I saw so many heart-rending sights—hungry, homeless families; small thinly dressed children picking coal on the railway tracks, which were not fenced as they are to-day. I worked hard to collect food and clothing for the needy, money to buy coal, which, in the bitter weather, was as essential as and certainly more costly than food.

While I did not suffer personal privation, our family was directly affected by the railway strikes, which revolved about Eugene Debs, who was promoting the organization of railway employees into "One Big Union." We had many anxious hours over paralysed railway traffic—burning of millions of dollars of railway equipment—shooting in railway yards—city under martial law—carloads of troops—and finally the explosion on Michigan Avenue, which shook that part of the city for blocks. Some said it was an explosion of an ammunition wagon, and others that it was a bomb. Needless to say the very name "Debs" was anathema in our family.

It was at this time that a British editor, William T. Stead, went about vehemently decrying the misery and the vices of the city. This culminated in a red-bound book, nearly five hundred pages in length—*If Christ came to Chicago*. It told of the "Streets of Sin," where whole blocks were given up to brothels, of which powerful proprietresses paid the police from fifteen to one hundred dollars a week for "protection"—elections bought with money, whisky, and free lunches—corruption at the City Hall—tax-dodging—gambling syndicates—and saloons where despairing hordes of men spent their last nickels, so needed for their starving families, and then, aroused to the hopelessness of the situation, went forth to riot.

The book certainly was the sensation of the day. Mothers forbade their 'teen-age boys and girls to read it, and, true to human nature, this ban increased its sale, for everybody then wanted to read it. I'm sure it must have made the author a great deal of money. Personally, I felt that while there was much truth in it, the effect of this was lessened greatly by the many exaggerated statements.

But I had my share of the gaiety of the gay '90's too. The "bicycle built for two" became the rage. Father Purdy gave us a tandem and, with nine other young married couples, we formed a "cycling club." What fun we had! We rode round the parks and took picnic lunches, or met at the German Building, one of the few left from the Fair. We had progressive dinners of six and eight courses, one course to a home.

How we dressed for this sport! My bicycle suit was made of fawn velveteen with tam o'shanter of the same stuff, trimmed with a bright, saucy scarlet quill. The bicycle popularized "bloomers," a reform style of dress adopted in 1849 by Amelia Bloomer, an ardent advocate of

women's rights. The current style of wide skirts, petticoats, and frills, intimate lingerie, would not have preserved the dignity or the respectability of the girls of the '90's in the emergency of being upset. What voluminous below-the-knee bloomers I had!—almost like Turkish trousers, with enough fawn silk of the finest quality to make a whole ensemble of the present mode.

In fact, as I compare the "wisps" of to-day with the similar garment of my young days—five yards of ruffles to a leg; the "bra's" to the elaborately trimmed "peplum-ed" corset covers, the simple "slips" to the five-yard circular petticoats, with innumerable rows of tucks, insertion, and lace (I had one with a hundred hand-run pin tucks); and above all the "girdles," with heavily boned, tightly laced "stays," I think how foolishly we dressed then.

Most of the "low down of life" was supposed to be kept from the delicate ears of wives, but much of the shady side and the "goings on" sifted to the young married women of our crowd. We knew that some of the important men of the city had separate establishments for their "lady friends"; that they acknowledged and even "kept" their illegitimate children. We knew that there was a certain time of the late afternoon when the élite of the demi-monde paraded State Street. We went down to see them, and could easily pick them out by their flashy clothes and because they "painted and powdered."

We persuaded our husbands to take us to the naughty show—a musical comedy called *The Black Crook*, banished entirely from the conversations of the Methodist faction of the family, talked over by the freer-minded, and attended by the boldest. There was really nothing to it, and the "daring, immodest" costumes of the chorus certainly left more to the imagination than those of the

present day. These buxom creatures bulged over and below their small waists, the upper parts of their bodies clad in close-fitting bodices or jackets, and the lower parts in tights and spangled trunks.

In the upper set, eloping with the family coachman became quite fashionable. One of my friends did this, and gave him all her mother's jewels to boot—and did the gossips twitter !

There were no afternoon tea-parties, but I was "at home" the last Thursday of the month, prepared to serve my callers hot chocolate with whipped cream, sandwiches, and cake. After the World's Fair, chocolate gave way to tea. Instead of bridge following our luncheons, we played euchre or went to a *matinée*. Dinners were very formal, and other evening functions took the form of *soirées* in honour of distinguished guests, progressive euchre or *pedro* parties, socials, when we played charades and other guessing games, *musicales*, theatre box parties followed by suppers, and house dances. Another popular diversion of our set was to gather at the Palmer House, have Turkish baths, meet our husbands for lunch, and go to the *matinée*.

Father Purdy was an enthusiastic Democrat, and he arranged that I should sit on the platform at that huge Democratic Convention of twenty-two thousand people in Chicago in 1895, when William Jennings Bryan—"the silver-tongued orator from the Platte"—was nominated for President. And was I dressed for the occasion? Mother had sent me a "Kansas dress"—a canary-coloured *voile*, with a deep brown silk sash. I wore with it a leghorn hat, trimmed with sunflowers, and carried a cane tied with streamers of yellow and brown ribbons, for the purpose of waving my applause. Perhaps it was the donning of this finery that made me late, for when I arrived I had great

difficulty getting through. It looked for a few moments as though I were not going to make the platform. Police-lieutenant Shippey, seeing my anxiety, said, "Can you hold yourself stiff enough to be passed over the heads of the crowd?" I nodded, and so I arrived at the platform "feet first."

I was not impressed with William Jennings Bryan, nor his now famous "Cross of Gold and Crown of Thorns" speech. I did not like his untidy appearance, his wrinkled alpaca coat and his tousled hair, but the day was terrifically hot, and I suppose he cared more for his "fiery message" than for the clothes he wore.

I felt like joining the Illinois delegation who, under the leadership of Governor Altgeld, walked out. But instead, father Purdy, all "sold" on Bryan, insisted that I attend a big reception at the old Leland Hotel in honour of Mr. and Mrs. Bryan.

Then there were the high never-to-be-forgotten performances of the great Shakespearian actors and actresses—Sir Henry Irving and Ellen Terry, Edward Sothorn and Julia Marlowe, Lawrence Barrett, and others; the lighter moments of the modern dramas, musical comedies, and revues, which starred Lillian Russell, Nat Goodwin, Joe Jefferson, and the Haverly Minstrels. And could I forget Sousa (and wasn't he handsome?), or the glorious music of his band, and the Theodore Thomas orchestra in the old Central Music Hall, which was later torn down to make way for the new part of Marshall Field? And my "big moment" with Paderewski?

On this particular visit to Chicago I had not gone to hear him, but at the World's Fair I had been swept away by his masterly interpretation of his Chopin and Schumann numbers. I was taking the train to my suburban home,

and, because it looked like rain, had my umbrella. As I waited, Paderewski and his manager, carrying a huge bouquet of American beauty roses, hurried into the station. He was standing near me, and in my excitement I dropped my umbrella. Paderewski stooped immediately and picked it up.

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Paderewski, I'm so sorry for my awkwardness," I stammered.

"You know me?" was his surprised answer.

"Oh yes, there is only one Paderewski."

The great musician smiled, carefully detached a rose from his bouquet and said, "To another American beauty."

I cherished those dry rose leaves many a day.

CHAPTER IX

I BECOME A CLUB WOMAN

THE Cuban Rebellion of 1895 drew me into my first women's club work. At that time in United States sympathy for Cuba's liberty and her oppressed people ran high. Public opinion was inflamed by the Hearst papers, with stories of terrible treatment and persecution by the Spaniards and propaganda that the States should make Cuba's liberty an issue with Spain. This finally resulted in the Spanish-American War of 1898.

To-day I would not be so biased or moved by the stories or cruelties of one faction in any war. Each opposing party can match story for story—as my father and mother did in the Civil War. All wars bring out the most bestial qualities in men, for the lust to kill is only aroused by fanning the fires of hatred—and what better fuel is there for this than the usual war-atrocity stories ?

On the contrary to-day I want to do all I can to promote world peace, for the older I grow the more I realize that there can be no lasting prosperity and happiness until there is understanding and friendliness between all peoples and countries. I look to women more than men to work for this great objective, because we translate war into the lives of our menfolk—who go to battle at least in a delusion of glory and adventure, while we must stay at home and endure the greatest mental agony of all—watching and waiting.

In the middle '90's I hurled myself into the cause of the suffering Cubans. I became a member of the Women's Auxiliary to the Cuban Committee of One Hundred, of which I was elected the proud and willing secretary. I collected money to buy food supplies to send to the "reconcentrados"—those unfortunate men, women, and children in prison camps.

On behalf of the organization I wrote to President M'Kinley, asking for an official permit so that all who wished to help Cuba would feel that in doing so they would in no way hamper the President's course. I received a reply from John Sherman, Secretary of State, who wrote :

“ . . . The matter has been for some time and is still receiving the President's earnest attention, and steps are under consideration for affording practical relief to the reconcentrados and other necessitous persons in Cuba. . . . I am advised by the Spanish minister that the Government of Spain has taken action in response to the charitable suggestions of the President, by directing that articles of food, medicine, clothing, and other articles of prime necessity be admitted free of duty.”

I made many speeches for the cause in Michigan, Tennessee, Indiana, and Illinois, and made a point to keep the Press informed of our activities.

One of our methods of raising money was the sale of small buttons inscribed "Cuba Libre," but the money came in slowly. I was racking my brains for a more remunerative scheme, when a friend said, "Get an interview with Hetty Green. If you get a dime out of her for a button I'll give you ten dollars for it."

For a minute I paused, but it was a great idea. How could I do it ?

“Find out where she’s staying and I’ll try.”

He sent word that she was registered at the Tremont House. Over I went. On presentation of my card the clerk said she wasn’t in. I could get no further information from him until I told him that I was a daughter-in-law of Warren G. Purdy, president of the Chicago Rock Island, in which she owned some stock. He immediately told me she was at the old Howland block, which she owned. I hurried over, and sure enough she was there, helping a woman do some cleaning.

What a sight she was! The “richest woman in the world” was wearing an old grey-black skirt, lengthened at the waist line with a narrow piece of black sateen, a blouse with none-too-clean lace collar, and an old hat with jet ornaments. Her very dirty hands were covered with tawdry rings, with the exception of one huge, very fine emerald.

I walked up to her and told her who I was. “I have really come here under false pretences,” I confessed. “I have come in the interests of Cuban relief work. I would like to sell you a button, or half a dozen buttons, to raise money for the poor unfortunate Cuban prisoners.”

“You want money! I haven’t any money,” was her short reply, the jet ornaments on her hat bobbing with each emphatic word. “I’ve just built a house for Sylvia in Vermont, cost thousands, has three bathrooms. Goodness knows what a person wants with three bathrooms! And there’s Ned in Texas, playing ducks and drakes with those railroads I bought him—cost millions—losing money every day.

“You live in Chicago, do you? They’re all liars and cheats here, can’t find an honest lawyer in the whole country, except in Cincinnati.”

I rushed to Will's office while the complete conversation was fresh in my mind, and wrote it down quickly, then hurried to the office of the Chicago *Tribune* to see Mr. Van Benthuisen, the editor.

"I've an interview with Hetty Green. Will you buy it?" I said breathlessly.

"Oh no, you haven't. Hetty Green doesn't give interviews."

"But she does. I've got a story that your reporters couldn't get, and I want a hundred dollars for it."

"Well then, leave it. I'll read it and let you know."

"No, I won't leave it. I'll take it to another paper—or I'll wait here until you read it."

"All right, all right! Sit down."

I watched his face anxiously.

"Well, damn it—if it isn't worth a hundred dollars! You've done it, girl. Front page, too!"

Of course there was an uproar. Hetty Green demanded my husband's resignation—my father-in-law's head on a "charger"—but they denied responsibility for my actions, and the affair blew over.

I then concentrated on the rescue of a beautiful Cuban girl, Evangelina Cisneros, who was a prisoner in Havana, and who was being threatened with banishment to the Spanish penal colony on the Isle of Pines. Later, when I met Evangelina's chaperone, who was deploring the imprisonment of many Cuban girls of good family, who did "nothing whatever, except smuggle powder in condensed milk cans to the Cuban troupes," I wondered if my zeal had taken me a step too far.

Our special efforts to save Evangelina from her impending fate took the form of two petitions—the first asking if she would be welcomed in United States should

she come to the country. It was signed by hundreds, among them being Mrs. John Sherman, wife of the Secretary of State ; Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, the famous author ; Mrs. W. M. Stewart, wife of Senator Stewart ; Mrs. William C. Whitney, and other equally prominent women. I was thrilled to have my name associated with these women, and still more so when several wrote to me. The second petition was addressed to the Pope and Maria Christina, Queen Regent of Spain, asking them to use their influence in having Evangelina sent to the States.

Before we heard the result of our European petition the country from one end to the other rang with the news of Evangelina's escape. A Hearst reporter (who was alleged to have bribed the guards) found ladders "conveniently placed," both on the outside and inside of the high prison wall. He quickly made his way through sentries stationed "sufficiently far apart" to attract no notice. He reached the beautiful prisoner's cell, found it unlocked, and hurried her away to a "conveniently waiting" yacht. She was taken to New York immediately, it being deemed advisable for diplomatic reasons to pass up Washington. She was tendered a huge reception in Madison Square Gardens, attended by over twelve thousand persons. Papers from coast to coast reported :

"Distinguished men and women from all parts of the country have given Evangelina Cisneros a cordial handgrasp as a heartfelt welcome to the 'Land of the Free, and Home of the Brave.'"

As secretary of the Women's Auxiliary to the Cuban Committee, I received a telegram from William Randolph Hearst, advising me of Evangelina's proposed visit to

Chicago, and went ahead with plans for a huge reception at the Auditorium. I secured Luther Laflin Mills, accredited to be the best criminal lawyer of the city at the time, and Senator Mason, two prominent family friends, as speakers. I had written to Chauncey Depew, who could not come owing to his mayoralty campaign in New York.

Evangelina, who had been completely outfitted by Hearst, arrived in a private car, accompanied by a chaperone, a Hearst reporter, an interpreter, and a number of secret service men. Attired in a magnificent white satin gown, through an interpreter she told her sad story. I aroused Father's sympathy to the degree that he offered to adopt her. But here let the *Kansas City Star* describe this in the "journalese" of the '90's :

CUBAN HEROINE TO BE ADOPTED DAUGHTER OF THIS GREAT REPUBLIC

MR. AND MRS. GEORGE MUNGER OFFER HOME TO
MISS EVANGELINA CISNEROS, RECENTLY ESCAPED
FROM CUBA

"Kansas, the lynch pin of United States, shows not only a kindly welcome, which costs only smiles and words, but a large-hearted Kansas family have offered her a home. Mr. and Mrs. George M. Munger, of Eureka, Greenwood County, have invited the homeless girl to live with them. Mr. Munger, owner of the celebrated laundries and a plantation on the Isle of Pines, speaks Spanish fluently. He resides on a large ranch near Eureka, and he is a man of wealth and position. Both Mr. and Mrs. Munger are intelligent and cultured, and this evidence of their kindness stamps

them as more than philanthropic. People of wealth can give money, build monuments, endow institutions, but when a family offers a home chair at their own hearthside, it means individual protection, such as only a father and mother can offer to a defenceless girl without a home in a foreign country.

“This is only one instance out of many where the brave and noble sons of this state came forward to prove the oft-asserted idea that Kansas was the birthplace of freedom, and by such deeds we celebrate the occasion.”

Evangelina did not accept Father's offer. She felt it her duty to go on—pleading for her suffering countrymen. And so she passed out of my life, leaving only these few mementoes—some yellow newspaper clippings, her book on Spain's persecution of Cuba, and an autographed photograph.

It was at a reception given in her honour, in the fall of 1897, that I met the great East Indian palmist, Count de Hamong, famed as “Cheiro.” His secretary came to me and, bowing low, said, “My master craves the honour of an audience with you.” Excited and flattered at being “picked out,” I readily consented and we made the appointment for next morning.

On arrival I was ushered into a dimly lighted room where Cheiro, dressed in flowing purple robes, was seated at a table. Before him, resting on a purple velvet cushion, was a long golden serpent, with ruby eyes and a flat emerald head, used later to trace the lines of my hand.

Quickly he read my left hand, calling it the hand “I was born with.” The lines showed two marriages, several children, but a long life.

As I stretched out my right hand it seemed to me that

the red eyes of the golden serpent, moving over the lines of my palm, gleamed wickedly, the emerald head shone with a deeper brilliancy. Then Cheiro said slowly :

“ You are leaving this country within the year. You will travel far. You will face danger, privation, and sorrow. Although you are going to a foreign land you will be among English-speaking people, and will never have to learn to speak another language. You will have another child, a girl, or an unusually devoted son.”

I listened, scoffing in my heart. But the next summer my home was broken up. Will and I had parted for ever. I was speeding northward to the Klondyke, where, that winter, all alone in a little cabin of that grim north country, I was to face the darkest hours of my life—the birth of my youngest son, Lyman.

PART II
YUKON

CHAPTER X

THE GOLD FEVER

GOLD in the Klondyke ! . . . gold by the ton . . . gold, grains the size of rice, by the bucketful . . . gold, nuggets as large as hens' eggs . . . gold, from the grass roots, for the panning ! That was the news flashed round the world in 1897.

The discovery had been made the year before on Bonanza Creek, but word of it spread slowly among the few pioneers scattered over that vast northern wilderness. There was no up-river steamer, no telegraph, no regular mail service. The only means of communication was by "mocasin telegraph" (word of mouth) or the odd letter carried by Indians or the very occasional traveller, who had to mush on for days through snow-filled valleys, over frozen rivers and mountain passes in winter, or travel thousands of miles of waterways by canoe, scow, or poling boat in summer. Months had passed before that ever-alluring cry of "Gold" reached the outside world, where it precipitated one of the maddest gold rushes in history.

In the autumn of '97 a few got through, but in the spring of '98, as soon as the ice was running in the Yukon River, there was a stampede of gold-seekers. Thousands came from all parts of the globe—men of all races and nationalities, crafts, and professions, the majority having no more knowledge of mining than the man in the moon.

The gold fever hit Chicago. Will, tired of his paymaster's job, and his friend, Eli Gage, who worked in his father's bank, made plans to join the rush. Backed by their respective fathers, they formed the Purdy-Gage Company, which purchased two ocean-going tugs, one steamer, and two sailing vessels.

The more they talked about the trip the more I wanted to go. It looked like a great adventure, and I was consumed with the urge to have my part in it. I had been married ten years. Will was away from home most of the time, and I was unhappy. Both boys were well started at school. Father and Mother offered to care for them at Catalpa Knob. Eli's wife, Sophy, also wanted to go. Father Purdy and Mr. Gage talked it over, and agreed it might be well for us wives to accompany our husbands.

Then one day a strange incident occurred, this being the real factor in the final decision concerning my going. A man by the name of Lambert, an employé of the Rock Island Railway, hearing that Will was going to the Klondyke, came up from Kansas City to tell father Purdy a remarkable story. He said that an uncle of his, one William Lambert, had died in the Klondyke and willed to the family a million dollars in gold dust, already mined, and marvellously rich properties. He had in his possession a copy of this will, which he showed father Purdy. He wondered if Will would look into it and act as the family's agent.

Father Purdy suggested that this be my special work. The idea was acceptable to all concerned, and the proper papers were drawn up. Father Purdy insisted that I should receive a 50 per cent. division of the gold dust, half a million dollars, and if I did not survive this hazardous undertaking, that it should be made over to my children.

To me it was a quest that had all the allure of a "Treasure Island" or "Aladdin's Lamp." I had only to go to the world-famed goldfields, lay before the Canadian authorities proof that I was the family's agent, and collect the gold. I pictured myself and children living in luxury the rest of our days. I look back now and wonder how anyone could have been taken in, as I was; could have been persuaded to go on such a wild goose chase; and that men with years of business experience—a railway president and a great banker—could have thought that such a huge fortune was to be had merely for the taking.

I took the boys to Catalpa Knob, where my brother George and my cousin, Harry Peachey, so caught my enthusiasm that they decided to join the party. After a few wavering moments, which always come to mothers when parting from their little ones, and with my heart full of gratitude to Father and Mother, who had been unusually sympathetic, I, with George and Harry, left to meet Will and the Gages in Denver.

In this city we outfitted ourselves completely with clothes for the trip. I recall purchasing a plentiful supply of Jaeger "combinations," merino stockings, high boots of Russian leather with elkhide soles (these later proving a godsend in securing footholds on the slippery slushy trail), a natty straw sailor hat which my brother carried over the Chilkoot Pass on the end of a stick as it could not be packed, and the last word in an "outing" costume of the late '90's. This was made of heavily ribbed tobacco-brown corduroy velvet with a skirt of shockingly immodest length (it actually showed my ankles), five yards around the bottom, edged with brush braid, and lined with brown silk and interlined with a foot of buckram, which gave it a fetching swing as I walked. It had a Norfolk jacket with many

pleats, a blouse with a high stiff collar almost to my ears and a pair of voluminous brown silk bloomers, which came below the knee.

We then continued gaily to Seattle, where we were joined by Captain Spencer, the business agent for the Purdy-Gage Company, his son "Ed," and Captain Treat. Our plans were that Eli and Sophy, his wife, should go to San Francisco, and from there to St. Michaels, headquarters of the Yukon Trading and Transportation Company, of which Sophy's brother, P. B. Weare, was president, whence they would go up the Yukon River to Dawson. The rest of the party was to take the boat at Seattle, go to Skagway, walk over the Chilkoot or Chilcat Pass, and thence by the Yukon waterway to Dawson.

We had been in Seattle only a few days when Will was called to San Francisco by a telegram from the Gages on what appeared to be a hurried final business consultation. Little did I know at the time that this telegram was to change my whole life. Within a week he wrote he would be delayed in 'Frisco—he didn't know exactly how long. He wrote again that he had changed his mind about going to the Klondyke—he'd heard such terrible stories of the hardships of the trail. He had heard, too, that great fortunes were being made in the Sandwich Islands (now the Hawaiian Islands). Would I consider going there? Or perhaps I had better go home to my people until he made up his mind what to do.

Go to the Sandwich Islands? With my Klondyke ticket bought, my passage booked, my vision of a million dollars in gold dust? Even after ten years of married life how little Will Purdy knew me!

Now I realize that this was more than just my head-strong determination to carry out an idea. It was the

pivotal point of my life—my destiny. The North Star, my lodestar, beckoned me. It lured me onward. My whole being cried out to follow it. Miserable and heart-broken as I was, I could not turn back.

At first my brother sided with Will. He refused flatly to take any responsibility for my going without my husband. He threatened to send for Father to *make* me go home. I coaxed, pleaded, cajoled. I said I would go alone. I was tired of the monotonous round of the society life of Chicago . . . of the loneliness of the days on end when Will had been away on his paymaster's job. . . . This was my opportunity to seek and claim my fortune. . . . I'd never ask a thing of him again. . . . George gave in—and promised that not until we were well on our way would he let Father know what had happened.

It would serve no purpose to tell the details of this tragedy in my life. It was all so long ago—one thing had led to another, and this was the crisis which parted two high-spirited and determined young people. I wrote to Will that I had made up my mind to go to the Klondyke as originally planned, that I would never go back to him, so undependable he had proven, that I never wanted to hear from or see him again. He went his way. I went mine. I never did see Will Purdy again. He died years later in Honolulu.

The Gages went to Eagle, Alaska, where Eli was taken sick and they turned back. The Purdy-Gage Company was short-lived, and the boats were sold to Sophy's brother's company, the North American Trading and Transportation.

Utterly engrossed as I was in my personal troubles, I do not remember much of Seattle that June of '98, except its waterfront. Over its wharves surged jostling eager crowds of miners, prospectors, traders, trappers, and adventurers,

all dressed in the clothes of the trail—hideous red-and-yellow plaid mackinaws, overalls tucked into high boots, and caps of all descriptions. Everywhere were piles of “outfits”—camp supplies, sleds, carts, harness, which, together with dogs, horses, cattle, and oxen, were being loaded into the various boats, sailing almost every hour. These, too, were of all descriptions—steamers, sailing vessels, dories manned by stout hands—all to leave, some never to be seen or heard of again, others to be dashed upon the rocks of bleak shores by the cruel waves of the “Inside Passage.”

Our party of six engaged passage on a small coast steamer which had been laid up for several seasons, but was due to sail on June 23. She was most unattractive-looking, but said to be thoroughly seaworthy (which was something those days), and we were assured that her captain knew the “Inside Passage.” She was called the *Utopia*, but one wag described her as “The Taddy-adly, Queen Anne front, Mary Anne behind, two decks, and no bottom.”

Single berths to Skagway cost fifty dollars; double, seventy-five. In order that I might travel comfortably, a stateroom with three berths had been booked for me at a cost of one hundred and twenty dollars. When I arrived I saw other bags in it, and presumed that it was a mistake. I was soon told, to my shocked surprise, that I was to have company. The double lower had been allotted to a tin-horn gambler and his female companion, the middle to me, and the upper to “Birdie,” destined to be one of the most notorious characters of the Klondyke. My brother George and I protested to the captain and purser; but we realized very quickly that we were in a hopeless minority. In the language of to-day, “We could take it—or leave it.”

The only concession allowed me was the choice of the time to get up and go to bed.

The steamer was certainly a "has-been." She was dirty, and loaded to the gunwales with passengers, animals, and freight. Men slept on the floor of the saloon and in every corner. The captain was seldom, if ever, sober, and there were many wild parties. Poker, black jack, and drinking went on night and day, and our safe arrival in Skagway was due probably to the Guiding Hand that looks after children, fools, and drunken men.

After a day out everyone became accustomed to his unusual surroundings, the weather was perfect, the meals were fairly well cooked and served, and a spirit of optimism prevailed as time flew by on the wings of novelty. I became accustomed to my stateroom companions; their kindness soothed my outraged feelings. Every morning the gambler brought me coffee, and I heard his bedfellow tell him, "You see that her toast is thin, you know she has a delikat stummick." Birdie, too, often gave me an orange or apple from her supplies. No longer did I weep in secret at our strange sleeping arrangements.

Among the passengers one couple attracted my attention. He was tall, angular, about sixty years old, with an air of one thoroughly accustomed to honest, hard work, even to roughing it. She was "fair, fat, and forty," with work-worn fingers loaded with jewelled rings, while from her ears dangled huge diamond hoops. They addressed each other as "Poppa" and "Momma," the latter being very talkative and inquisitive. I soon learned that they were on their wedding trip; that they were going to the Klondyke to make a "clean-up"; after which they were going to London, where Poppa was going to float stocks. While he was doing this, Momma was going to run down to Italy

to buy marbles—"real marbles." As I looked at Poppa I couldn't possibly picture him surrounded by marble statuary. How differently this romance turned out! Afterwards I heard that the hardships of cooking for Poppa and his husky miners proved too much for Momma, and within a few months she was back at her old job of serving "ham an'" in one of the coast cities.

It took seven days to make that thousand miles of sea voyage, only one day and a half in the open, and the remainder in the "Inside Passage," winding between the coast islands. After the first two days there was no darkness, only a few hours of twilight, which, as we journeyed north, became paler until, upon our arrival at Skagway, it was continuous light. Vegetation was less luxuriant, but the scenery of the Coast Range, the mountains that come down to the sea, became grander. Above us were some peaks so high that they disappeared into the draping clouds. There were others crested with the snow of ages, which, as it shifted slowly down the mountain-side, transformed itself into many hanging glaciers—great beds of blue-green ice that cracked from time to time and set adrift small icebergs into the sea. One morning we passed within a few hundred feet of an iceberg of the clearest, deepest blue, shaped like a gondola. All that seemed necessary to complete the phantasy were some fur-clad gondoliers.

For several days there were no signs of settlement. Then we caught glimpses of Indian villages, and saw Indians fishing from canoes at all hours of the day and night. At St. Mary's, Bella-Bella, Juneau, Fort Wrangel, we noted the famous totem poles, which are rare combinations of door-plates and family trees. We looked at Indian graveyards, where the dead are placed above the ground, under queer



▲ Skagway Street Scene in 1898.

little painted houses, surrounded by small picket fences. Here the Indians tried to sell us specimens of their handicraft, as they do to-day.

As we neared the end of our voyage we saw many black whales. One enthusiastic old whaler, then turned miner, frequently startled us by shouting, "Thar she blows!" every time he saw a high spray of water.

The Lynn canal was alive with many varieties of fish, and we were especially interested in the schools of dolphins sporting in the waves, often leaping high into the air. These fish were large—eight or ten feet in length—and of a dark blue colour, save the belly, which was white, shading into Nile green and turquoise blue.

We arrived at Skagway at eleven o'clock at night. As we docked, a dozen newsboys jumped aboard immediately for huge bundles of newspapers, which sold like "hot cakes" at "four bits" apiece. Of all that motley crowd which met the boat two figures are clearly etched in my mind: One, a beautiful painted woman, in a much be-ruffled princess dress and a huge be-feathered and be-flowered merry widow hat, lolling in a hack, who called "Hallo!" to the captain; the other, a fine figure of a man with heavy flowing black moustaches, mounted on a white horse, which came clattering down the plank wharf. I never learned the name of the former, who was evidently a "lily of the field," but the name of the other was hurriedly whispered from person to person. It was "Soapy Smith," the bold bad man of the North, now cited as one of the most notorious villains the world has ever known.

At that time Soapy Smith (so named because he was once a soap pedlar, who did a flim-flam trick with soap and five-dollar bills), a smooth, immaculately dressed individual, headed a gang of cut-throats, gamblers, and desperadoes,

who literally carried on a reign of terror in the early days. His headquarters were at Skagway, where he ran "The States Hotel," a combined saloon, hotel, and gambling house, each room named after a state of the Union. In the days of the gold rush it was always as full as a rabbit warren. Gold-seekers and -finders alike were fleeced of all they owned once they got into the clutches of the gang, and many who dared to put up opposition were never heard of again—probably murdered.

Matters became so desperate that, when it was suspected that the sheriff and other government officials were members of Soapy's gang, the law-abiding citizens of Skagway arose in wrath and organized a Vigilantes Committee, with Frank Reid as leader. They called a meeting on the wharf—the safest place not to be overheard. Soapy learned of it, grabbed his gun, and, single-handed, rushed down to see what it was all about. Reid stood on guard at the entrance. A hot argument ensued. Both men, quick on the trigger, shot at the same moment. Soapy fell dead and Reid was mortally wounded. Reid died a few weeks later, and is buried on the mountain-side above the town—his tombstone, a simple cross, bearing this inscription :

FRANK REID

HE DIED FOR THE HONOUR
OF SKAGWAY

The infamous Soapy came to his well-deserved end ten days after our arrival. Meeting the *Utopia* was evidently one of his last public appearances. After his death it was easy to round-up the members of his gang, who were either imprisoned or told to "Mush on !" *

* A corruption of the French word *marchons*.

After a day or so of unloading at Skagway—miners' outfits, rails for the new road which was being built through the White Pass, horses (the majority soon to be killed on the trail) and cattle—the *Utopia* puffed slowly to Dyea, the small, ever-changing town of tents, just around the bend of the Lynn canal, within a few miles of the towering Chilkoot Pass. Our outfit was dumped on the sandy shore and the little steamer pulled away on her return. As I watched her depart I realized that I had "burned my bridges behind me," that I had left civilization, with its comforts and luxuries.

I was not overcome with loneliness or fright as I looked directly before me at the fearful mountain pass that was to go down in history as "the worst trail this side of hell." I thought of my New England forebears, women who had bravely faced the hardships of pioneering, coupled with the constant fear of attacking Indians; of my great-great-Aunt Sophia, who, with a babe at her breast, had driven with her husband across a blazing, wind-swept prairie. I thought of Mother, how nobly she had met the adversities of life.

Once again I knew that my path lay ahead, that there was no turning aback now. I, too, must join that motley, primitive procession of gold-seekers, which rested neither day nor night. I, too, filled with the zeal of my mission, must learn the battle-cry of that trail of death—Mush on! Mush on! Life in the "golden north" had begun.

While looking about Dyea to find a place to pitch our tents, Captain Spencer became acquainted with a young man who most generously placed his rough board shack at my disposal, while he, the owner, "bunked" with a friend next door. It was a small one-roomed shanty, twelve by fourteen feet, furnished with a sheet-iron cook-

stove, two chairs, and a table. It had a built-in narrow bunk and some packing-box cupboards. The men set up tents for their sleeping-quarters, and we lived here pleasantly for a fortnight.

George, travelling light, walked over the Chilkoot and the Chilkat or White Pass to find out which was easier, but having since been over both, I am convinced that there was no choice, that, if anything, the Chilkoot was the harder. We spent our time fishing, climbing mountain paths to limber-up for the trip ahead, and I whiled away many a happy hour picking wild flowers. For the first time in my life I saw hillsides of wild blue iris, and lupine or "blue bonnet," now the official flower of Texas. It had indeed wandered far from home.

I was chief cook and bottle-washer, but this work was simplified by a limited diet, and the dish-washing minimized, as we carried the fewest of granite dishes and cooking utensils. One morning, after I had finished the breakfast dishes, George said, "Now, Polly (that was his nickname for me), let me have the dish-pan. I want to wash my socks." I objected strenuously. "Well, you needn't get so huffy about it. I took a bath in it last night." And so one of my first lessons of life in the North was to adjust myself to the fact that one and the same pan must serve the purpose of dish-pan, bread-mixer, bath, and wash-tub. Many times I exclaimed, "Thank heaven we have plenty of Ivory soap and Sapolio!"

Filled with the sublime immensity of the North, I often used to sit on the doorstep of my shack in the long-light evenings. I would be stirred to the depths of my soul by the panorama of magnificent beauty before me. I would look up at the mountain-sides, thousands of feet above me, at the glacier with its shifting shimmering shades



The Summit of White Pass Trail.

of blue, and in that deep silence there would come to me the words of the old familiar hymn :

“ Unto the hills around do I lift up
My longing eyes,
O, whence for me, shall my salvation come,
From whence arise ?
From God the Lord doth come my certain aid,
From God the Lord, who heaven and earth hath made.”

But life was not all thrills of this high adventure. Mother kept the letters I wrote home and returned them to me when I went back to Catalpa Knob. I remember my homesickness as I wrote this letter, dated June 29, 1898 :

“ My loved ones,
“ . . . Over the distance my heart and thoughts go out to you. Not a day passes that many, many times we do not speak of you or think of you. Kiss my babies, love them, cherish them, as I know you will, and the time will not be long until our return, richer in experience and broader minded for the seeing and knowing of the ‘ under side of life ’ . . . ”

The time came very soon for us to leave Dyea, this last outpost of civilization, and we celebrated the evening before by having an oyster stew, at fairly reasonable prices—oysters a dollar and a half a quart, and fresh milk a dollar a gallon.

CHAPTER XI

“THE TRAIL OF '98”

WE left Dyea on July 12 at noon, to walk the dreaded trail of forty-two miles over the Chilkoot Pass to Lake Bennett, first to Sheep Camp at the foot of the Pass, then to the summit, down to Lake Lindeman, round the shores of that beautiful lake, past the rapids and finally to the little village of Bennett.

With staff in hand, at last I had taken my place in that continuous line of pushing humans and straining animals. Before me, behind me, abreast of me almost every man toted a pack of sixty to eighty pounds, in addition to driving dogs and horses harnessed to sleighs and carts, herding pack ponies and the odd cow, while one woman drove an ox-cart.

We were lucky enough to be travelling light. We had “let out” a contract to a company of packers for the transportation of our clothing, bedding, and “grub,” which weighed several tons. After much haggling we had secured a “reduced” price of nine hundred dollars “spot cash”—this, in the words of the packers, “a damn low figger.” After I got over the Pass I agreed; it was a super-human effort to transport those thousands of pounds up that narrow, slippery, rocky trail of the Pass, through boulder-strewn canyons, across swampy bottomlands. It meant changing every box and bundle from steamer to

wagon, to horse, to man, to sled, and finally to horse, before they were landed on the shores of Lake Bennett, where we were to wait for the building of our boat, which was to take us up to Dawson.

A quarter of a mile from Dyea we crossed a toll bridge, and after the attendant had collected our toll of a dollar each, he abused us because we would not buy a five-dollar steering paddle to use on the lakes and rivers on the other side of the Pass. Fancy paying this price for it and carrying it over the trail too !

For five or six miles we followed a good wagon road, through cool shady woods. We forded several clear mountain streams by stepping from stone to stone, and now and then I was carried across pick-a-back. (I weighed only one hundred and ten pounds those days.) The trail became rockier, and we scrambled over tons of enormous stones and boulders, through four miles of a valley, with hardly a tuft of vegetation. It might have been the playground of the gods, so wild it seemed ! My bulky clothes made the walking hard. My pity went out to the beasts of burden carrying their heavy loads. At three o'clock we stopped a half-hour for refreshments at a wayside cabin, kept by a widow and her little son. She brewed us a cup of strong tea, and as we ate substantial ham sandwiches, told us gruelling stories of the rush of the year before.

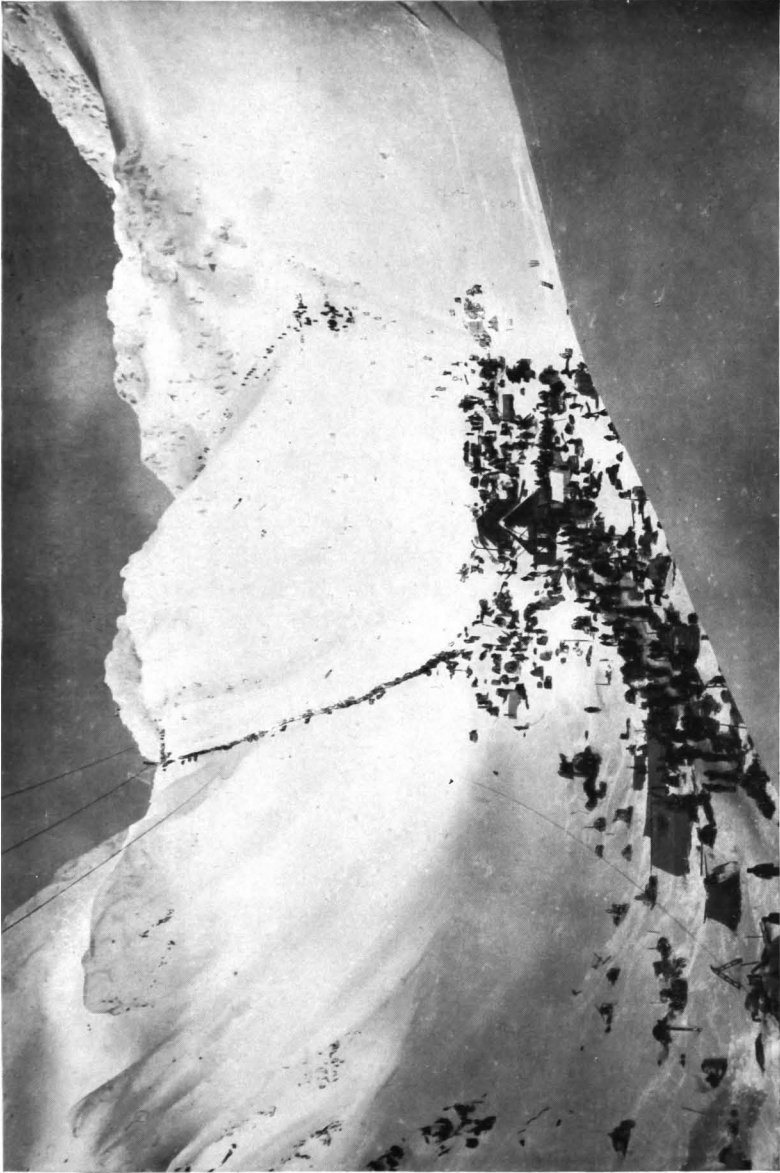
Refreshed and undaunted we continued, soon reaching the little settlement of Canyon City. Here we struck the mountain trail which led to Sheep Camp, at the foot of the Pass, where we planned to spend the night. As we travelled we began to realize that we were indeed on a trail of heart-breaks and dead hopes. On every side were mute evidences—scores of dead horses, that had slipped and fallen down the mountain-side (so few got over the Pass), and caches of

miners' outfits. We looked into a deserted shanty, where lay a mildewed ruined outfit. "Home of two brothers who died from exposure last winter," they told us.

And was I glad to call it a day when we arrived at Sheep Camp, the small shack and tent village of one street huddled between precipitous mountains? There seemed nothing permanent about it save the isolated glacier that glittered and sparkled in the sun above our heads. Before us was a huge pile of snow, ice, and rocks, the débris of the snow-slide which had happened at Easter, and had crushed to death thirty such adventurers as we. We were greeted with the news that several more bodies had been discovered that day. These were buried under a large cairn of stones which was pointed out to every new-comer. As I looked at it I could not help but feel that such a sudden end—to be snuffed out without a chance to make one's peace with one's Maker, and in a mad search for gold—was surely an ignominious death. How much more glorious to die in battle, serving one's country!

I looked up the Pass. I can see it yet—that upward trail, outlined on an almost perpendicular wall of ice-covered rock, alive with clinging human beings and animals, slowly mounting, single file, to the summit.

We stopped at the Grand Pacific Hotel. In writing home a description of this to Father and Mother, I said, "Look at your woodshed. Fit it up with 'standees,' and you have the Grand Pacific." But I had no such uppish attitude when, weary and footsore, I staggered in, and when I left my heart was warm with gratitude to the elderly couple who kept it. In addition to the regular supper bill of fare I had half a canned peach. I was given the only "private room" in the house—a cubicle partitioned off by a wooden wall, two-thirds the height of the room, with



Scales and Summit of Chilkoot Pass, 1898.

a built-in bunk filled with hay and covered with two pairs of grey army blankets—and comfort of comforts !—a real feather pillow !

After a wonderful night's sleep, a hearty breakfast of corn-meal mush, bacon and cold-storage eggs, condensed milk, prunes, and a whole orange—the last in the camp—and settling our hotel bill (meals and bunk a dollar apiece), with high hearts that glorious July morning we started to climb that three thousand feet of steep, narrow, icy mountain trail. The Indians said there was a curse on all who attempted it in summer, as the hot sun melted the winter snow, and it came crashing down—crushing everything before it. ~~These~~ avalanches had already taken toll of nearly a hundred lives.

For the first hour we walked over the trail of the recent slide. In the melting snow I saw a bit of blue ribbon. Bending down, I tugged at it and pulled out a baby's bootee. Did it belong to some venturesome soul who had come to seek a fortune for wife and baby ? Would those who were waiting for him wait in vain ? Was this one of the hundreds of tragedies of this mad stampede ?

I did not dare look round at the magnificent mountain scenery nor drink in the beauty of the tumbling torrents, for every minute the melting snow was making it more slippery under foot. The greatest of care was needed in crossing the dangerously thin ice that was often the only bridge over a mountain stream, which had paused a few moments on a narrow ledge, to drop over a precipice, hundreds of feet below.

As the day advanced the trail became steeper, the air warmer, and footholds without support impossible. I shed my sealskin jacket. I cursed my hot, high, buckram collar, my tight heavily boned corsets, my long corduroy

skirt, my full bloomers which I had to hitch up with every step. We clung to stunted pines, spruce roots, jutting rocks. In some places the path was so narrow that, to move at all, we had to use our feet tandem fashion. Above, only the granite walls. Below, death leering at us.

But soon, too soon, I was straining every nerve, every ounce of physical endurance in that ever upward climb. There were moments when, with sweating forehead, pounding heart, and panting breath, I felt I could go no farther. At such times we dropped out of line and rested in the little snow dug-outs along the way. But such a few moments of rest! Then on with that cursing procession of men and dogs and horses, pulling sleds or toting packs.

Mush on . . . Mush on. . . It beat into my brain. . . . Cracking of whips. . . . Wild screams of too heavily loaded pack horses which lost their footing and were dashed to the rocks below . . . stumbling . . . staggering . . . crawling. . . . God pity me!

Mush on . . . Mush on. . . . Another breath! Another step. . . . God give me strength. How far away that summit! Can I ever make it?

Mush on . . . Mush on . . . or die!

“Cheer up, cheer up, Polly!” I hear George break the long silence. “Only one hundred feet to go now.” One hundred feet! That sheer wall of rock! Can I make it? In some inexplicable way the men of our party get round me. They push and pull me. They turn and twist me, until my very joints creak with the pain of it. “Don’t look down,” they warn. I have no strength to turn my head, to speak. Only ten feet more! Oh, God, what a relief!

Then my foot slips! I lose my balance. I fall only a few feet into a crevice in the rocks. The sharp edge of one cuts through my boot and I feel the flesh of my leg throb-

bing with pain. I can bear it no longer, and I sit down and do what every woman does in time of stress. I weep. “Can I help you?” “Can I help you?” asks every man who passes me. George tries to comfort me but in vain. He becomes impatient. “For God’s sake, Polly, buck up and be a man! Have some style and move on!”

Was I mad? Not even allowed the comfort of tears! I bucked up all right and walked triumphantly into that broker’s tent—an ancient canvas structure on the summit. I had made the “top of the world,” but “the wind that blew between the spheres” cut me like a knife. I was tired, faint, hungry, cold. I asked for a fire, and was answered, “Madame, wood is two bits a pound up here.” George, who was really concerned about me, spoke up, “All right. All right. I’ll be a sport. Give her a five-dollar fire.” One heavenly hour of rest. I took off my boots, washed my wounded shin and poured iodine on it. I dried my wet stockings, had a cup of tea, and got thoroughly warm.

We then went through the Customs, as we had now entered Canada. Around us, shivering in the cold wind, were many waiting people, their outfits partially unpacked and scattered about them in the deep snow. It was here that I met for the first time members of the North-West Mounted Police, and I thought that finer, sturdier, more intelligent-looking men would be hard to find.

Then the descent! Down, ever downward. Weight of body on shaky legs, weight growing heavier, and legs shakier. Sharp rocks to scratch our clutching hands. Snake-like roots to trip our stumbling feet.

We stopped at the half-way cabin for a two-dollar supper of bean soup, ham and eggs (of uncertain age), prunes, bread and butter—the bread served with the apology of

the proprietor, "The middle of it ain't done, but you don't have to eat it. I hurried too much."

I had felt that I could make no greater effort in my life than the last part of the upward climb, but the last two miles into Lindeman was the most excruciating struggle of the whole trip. In my memory it will ever remain a hideous nightmare. The trail led through a scrub pine forest where we tripped over bare roots of trees that curled over and around rocks and boulders like great devilfishes. Rocks! Rocks! Rocks! Tearing boots to pieces. Hands bleeding with scratches. I can bear it no longer. In my agony I beg the men to leave me—to let me lie in my tracks, and stay for the night.

My brother put his arm around me and carried me most of the last mile. Captain Spencer hurried into the village, to the Tacoma Hotel, to get a bed for me. It wasn't much of a bed either—a canvas stretched on four logs, with a straw shakedown, yet the downiest couch in the world or the softest bed in a king's palace could not have made a better resting-place for me.

As my senses slipped away into the unconsciousness of that deep sleep of exhaustion, there surged through me a thrill of satisfaction. I had actually walked over the Chilkoot Pass! . . . I would never do it again, knowing now what it meant. . . . Not for all the gold in the Klondyke. . . . And yet, knowing now what it meant, would I miss it? . . . No, never! . . . Not even for all the gold in the world!

CHAPTER XII

LAKE BENNETT TO DAWSON

FEELING the effects of our Herculean efforts of the day before, we rested long in the canvas camp at Lindeman. My energy was so drained that I spent most of the time on my cot or sitting on moss-covered rocks looking at a cloudless sky, reflected in the rippling waters of the lake, after which the camp was named. By evening I was ready to go on, and the party decided to walk the two miles to Lake Bennett, where we hoped our baggage had arrived, as planned, and set up our camp for the night. But in this we were disappointed, although the packers had assured us it would be there "as soon as you are."

There were two or three so-called hotels, canvas-roofed, wooden affairs, each of which had kitchen, dining-room, bar, and dance hall—all in the one room. The walls were lined with bunks on two sides—but they were all taken. It was impossible to find a bed for me. One man casually offered to share his bunk with me. Finally a good-natured packer, taking pity on me, told George that we might sleep under some canvas-covered hay. "But don't you scatter that hay about. It's worth two hundred and fifty dollars a ton," he warned. Fortunately the weather was mild, and for several nights our party—five men and one woman—was glad of these somewhat crowded sleeping-quarters. And still our outfit had not arrived! Vainly

we searched that crowded town of Bennett for a tent, shack, or cabin, but the whole world seemed to be waiting for the building of boats to speed it down to Dawson.

We heard of two cabins back at Lindeman, above the rapids connecting the two lakes, and we walked back. They were owned by a party of Australians, who gave us the cabins they were just leaving, telling us to pass them on to someone else when we were through.

Then followed two weeks of as wonderful a camping experience as I have ever had. The camp site commanded a magnificent view of snow-capped peaks, ranged round in fanlike folds about the limpid lake. The weather was perfect. Shortly after midnight the sun rose, revolved in spiral fashion, mounted higher and higher till it reached the zenith at noon, then sank lower and lower until it dipped below the horizon. Daytime and night-time merged into each other so softly, so imperceptibly, that we scarcely realized the change.

It was here I learned to make sourdough, which, in the early days of the Klondyke, took the place of yeast, which could not be had in the country. This is the recipe :

Mix a thin batter of flour and water. Add a little rice or macaroni water and a pinch of sugar. Put mixture in a pail, cover it and hang over the stove, keeping it warm for four hours. Sourdough may be used to raise bread, pancakes, and doughnuts. For pancakes use a pinch of soda.

Even to-day I can make sourdough pancakes that will melt in your mouth.

This, too, is the origin of the name "Sourdough," meaning pioneers of '98 or before. To-day new-comers

claim they are Sourdoughs if they have seen the ice form in the rivers in the fall and go out in the spring, but they are "Chechakos," the Indian word for "new-comer" or "do nothing."

Fish were to be had in abundance, but our fishing tackle was with our dunnage, which still had not arrived. George said he was sure he could gaff a certain old salmon-trout with a forked stick, as the Indians did. The more we watched that fish swim around that quiet pool the more our mouths watered.

One morning, bright and early, we determined to get him. We lay bellydown in watchful silence for many minutes. Then I sneezed. "Damn it—just like a woman!" hissed George as the fish scuttled away. "Well, men sneeze too," I argued hotly. A strained silence continued, and, to our surprise, that fish came back. More waiting. Suddenly George thrust the stick into the water. There was much splashing, a quick pull which hurled the trout up on to the mossy bank, and we were capering around in glee like a couple of kids, wondering how it had been done. An occupant of a near-by tent produced some scales, and our catch tipped them at five pounds two ounces. Many hours were wasted in this kind of fishing, and we were glad when our tackle caught up with us.

Sometimes the men went hunting, and many a blue grouse they got. I was supposed to have full charge of the cooking, but more often than not one of the party took the job off my hands, leaving only the pies, pancakes, and doughnuts to me.

I had plenty of time to explore the country around. On the higher hills I found quantities of dainty mountain forget-me-nots, growing cheek by jowl with the pink snake weed, the mountain harebell, and the brilliant cerise

shooting stars. Lower down were saucy Dutchman's breeches, bleeding heart (a prototype of the kind that grew in grandmother Munger's garden), exquisite in their waxen beauty, the single, heart-shaped blossoms giving forth an almost intoxicating fragrance, and the tiny twin flowers or Linnæa, the favourite of Linnæus, the Swedish "Father of Botany." Sometimes I watched that northern cannibal, the sundew (a distant relative of the Venus flytrap), at work during the drowsy summer days, literally sucking the life fluid of countless unwary midges trapped on the sticky hairy-coated thick leaves. I've actually seen the leaves bloat during this banquet.

Often I walked to Bennett, to the little pioneer church which was being built at the head of the lake—a symbol of man's homage to our Creator, whose power and glory were so evident in the magnificent world around me.

Every night the campers gathered about the enormous fireplace in the large cabin, which my brother George and I had taken for ourselves, and we did enjoy its warmth and cheer in the cool mountain air. When our baggage finally arrived we unpacked George's mandolin and my guitar, and had a sing-song. We sang, "The Bicycle built for Two," and "The Man on the Flying Trapeze," popular songs of the day, and followed these with many old favourites and hymns. Then, deliciously tired from the day in the open, and sleepy from the bracing air, we retired to rest on fragrant pine boughs, piled high on our bunks or on the ground.

One morning we discovered that a bear had visited our camp. It had stolen part of a ham hanging on one of the outside rafters of the cabin and slobbered over a tin of butter in a vain attempt to get at it. For many nights one or another of the men sat up to catch him, but

with no luck. In the meantime I insisted that I have a loaded gun by my bunk, much to the amusement of the men, who said if there was a chance for me to use it I would likely point the wrong end.

One night I was aroused by a stealthy-creeping rustling noise. I got up quickly, put on my slippers, grabbed my gun, and ran across the dirt floor.

“Polly, Polly, get back to bed!” called my brother.

With a subdued “Shut-up!” I crept to the window, raised my hand to remove the canvas screen, and let out a piercing shriek. Up my sleeve and out of the back of my gown was running the animal that I feared most of all in the world—a mouse. Did I voice that fear too—with shriek after shriek, arousing the whole camp! For days it was the standing joke. One old-timer, looking me over speculatively, saying, as he chewed his wad of tobacco, “Walked over the Pass. Goin’ through the rapids. Campin’ a long ways from home. Pretty rough life. Ain’t afraid of nuthin’ but a mouse. Lordy! Wimmin is queer.”

One afternoon I was standing on the shore of Lake Bennett, watching the little group around the *Flora*, the first of the river steamboats to attempt the passage of Miles Canyon and the White Horse Rapids, when I saw a new woman, different from the usual type coming into the country. She was wearing a smart-looking raincape and a tweed hat, and, as she turned, I noted that she was not so pretty as clever-looking. I walked over and introduced myself. She told me her name, Flora Shaw, and that she had been sent to the Klondyke by the *London Times*, of which she was the colonial editor. She had allowed a month’s time to make the trip from London, England, to Dawson, but it was taking her much longer than that. She asked me where I lived and I replied, “Chicago—but

I have lately come from Kansas, where my father owns a large ranch."

"Do you know my brother? He lives in Eureka, Kansas." I did, as this was the nearest post office to Catalpa Knob, which proves, as has been done so often, that the world is really small. I met her again in London in wartime, she, in the meantime, having married Lord Lugard, a colonial governor.

In three weeks our boat was finished. She was a fine unpainted craft, shaped like a fisherman's dory and built of Alaska pine at King's shipyard, Lake Bennett, at a cost of two hundred and seventy-five dollars. She was thirty-seven feet long, six and a half feet across the bottom, and eight and a half feet at the top.

We broke camp early one rainy morning and walked into Bennett. While our men loaded the boat, I sat in the main room of a semi-hotel and saloon talking to an old coloured woman, whom every one called "Aunty." I was fascinated as I watched her cook, wash dishes, chew tobacco, and spit with unerring accuracy through a hole in the stove lid. She was shiftless, dirty, easy-going, but famed throughout the Klondyke for her coffee and doughnuts.

In a short time our goods were loaded. When our several tons of luggage and our party of six got in, there was very little space above the water-line and very little room inside. However, we sailed away in a drenching rain, before a high wind, followed by the gaze of an admiring and curious crowd. As we were well protected by our oilskins we did not mind the rain, although we were a bit cramped.

By evening we had reached the lower end of Lake Bennett at Caribou Crossing (now Carcross), a distance of

forty miles, and there pitched camp. I had my first experience of cooking supper for five hungry men over a smoky camp-fire built of wet wood, but we were fortunate in having with us boiled ham, corn-meal mush for frying, and plenty of bread.

The next morning dawned clear and beautiful, and we were well under way by six o'clock. With two blanket-sails spread we rushed along at a rapid rate, into a narrow strip of water called Windy Arm, rightly named, as we were forced to land twice on the lee shore because of high winds. Then into Lake Tagish, at the foot of which was a log North-West Mounted Police post, in front of some tall evergreens.

Here all boats were stopped and overhauled in a search for liquor. I did not notice until later how solicitous the men of our party were for my comfort. They insisted that I sit on a couple of boxes covered with blankets and a fur robe. Afterwards I found out that these boxes contained two cases of Scotch whisky.

The young officer in charge of the post was fine-looking, well dressed, and exceedingly polite to me. I admired the handsome buttons of his uniform, and he asked me if I would accept one for a hatpin—he had sent some home to his sisters for that purpose. I was delighted, for it would certainly be an unusual souvenir to show when I got home. He told me of a man who was ill in a near-by cabin, and I went over to see him and left several jars of beef tea, which won his extreme gratitude as this could not be had “for love or money.”

When we left, the young officer told me that since the previous May eighteen thousand men had passed the post and I was the six hundred and thirty-first woman. He numbered our boat 14,405.

We reached Lake Marsh, which pours into the narrow river that rushes through Miles Canyon with its massive, forbidding walls of granite. Many were fearful of our heavily loaded boat attempting it. There was said to be a hundred-dollar fine levied on the owner of any boat taking a woman through the canyon and the White Horse Rapids below. But rather than walk that five miles of portage alone, I chose to go by our boat, which was to be piloted by Captain Spencer, an experienced navigator.

We sped through the canyon. There was a breathtaking interval before we were swept into the seething cauldron of the White Horse Rapids, where so many venturesome souls had lost their lives and outfits. Half-way through our steering oar broke with a crack like that of a pistol shot, above the roaring waters. For a tense moment the boat whirled half her length about in the current. Captain Spencer quickly seized another oar, calling coolly, "Never mind, boys! Let her go stern to." A second's hesitation and our lives would have paid the penalty. It took the boat only twenty-six minutes to get through.

Such an incident could not be described better than in the words of Robert Service, far-famed poet of the Yukon:

"Dared we that ravening terror, heard we its din in our ears,
Called on the gods of our fathers, juggled forlorn with our fears,
Sank to our waist in its fury, tossed to the sky like a fleece,
Then, when our dread was the greatest, crashed into safety and peace."

Below the rapids lay Whitehorse, another small tented town, a haven of rest to us. Did I say rest? I spoke too

soon, for I had forgotten the pestiferous mosquito, with its needle-like sting and its voracious appetite. We swathed ourselves in mosquito netting, rubbed eucalyptus oil on our hands and faces, but even then the bloodthirsty brutes defied us to sleep. Not for an instant did they stop their ceaseless hum-m-m-m. They were particularly "hellish" in this district, especially if we camped on the low-lying places. We soon learned to choose our camp sites on high banks where, if a stiff breeze were blowing, we were not troubled.

After we got through the Five Fingers, so named because of five huge rocks rising like sentries in midstream of the upper Yukon River, the navigation was fairly smooth. Day after day we passed unbroken mountain ranges and wooded river banks—a sameness of scenery which became monotonous.

Every day we travelled eight hours, sailing when the wind was up, rowing or floating with the current when the wind was down. Every evening we made camp, rolling in our blankets on piles of pine boughs in the open, or sleeping under canvas if it were raining.

We cooked our meals on a little sheet-iron Klondyke stove, and there was generally an unlimited supply of dry wood for the gathering. At first we had no big game, but our men shot a few squirrels, which for a time I could not eat until driven to it by a craving for fresh meat. Occasionally we had a wild fowl, and, as we neared Dawson, we were able to buy pieces of moose or caribou from the Indians.

All along the way we fished—trolling for trout from the boat. I caught a salmon trout weighing nine pounds, but others weighed over twelve pounds. George speared many whitefish or cast for grayling in some quiet pool of water.

We picked wild berries of all kinds—raspberries, strawberries, red currants, blueberries, and cranberries, but we sorely missed fresh vegetables. On a solitary berry-picking excursion I came upon a party of Indians in a fine swampy patch of blueberries. They took no notice of me, and I stayed so long picking and having my fill that George was worried and came looking for me. He always wanted me to take a revolver when I went away from camp, but I had no fear of anything, especially if I had a stout stick.

As over the Pass we continued to be a part of a never-ending procession. Boats of all kinds passed us—singly, in pairs, in fleets: scows, canoes, small sailboats, rafts, and row boats—anything that would float. One boat was actually cut in half—evidently the last word in a “50-50” division of an outfit—so many partners were quarrelling and quitting. How most of these boats, with pilots knowing little of swift-water navigation, got through the canyon, rapids, and Five Fingers, was little short of miraculous.

In camps we met hundreds of men of all sorts, and, without exception, they were kindly and courteous. One party included an undertaker, doctor, druggist, and nurse, to whom I suggested that they fly a black flag with skull and crossbones. This was the beginning of some fine friendships which have lasted to this day.

Two nights above Dawson we made an afternoon camp on a creek tributary to the Yukon, where a few miners had “struck it.” At first we were greeted coldly, as there is nothing more dreaded by real miners than a stampede. Besides, it was a late discovery, none of the claims had been recorded, and it was a rare opportunity for claim-jumping.

As the day went on our neighbours became more friendly. All were from New Zealand, and they thought of naming the creek “Maori.” I chose Excelsior, which they

liked, and so it is named to this day. I invited them to supper, which was "extra special," being hard tack, coffee, and dried apple dumpling. The New Zealanders said it was their first dinner party in the Canadian North, and the best meal they had had since leaving home.

In the evening we sang. I tried my skill at chiromancy, and, it being still light when they left, I wrote a description of the event in a home letter. In fact, in the long-light hours campers never went to bed before one or two o'clock in the morning, and they slept until nine or ten. Next morning George and I staked claims and proceeded on the last lap of this long journey.

As I travelled farther and farther from my dear ones, many times my heart grew heavy. I comforted myself by writing letters to them, and this is an excerpt from one mailed from Dawson City, N.-W.T., August 6, 1898 :

"Of my children I say nothing, but mean much. I have no fear for them, only an all-abiding faith that all is well. Do write me often, for your letters, which I received on arrival, are a Godsend in this wilderness. God bless and keep you all."

"P.S.—So Will has gone to the Sandwich Islands. I never want to see him again."

CHAPTER XIII

DAWSON CITY IN '98-'99

IT took us twelve days to make the trip from Lake Bennett to Dawson that summer of '98. As we neared our journey's end the scenery became less rugged, the mountains changed to high hills, the Yukon flowed more placidly. At last, rounding a bend during the afternoon of 5th August, we came within sight of the city, "the end of the rainbow where we would find our pot of gold." In the distance the many columns of smoke, rising from the buildings, were a welcome sign of settlement and civilization to our eyes so long accustomed to the vast uninhabited hinterland.

We skirted the small wooded islands above the mouth of the Klondyke River which empties into the Yukon, and there, scattered on the flats at the junction of the rivers, and straggling half-way to the top of the high hill behind "King Solomon's Dome," lay Dawson, a city of tents, shanties, and log cabins, with a floating population of approximately twenty thousand. On landing, even in our most enthusiastic moments, we could not have said the place was beautiful. It was like every new town in the making, disordered and untidy. On the waterfront were hundreds of boats tied to wharves or beached on the muddy shore. Everywhere were rough board buildings on stilts; hurriedly pitched tents, with stoves, cooking utensils and bundles

thrown around ; and freshly cleared lots, with new one-roomed shacks, bushes, and shavings strewn about.

The only semblance of order was on Front Street, which probably was due to the fact that the Mounted Police had put up notices that all lumber, logs, timber, cordwood, and other obstructions be removed ; that campers occupying the streets must move their tents elsewhere because the health of the town was threatened (there were already many cases of malaria, typhoid fever, and a few of smallpox). The street was flanked with two-storey log or frame buildings, very large tents, through which streamed the stampede, now in a frenzied hurry to stake their claims.

Almost every other building was either a dance hall, saloon, hotel, or restaurant, with such names as the Floradora, Aurora, Northern, Monte Carlo, M. and N. (the name derived from the initials of the owners' names), Sourdough, Can Can, and Chisholm's Saloon, nicknamed the " Bucket of Blood," where the first drink was accompanied by a whisk. (What for ? To brush you off when you came to.) One or the other told the world by painted signs and printed notices that "crap, chuck, and draw poker, black jack, roulette wheels, and faro banks were run by the management ; that every known fluid—water excepted—was for sale at the bar ; that there were special rates for the 'gambling perfesh.'"

Our first business was to get a home. Looking about Dawson we found lot prices sky-high, and lumber selling at one hundred to five hundred dollars per thousand. Hearing that there was plenty of land for the taking on the other side of the Klondyke, we decided to go there. We squatted on the hill above Lousetown, described by the Sourdoughs as "The lousiest place on God's earth, for any day the lice might walk away with them buildin's," a mile

and a half from Dawson, our men building the largest of a hundred or so cabins.

It contained one large room, a small corner "state-room" for me, and the usual built-in bunks for the men. Instead of the dirt floor, we pounded into the earth small round poplar blocks, which not only made the place warmer, but was a convenience in cleaning, as I swept the dirt into the numerous cracks. The men made our furniture from tree-trunks and twigs, boards, and packing-cases. It included plain willow-withy chairs, with an armchair for me, a board bench, a table (two wide boards nailed to four slim poplar legs), and a packing-box cupboard and dressing-table.

I have always liked fixing up homes, and although this was only a little northern cabin I tried to make it as pretty and homey as possible. Much against the will of the party I had brought two linen tablecloths with two dozen napkins, silver knives, forks, and spoons "for company," and a bolt of cretonne—a gay pattern of Maréchal Niel roses on a sage-green background. I made this into curtains, packing-box covers, and, later, cushions which I filled with feathers of wild ducks. It was well worth the trouble of bringing as it did brighten the little cabin. I pinned our surplus blankets on the walls, put our fur robes on the bunks, laid the table with coloured oilcloth which I scalloped with scissors, placed on it a bouquet of wild flowers in a tin can covered with birchbark, and arrayed my agate iron dishes and silver in the cupboard. When we were completely settled we were all proud of our little home.

And now to claim my treasure—the million dollars of gold dust—while the menfolk staked and worked their claims. One day George remonstrated with me on the

use of some of the strong words of the North which I was rapidly adopting. "Polly, what will people think of you if you talk like that when we get home?"

"Think of me! If I get my half-million I won't give a damn; and if I don't then they won't give a damn for me!"

My first visit was made to the Gold Commissioner's office, where, with blissful ignorance, I laid my case before various officials, asking to be shown the records. After considerable palm-crossing these were produced. There was much crooked work done by government officials in those days. Changes were made in records by running a pen through names and dates, by erasing or scratching out names, and, in some instances, names, date, and all information were cut out entirely and a fresh slip pasted in.

At the post office I asked for information about the men whose names were signed as witnesses to the Lambert will. I was told that mail was being held there for them, and so I wrote to them. Receiving no replies, I wrote other letters and registered them. Some of these were delivered but never answered.

Finally, on payment of a hundred dollars, a post office employé (now deceased) opened the letters of these witnesses and gave them to me to read. I had hoped to get much information, but did not get any. The post office employé returned the letters to their envelopes and wrote across them "opened by mistake."

So I went on and on, tipping and tipping until money was getting perilously low. Summer ended and still I hoped and sought vainly for the Lambert grave, the witnesses of the will, the registration of the claims, and the gold dust. After exhausting every clue I gave up, convinced that the whole affair was either a huge hoax or an un-

fathomable mystery. All I discovered was that Lambert actually had existed ; that he had been a prospector in the far corners of the North for many years ; that he had last been heard of in Juneau, Alaska ; that the will was in his handwriting ; and then information petered out.

Later I learned that the Lamberts, losing faith in me because of my failure to return within six months with the gold dust, interested a man by the name of Gillette (the Chicago yeast and baking-powder man). He put up several thousand dollars for one of the Lamberts who, accompanied by a lawyer, started for Dawson. After hearing the horrible tales, and fearful of attempting the Pass, they decided to enter the country by St. Michaels. They reached that port, and I was told that the young attorney, who had been particularly loud in his expressions of what he was going to do to me when they caught me with the stolen million, was separated from Lambert, his purpose, and pocket-book by one of the peroxide beauties of the North, who found many an Eldorado in such simple-minded men. However, I did get the proverbial comfort of " misery," for at least I had company. Their search came to nothing, even as did mine, and the Lambert case for ever will remain one of the unsolved mysteries of the North.

The glorious days of the northern Indian summer came. All nature, forgetful of the fast-approaching winter, seemed drowsing comfortably—disregarding the warnings of the frost, which made the forests glow with red and gold against a background of dark evergreens.

The *Klondyke Nugget*, the first newspaper in Dawson, was warning Chechakos unprepared for an Arctic winter to leave the country at once ; that winter set in in September ; that floating ice from the upper rivers made navigation on the Yukon dangerous until early November ; that

severe storms and cold were to be expected at this time ; that to spend a winter in a tent was risking one's life ; that the rubber footwear brought in by most of us was useless for the northern winter.

Everyone who could was hurrying out as fast as possible. A Mountie told me that there remained less than fifteen thousand of the forty thousand who had stampeded in, and before spring another five thousand would be gone.

The " Sand Bar " in front of the city had been laid out in two streets, both lined with outfits for sale. Some were auctioned at ridiculously low prices, and even at that there were few buyers.

As I watched the ever-departing stream I thought how strange are the ways of men. Only a few short months ago we, who had staked our all and strained every muscle to get into the country, were now making every sacrifice to get out. We had been so eager, so confident, that we could make our fortunes with so little effort. What a myth that was ! I, too, must leave the country by one of the small river steamers—the *Ora*, *Flora*, or *Nora*.

I had given myself so completely to the search for the Lambert gold that I had deliberately put out of mind a terrible suspicion—I was to become a mother. I could not believe it. I would not let my mind dwell on it. I pursued my quest with feverish energy. My suspicion became a certainty. Terror-stricken, I faced this Gethsemane. I realized I could not leave the country. I could never walk back over that Pass. Neither could I face the ravaging ordeal before me alone, helpless, most of my money gone. Life had trapped me.

" Oh God, my Father, let this cup pass from me," I prayed. " Let me die."

To-day I am glad that my Maker did not answer my

prayer. Here I would like to tell young mothers who face this bearing of unwanted babies in dire circumstances, who rebel against it with every fibre of their being, to keep their faith in God. This trust saw me through. I was brought up in the belief that no one is called upon to bear a greater burden than he can carry. I often thought of the guiding principle of Mother's life, "The Lord will provide."

I told my brother. "I never should have consented to your coming," he said. "Father will never forgive me." His helplessness to cope with the situation bucked me up. He told our cousin, Harry Peachey, who was planning to leave the country. Afterwards, Aunt Martha Morse told me that when he arrived home he said, "By this time Martha is dead. She was going to have a baby, and she couldn't possibly live, she looked so ill."

My old fighting spirit came to the rescue. I determined I would not brood over my troubles. I would not be downed. I suppose it is the pioneer spirit, not to be overwhelmed by trouble, but to arise and go forth to meet it. Besides, I had the little one to think of now. I must make some clothes. I looked over our outfit. There were the table-cloths and the two dozen table-napkins (and didn't they come in handy!). As I sewed on the little garments, I became fully resigned to the baby's coming. I began to have a real joy in its anticipation. I knew that if I got through safely and my baby was well, I would have many happy hours caring for him, and when the Yukon River broke up in the spring we would go out to our dear ones.

And, just as the summer days were light so long, now the winter days grew darker and darker, until it was continuous night. Endless days with no sight of sun. Deep blue nights with countless stars palming in the Milky

Way. Cold, still, aurora nights, with red, gold, and green northern lights, crackling and swishing as they streamed from the dusky skyline to the very zenith of the heavens. Pale, green, moonlit nights, the Great Dipper, and, almost above us, the Pole Star, fixed, constant, comforting.

After the supper dishes were done, if I sewed as a special favour I was allowed two candles. None of us liked cards, but we spent many evenings playing checkers and chess on home-made boards. Sometimes I wrote or read, or became interested in the nautical problems worked out by our two sea captains. Yet, in spite of high resolves, there were many nights of heartache and homesickness. If we sang, which was rarely, "Home Sweet Home" was never allowed. One night I took down the photographs of my parents and children; they aggravated my loneliness.

The winter swooped down upon us so early. In a letter written at that time I said :

"November 20, 1898.

"We have been frozen in for five weeks. Each and every day I look from my little cabin window and see dozens of men crossing the river, pulling Yukon sleds, the more fortunate with dog teams, from five to ten in a string, or sailing ice-boats.

"We are really icebound. The snow is several inches deep, and last week we had our first touch of Arctic weather—32 below. On the coldest days we have had no wind, and the silence is so intense that the human voice in ordinary conversation carries for over a quarter of a mile.

"We hardly realize the extreme cold, and I am told that for this reason alone we must keep continually on

the move, as it is an easy matter to freeze to death after the first chill. Above all it is important to keep the hands and feet warm.

“When our men go to work, each wears the heaviest woollen underwear, sweater, trousers, overalls, fur cap, two pairs of mittens, moccasins, and a small nose protector. One man boasted that he could keep warm without an overcoat, but one night in a saloon he was stripped, and it was found that he was wearing eight flannel shirts.

“This is Thanksgiving month, and I am going to celebrate with a dinner. It is difficult to cook here, with granulated potatoes, crystallized eggs, evaporated fruits and vegetables, canned meat, and condensed milk, but I have made mincemeat and it is prime.

“We have invited three guests and have had no refusals. We are going to have a five-course dinner, the menu to be :

“Canned Tomato Soup—Bread Sticks

Oyster Patties—Olives

Baked Stuffed Ptarmigan.

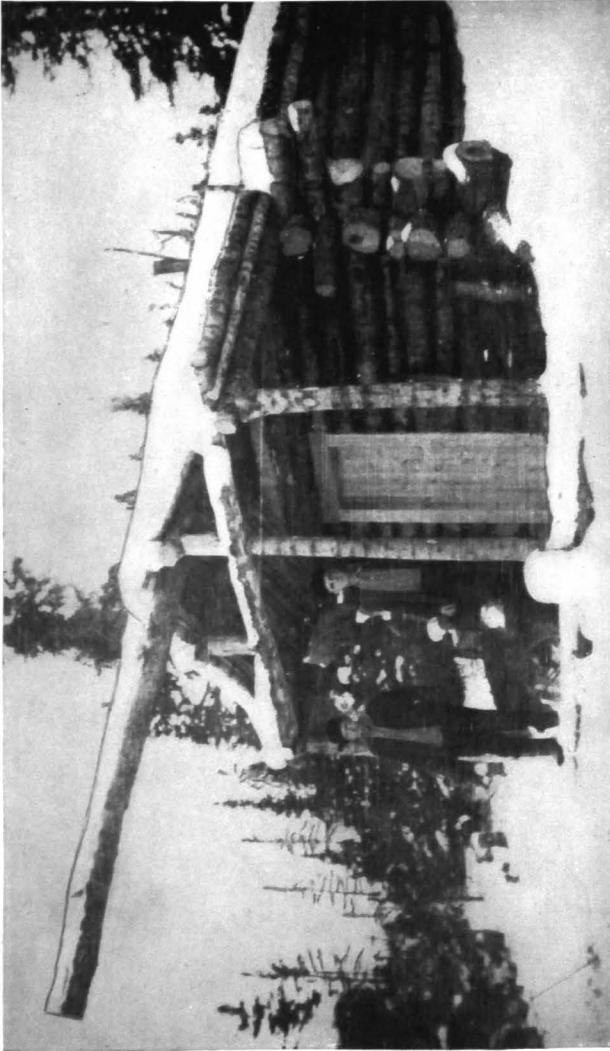
Canned Corn—Desiccated Potato Puff

Bread—Butter—Pickles

Mince Pie—Cheese—Coffee.

Popcorn Balls—and a taste of your Home Fruit Cake (the larger part of this to be saved for Christmas).”

We had many regrets for our high living of these early winter months. We did not realize the problem of a food shortage and the terrific winter prices which were to add to my troubles of that lonely winter. It became necessary to ration ourselves, and I determined that I would share as



“Home, Sweet Home.” First Home in Yukon, 1898.

the men. For six months we were to be entirely without butter, sugar, or milk. Our breakfast consisted of cornmeal mush with molasses and clear coffee. Flour was a dollar a pound, meat two dollars a pound, butter three dollars a pound, eggs three dollars a dozen, oranges, apples, and onions a dollar and a half each—when they could be had. Cow's milk was sixteen dollars a gallon, but hay was four hundred dollars a ton. How I longed for a change of diet—some fruit and vegetables! Instead I gulped down the ever-unpalatable cornmeal mush, prunes, and tea with no milk or sugar.

Excerpts from other letters of that winter are :

“ December 10, 1898.

“ It is hard to have no letters from home, but they will be all the more welcome when they do come. We are told that from now on we are to have a monthly mail taken out to Skagway and brought in, but we hardly dare hope for it. We are also warned not to give letters of importance to irresponsible parties to mail at salt water. I have been paying a dollar apiece to have my letters taken to Skagway.”

“ January 3, 1899.

“ The holiday season is past. With us there was no gaiety—all are hard at work. We had a few days of seventy below and then everybody stayed at home. I threw out the dish water and it fell to the ground in a frozen spray. We are very comfortable in our cabin, chinked with moss, and we keep our wood fires going full blast day and night ; the men, awakened by the alarm clock, take turns to fuel up.”

Word spread about the camp that a baby was expected. I had not found a million dollars in gold dust—but I made a rich discovery. Always, the world over, pioneers have proven themselves to be “salt of the earth.” They have a fine courage, which they know how to keep alive in each other. They know how to share their few possessions. The gifts those men brought me! One stamper’s wife had insisted that he bring in a bolt of red flannel for abdominal bands, and over he came with yards of it. Others brought me cherished pots of home-made jam—another, a tablecloth for baby dresses, and delicacies for my Christmas dinner. Showered with kindnesses like these, I learned to love my fellow-men of the North, who, although I did not know it at the time, were to be my people for the rest of my life.

There was also the immediate problem of financing my confinement. I went to see Father Judge (head of the Roman Catholic mission and hospital). He told me my hospital and doctor’s expenses would be a thousand dollars. He was kind, and offered to trust me until I could get money in the spring. I was brought up to abhor debt. I had had two children, and had the advantage of the most expert medical care in Chicago. I decided to get through alone.

The baby came ahead of time. I was alone, and it was over quickly, an incredibly easy birth—Mother Nature’s gift to women who live a natural out-of-door life such as I had done. And weren’t the menfolk surprised, when they returned from work at night, to find, wrapped in red flannel—a fine, healthy boy! My brother nearly passed out when he had to give him his first bath. They called him the little “Chechako,” but I immediately named him “Lyman” after Grandfather Munger.

I had not written of my condition to my parents. I

reasoned that they could do nothing, and it would mean weeks of worry. Now that the baby was here, I could hardly wait until my hand grew steady enough to write them this news.

“February 10, 1899.

“On Tuesday, at noon, January 31st, my third son was born, and I welcomed him with delight. He weighs nine pounds, and is as hale and hearty as any baby born under happier conditions. I have written this little poem about him :

“THE LITTLE CHECHAKO

“His eyes are bright as midnight stars,
His hair it shines like gold of Mars,
He bears no pack, he wears no clothes,
From tip of head to tip of toes
His body's red, just like a rose.

“I am enclosing a curl of his hair. Embrace my other little ones for me. Tell them about their new little brother, and be ready to welcome the wanderers.”

Being young, and, now I realize, blessed with an unusually good constitution, I was soon up and around.

What a welcome the camp gave my baby! The men of our party, and my neighbours, all men, took full charge. They kept the fires going. They brought in foodstuffs—fresh-baked bread, cakes, chocolates, ptarmigan, moosemeat, every wild delicacy of the country. Miners, prospectors, strange uncouth men called to pay their respects. They brought gifts of olive oil (which by some miraculous

mistake had been shipped in with foodstuffs), gold nuggets, gold dust. Often as I lay in bed with the baby I thought of the Holy Mother and her Babe, born in a manger, and the gifts of frankincense and myrrh brought to her by the wise men.

With tears in their eyes my visitors told me of their own babies so far away. They wanted to hold mine, to see his toes, to feel his tiny fingers curl in their rough hands, to see for themselves that his back was straight and strong. Later, his bath hour became a daily show. Again the dish-pan was pressed into service, and what nobler use for a dish-pan? The cabin, which was stifling hot for fear the baby would catch cold, became hotter and more stifling. My heart was touched and responded to this adoration, for every mother knows that there is only one perfect baby in the world and that one is her own. From the moment of his arrival little Lyman was the happiest, most contented child I ever knew. He would go to the roughest-looking of them all, gurgling and laughing and pulling their beards.

Our cabin became a social centre. Again we brought out the mandolin and guitar, and the stillness of the North was broken with such rollicking songs as "Johnny Schmoker, Johnny Schmoker," "There is a Tavern in the Town," and the ever popular "Bicycle Built for Two." Then our spirits would effervesce and we would sing that greatest home song ever written—"Swanee River," our eyes growing misty at the words :

"All de world am sad and dreary,
Everywhere I roam,
Oh ! Darkies, how my heart grows weary
Far from de old folks at home."

CHAPTER XIV

A WILD WINTER IN DAWSON

SO popular did our home musicales become that we were offered what we thought was a fabulously large sum to "put on a turn" at the Pavilion—a variety theatre, the first of its kind in Yukon. It had been opened in the summer of '98 shortly before our arrival. Its advent was contemporaneous with the coming of the Salvation Army, the organization of the first Masonic lodge, the establishment of the "elegant parlours" of the first professional masseuse, who advertised "Russian, Turkish, plain, and medicated baths." The Pavilion was very popular, one of its chief attractions being the beautiful and vivacious Oatley Sisters, who had good voices and good figures, sang the latest songs, and danced the buck and wing with abandon. Although I needed the money I never could quite bring myself to consider going on its programme!

It was a wild winter in Dawson that winter of '98. As I look back to it I have an infinite pity for the men of those days, many of superior breeding and education. They were lonely, disillusioned, and discouraged. There were so few places to go where it was bright and cheerful. They gathered with the others in the saloons and dance halls. They joined the party with the "first round," and then they drank to drown their woes. The continued Arctic darkness contributed to the debauchery. Revellers lost all sense of time as to day and night periods, and

attuned themselves to the ever-present night until they passed out from sheer exhaustion.

Analysing the women of the Klondyke stampede, there were three classes : members of the "oldest profession in the world," who ever follow armies and gold rushes ; dance hall and variety girls, whose business was to entertain and be dancing partners ; and a few others, wives with unbounded faith in and love for their mates, or the odd person like myself on a special mission.

While I did not enter into the gaiety, I did have what sporting editors would call a "ringside seat." We did not know when we squatted above Lousetown that we had established ourselves just above the red-light district, through which we had to pass to reach the footbridge across the Klondyke River to Dawson. As I walked back and forth I often saw the painted women, leaning over their half-doors, brazenly soliciting trade. Clearly through the still, cold night air would come the sounds of wild revelry . . . the tinny piano pounded by the "professor" . . . loud laughter . . . singing.

While many prostitutes, in their isolated cabins, practised their profession quite independently, there were also some white slave girls, mostly Belgians. These had been brought in and were managed by men known as *macques*, who not only lived "off the avails," but first demanded repayment of the passage money of their victims. Let it be always to the credit of the North-West Mounted Police that they spared no efforts to bring these men of "fancy dress and patent leather shoes" to justice. They were ruthlessly rounded up, brought to trial, and, if proven guilty, given a blue ticket, which meant shoved aboard a boat and told to "get to hell out of the country and never come back."

The dance hall girls were often beautiful, invariably had good figures, and many were clever and resented the stigma generally attached to their profession. They had to be able to do some vaudeville stunt, and to be entertaining companions—the kind “a fella would like to buy a drink for.” It was decidedly to their personal advantage to have a flair for salesmanship, to help the proprietor sell his full stock of liquor, for they received a commission of 25 or 50 per cent. on drinks, which were never less than a dollar apiece. It was said that some girls made as high as two hundred and fifty dollars a night, but this could only be done by “rolling,” which meant getting a man drunk and stealing his poke.

The dance-saloon-gambling-variety halls were built on the same order, the bars usually to the left of the entrance. They were backed with plate glass mirrors on the upper wall, and the lower was lined with bottle-laden shelves. On the hardwood counters rested several finely balanced gold scales for weighing “dust,” as there was practically no currency in the country. (An ounce of dust was worth fifteen dollars.)

To the right were the gambling rooms, usually furnished with poker and crap tables and chairs, faro banks, and roulette wheels. Although there was generally a house limit on the bets, sometimes the games were “wide open,” as high as twenty thousand dollars being lost in a single whirl of the roulette wheel, five thousand at stud poker, and a thousand dollars a throw in a crap game. (Speaking of bets, I knew two old Sourdoughs who bet each other ten thousand dollars on their respective spitting accuracy—the mark being a crack in the wall.)

Dance and variety halls had fine floors and were lighted by hanging oil lamps. There was always good music, some

of the musicians having played in the best orchestras in America. The larger halls had stages and galleries, with curtained boxes, where patrons might have a certain privacy for entertaining their girl friends or watching shows and dances. Drinks served here cost double.

Dances were a dollar apiece, and each was concluded with a "promenade all" to the bar, where the male dancer would buy two drinks, ginger ale for his girl partner, and generally hard liquor for himself. If he fancied champagne, he paid thirty dollars a pint.

A high note of dance hall life comes to me—the case of a woman whose husband was accidentally killed on the Pass, and she was forced to earn a living for their child, who was at home with relatives. She had a very sweet voice, which one of the dance hall owners had heard on the boat trip in, when she sang a number of old-fashioned songs. He learned of her trouble, and, realizing that her voice would be a "gold mine" for his dance hall, offered her a good salary to sing each night. She consented on the understanding that she would do only her turn and go.

She told me of the sickening dread of her first appearance. On entering she was confronted by a palatial bar, which was lined with drinkers; and bar-tenders were "setting 'em up" as fast as possible. A great crowd was dancing wildly, reeling madly. The noise was frightening—piano banging, glasses clinking, hysterical laughter mingled with oaths, talking, shouting—Dog-faced Kitty trying to teach a Sourdough to waltz, and Sunshine Sue in the arms of "her man."

My friend had chosen for her opening number, "Don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt?" As the first notes floated through that place of drunken revelry a hush fell upon the crowd, broken only by a high, shrill voice,

“Look who’s here !” and followed by, “You shut yer trap !”

When she finished the men surged round her, but the proprietor was as good as his word. “No, boys, Mrs. S—— will sing here every night if she’s let alone. Her husband was killed on the Pass. She has a child to support. Will you play the game ?” A roar of “Yes !” filled the hall.

Strange women drifted into the Klondyke, their very names descriptive of some characteristic—names that now are a part of Yukon history—and, with no intention of casting slurs upon any, let me tell you some. There was Diamond-Tooth Gertie, a pretty, dark young woman who had a diamond inset in one of her front teeth ; Sweet Marie, who nearly killed a man who put her beloved “Fido” under a tub and piled it high with furniture and bedding ; Spanish Jeanette, who, when she said she was a lady from Castile, provoked this now historic remark from a Sourdough, “Castile ? Hell ! You sure don’t get to the castile (soap) often enough. A Mexican greaser from Market Street, ‘Frisco, more likely !”

I remember hearing of Lime Juice Lil, who, as her name suggests, was a teetotaller. She was notorious for “rolling,” and finally the police “got the goods on her,” and she received a summons, which she knew meant the blue ticket. She secured an interview with the Commissioner. Quietly dressed in a tailored suit, accompanied by a woman in widow’s weeds, she arrived. The widow told how this *good* woman had helped her starving children—that they would have died if it had not been for this *good* woman. Then Lime Juice Lil spoke up. She was in love with one of the bar-tenders of the town. In fact, they were planning to get married. With muffled sobs she confessed that it

was very necessary that they get married, for she was going to have a baby. The sympathetic Commissioner (not at all taken in) voiced the opinion that matters would be simplified greatly if the marriage took place at once. It did, but no child ever blessed the union.

Many of these girls had hearts of gold. They would give their last dollar to those who needed it. There was often a fine sportsmanship among them and a real mothering for a man who was down and out. Ping Pong was such a girl. She happened to hear a bar-tender refuse, in sizzling language, to charge the price of a drink to a pitiful wreck of a man who had been too large-hearted in his flush days.

“To think I have sunk so low. A bar-tender to talk to me like that !”

Although she hadn't been “one of his girls,” she threw her poke of gold dust on the bar—and in language which matched that of the bar-tender's ordered a drink for the down-and-outer.

I have wondered since if we other women could not have been kinder to those so set apart from us. Too often many of us, secure in our legitimacy, swanked by arrogantly. I was told that the girls often laughed over this among themselves, for well they knew the double life of many of the leading citizens.

Most of the girls paid the price of this gay wild life in full. The longest they could stand its fast pace was five to ten years. Is it any wonder that they “cashed in,” for they were well aware if they saved no stake they would die in the gutter.

Likewise numbers of men burned themselves out by their hard living in these early Klondyke days. I have known many who died from drink and dissipation in the prime of their lives.

CHAPTER XV

I BECOME A SOURDOUGH

AFTER that first winter in Dawson I was indeed ready to pay my tribute to the real aristocracy of the country, those few Argonauts who had prospected in the North for years, men ever ready to shoulder pack, pick, and shovel, and brave the hardships and dangers of its great distances. There weren't many sudden fortunes made. The majority of those successful were the men who stuck.

There was my neighbour, Frank Fuller, who lived in the cabin below me. He had left Seattle in the early spring of '98 with provisions and money to last a year. En route he had been robbed of his money belt and landed at Skagway with only two dollars. Caching his goods, he worked as a packer on the trail. Saving a little money, he mushed on, joined two other gold-seekers, and the three built a large log raft, hoping to raise more money by the sale of the logs in Dawson (a hundred dollars a thousand). The raft was wrecked and abandoned.

Fuller kept on and camped by a small creek, within seven miles of Dawson, where he began prospecting. Returning one evening he found tent, grub, and most of his clothes stolen. Undaunted, he still kept on, living in his boat until his cabin was finished. He finally was rewarded by making a strike on Sulphur Creek which brought him a small fortune.

As I was busy with the baby, the days now passed more quickly. There were times when I missed and longed for the comforts of civilization, but when I heard of the death of a young mother leaving a baby girl ten days old, I realized I was fortunate. I was glad, too, that we had not built our cabin in Dawson City, where typhoid and malaria raged that winter.

In April many men who had been laid up all winter became excitingly busy working their claims. They cleared away the snow in the shafts, built huge fires, shovelled and picked the thawed ground, and then rebuilt the fires. This was the last year of this old-fashioned and slow type of placer mining, for steam thawing machines were shipped in on the railway next year, and high prices were paid for contracts—the faster the work the higher the price.

The hills purpled with spring flowers—the dainty pasque flower or crocus, protected from the frosts of night with a soft downy collar. I watched the purple petals fall, the seeds form into lovely plumose tufts, and the remarkable growth of foliage. Altogether I found eleven varieties of this ranunculaceæ family, including the tiny yellow water crowfoot, commonly skirting the edges of sluggish streams and sloughs, and the long-fruited anemone, with its pretty white blossoms shading into delicate greens and blues.

I continued to have many visitors to see the baby. One day a man from Chicago called. In the conversation, when he mentioned such names as Charles Morse, I naturally said, "He's an uncle of mine," or Lyman J. Gage, "I've known him for years." Next day a Mountie dropped in, and we chatted informally. Later I learned that he had come at the instigation of my Chicago visitor, who had reported to the police that there was a crazy woman with a baby



Pasque Flower, or Yukon Crocus.

“all alone in a cabin on the hill,” who said she was related to, and knew, some of the big men in Chicago ; that if this were true, she wouldn't be stranded up there ; and the matter should be investigated.

One spring evening, April 26, 1899, I was looking toward Dawson, and saw many tongues of fire darting through clouds of smoke. It was the big fire that burned half the city. Like the Chicago fire, it was alleged, but never proven, to have been started by the upsetting of a lamp. There was a south-west wind blowing ; the firemen lost considerable time in getting the new fire apparatus (shipped in after the fall fire) into working order, and in the meantime the fire leaped from building to building, the rough boards, oakum and moss-chinked logs, canvas roofs and factory cotton linings, burning like paper. The loss was estimated at half a million dollars, yet before the ashes were cold they were being panned for gold, and rebuilding had started.

Then came that time in the North, “when the days begin to lengthen and the sun begins to strengthen,” when all eyes are constantly watching the streams and lakes of the Yukon River system for signs of the annual break-up. It is then that Chechakos become Sourdoughs. Now my time had come, for had I not watched the river freeze in the fall, and was I not about to see the majestic Yukon begin again its northern rush to the Arctic ?

Well do I remember that momentous date, May 23, 1899—the day I became a Sourdough. I was sitting in front of my cabin, little Lyman asleep in a swing made from a packing-box. Above was a perfect blue sky, the sun shining with such brilliance that the glare dazzled my eyes as I looked into the distance. Below, the Yukon was heaving, cracking, and groaning, for the ice and snow were melting

fast. A warm, gentle breeze was scattering the yellow pollen of the willow buds.

Suddenly, hearing an unusual rustling, I looked up and saw a movement in the bushes on the hillside above me. Thinking it was a bear, I hastily snatched Lyman and rushed into the cabin. I made him comfortable on my bunk, put up the shutters on the one small window, gathered up all the firearms—two revolvers, two shotguns, a rifle, and the ammunition, and took them outside. With nervous fingers I loaded them.

I was still on the look-out for my first bear, and was thinking what glory would be mine if I should kill one while alone in camp. I'd show the men of our party that I could use a gun as well as any of them. What if she had cubs? Absorbed in these thoughts, still conscious of the rustling, grinding noises, I had not looked toward the hill. When I did, to my horror I saw the whole hillside slowly moving toward the cabin, and gaining momentum. A landslide! The quick thaw had loosened the upper stratum of earth and made it into a river of mud that was carrying everything before it.

I dashed into the cabin again. I seized the baby, wrapped him in a shawl, put on my own coat, and, paralysed with fright, stood at the corner of the cabin, wondering desperately what move to make, if any. I knew I was in terrible danger, and in silent prayer I commended myself and baby to the care of my Maker.

God answered my prayer. The onrushing avalanche was halted by a clump of trees seventy feet above the cabin. The mud, rocks, snow, and small trees piled up against them. Deeply rooted, they held firmly. In a moment the roaring river of mud started to move again, but the trees had split the avalanche. The heavier right half cleared our cabin,

uprooted a tree and swept with it two cabins below, depositing its débris on the bosom of the Yukon. The left passed more closely, carried with it our outhouses, and finally lost itself in the more securely frozen ground below us.

Realizing our narrow escape from a horrible death, and trembling from head to foot, I tottered into the cabin. I must have fainted, for when I came to, several hours later, I was lying on my bunk with my little one beside me. We were both unharmed. Subconsciously I must have taken care not to fall upon him. Looking out, I knew that it was not a bad dream, for the hillside was cleared of its surface, and gleamed like the earth of a new-cut furrow.

Hearing the terrific barking of dogs, I went to the door. I gazed upon a scene of magnificent beauty—enormous ice-blocks coursing down the river, swirling in swift-frothing eddies. And, sitting on a huge ice-cake, hurtling by in mid-stream, was a bob cat, with a frantic pack of huskies in hot pursuit along the river bank. As though the poor beast had not trouble enough ! The river was clearing fast.

I had become a Sourdough.

To this day the break-up of the Yukon is a momentous occasion. Recalling twenty or more—some came with startling and dramatic suddenness. The ice went out with a roar and navigation opened within a day. In other years there was a gradual transformation of the still silent brooding ugliness of months to a scene of wondrous ever-changing beauty. For several hours loud crackings heralded the slow breaking of the ice. As the water oozed through the cracks, the ice began to move slightly, gradually gaining momentum, to the always awesome climax of massive ice-cakes crunching, grinding, piling, like a stampede of thousands of maddened animals.

Occasionally there were tragedies. One perfect spring

day seven men and a dog left Dawson on a scow laden with supplies to sell to the lower river camps, before the regular steamers could get through. The Yukon in front of the town was clear, and the men followed a loosened ice-jam. Several miles on, at an abrupt turn of the river, the ice jammed again, blocking the passage of the scow. In the meantime another huge ice-jam above Dawson broke loose. Evidently the scow was caught between two mighty ice-flows, for men and scow were never seen again. Days after, the dog, thin, and badly lacerated, limped into Dawson.

For many years Lake Le Barge held back early spring navigation, the ice breaking up more slowly because of the lack of current. A few years ago Herbert Wheeler, president of the White Pass and Yukon Company, acting on the theory that black absorbs the sun rays, spread a forty-foot strip of finely ground lamp black up and down the entire length of the lake. This "Lamp Black Trail" proved a great success, and is repeated each year, with the result that navigation of the Yukon is now one month earlier.

Everyone bets upon the break-up time, betting beginning just after the new year and closing at the middle of April, as any time after that the ice might go out. There is much studying of weather bulletins, and an early spring, which seldom occurs, is favourable to an early break-up.

To-day in Dawson, and even more so in Fairbanks, large betting pools are formed, these running from three thousand to seventy thousand dollars. Books of tickets are printed and sold for a dollar or more a "pasteboard," the guesser recording on his ticket the exact time when he thinks the ice will begin to move in front of Dawson.

The clock polls are favourites, the guesses being marked



Crossing the Klondyke just after the Ice Jam broke.

on the seconds, minutes, or hours of a clock face, which is sketched on heavy cardboard, prices ranging from twenty-five cents to five dollars a guess. In the early days they ran from ten dollars to five hundred dollars. I have known some who have won as much as three thousand dollars. (Once I won a hundred and fifty dollars.)

The greatest care is taken to determine the exact time to the second that the ice begins to move. A flag pole is set firmly in the midway of the river in front of Dawson. A stout cord is connected from the pole to the whistle of the Northern Commercial Company's shops, and then to a clock. The instant the ice moves the pole the cord pulls the whistle and the clock stops.

Hearing the signal, the entire population rushes to the river to watch the ice go out. It is the funeral procession of Old Man Winter, and everyone views his passing with relief. Once again Spring has come to the North, bringing long hours of warm sunshine and growth so quick that it is almost visual. But—best of all—no longer are our homes so remote from the rest of the world, so inaccessible.

Navigation of the Yukon has opened.

CHAPTER XVI

I GO OUT

EVERY day, that spring of '99, numbers of steamers, barges, scows, canoes, and rafts plied up and down the river. Thirty sacks of mail came in on the *Flora*, and among my letters I received one mailed in Chicago the previous August. There was no letter from Will. Evidently he had taken me at my word. More than ever I was determined never to go back to him. The river craft brought in shipments of food, and I was thankful for the change and the summer prices. Fresh milk was now only a dollar a quart—one-fourth the winter price. There was an abundance of fresh fish—salmon being only twenty cents a pound. Eggs, sugar, oranges, lemons, and vegetables were still unobtainable. I could now get a bottle of Castoria for the baby for one dollar and fifty cents; in the winter I had paid the hospital two dollars for a partly filled bottle—the only one in the whole camp.

May merged into June—the loveliest month of all the year in this land of the midnight sun. The trees budded into leaf and the ground and hillsides were carpeted with wild flowers—the dainty pyrola or “shin plant”; the wild Arctic poppy; the showy bluebell, mistakenly called Virginia cowslip; the Jacob’s ladder, unkindly named “skunkweed,” because of its disagreeable odour; the calypso, said to have originated from the ground watered

by the tears shed by the goddess Calypso over the desertion of Odysseus, who was wrecked on her Isles, and to whom she promised immortality if he would marry her ; the delicate coral root and the lady's tresses—all to be found within a few minutes' walk of my cabin.

The men would mind the baby in the evening as I roamed the sandy, sunny hills, or the low boggy places on an orchid hunt. I found many varieties, the most common being the white orchis, with large purple-pink blotches, usually one flower on an erect stem, with two or three sheath-like leaves. I discovered the Siberian orchis, or Franklin lady slipper (so called because it was first mentioned by the botanist of the Franklin expedition), its pure white sack with purple spots inside, and green overhanging lip, matching its two wings. I was thrilled when "There gleamed upon my sight" a pure white orchid, an exquisite single flower of unusual beauty in a setting of long acute bright green leaves, and exhaling a faint delicious fragrance ; but my joy knew no bounds when for the first and only time I came upon a clump of three, a rare find for the most experienced botanist.

I now did my writing in the evening. On the longest day of the year, June 21, 1899, I wrote home :

"It is now ten minutes past ten o'clock in the evening, and I am seated at my table, about four feet from the open window, writing by daylight, or perhaps I should say 'night light,' while the baby is sleeping quietly.

"The song of the hermit thrush, mingled with those of other birds, comes floating in ; the restless river rushes below ; the insects hum about ; and I hear a saucy little squirrel scolding every passer-by.

"The mosquitoes have arrived with their 'summer

bills,' and how they do bite and sting ! Little Lyman is a favourite with them, and his dear little bald pate is covered with lumps.

" He is a ray of sunshine in the camp. Not a day passes that someone does not bring some dainty for 'the kid and his ma.' "

Again I write home—July 4, 1899 :

" It is a gala day in Dawson, and the Canadians are seemingly as delighted to help us celebrate our national holiday as we were to join with them on Dominion Day (July first). In fact, the celebration has been a continued spree, the all-time daylight making many think there is no bedtime.

" The Fourth was heralded in by a gunshot, one minute after twelve midnight, and 10,000 Americans and Canadians paraded up and down singing alternately 'My Country 'tis of Thee,' and 'God Save the Queen.' The terrific uproar of unusual noises frightened hundreds of dogs that had never before heard such a racket, and they rushed madly up and down the streets or jumped into the river, to swim across to more silent places.

" What's a Fourth without fireworks ? We had them too, but the beautiful colour effect was lost entirely in the daylight.

" In the afternoon there was a baseball game on the Sand Bar between the 'Sourdough Stiffs' and the 'Chechakos,' the bats made of boat masts and the balls of twine or wood blocks.

" The thermometer registered 98 above in the middle of the day, but, as usual, the night is getting cool.

" A brickyard four or five miles above us on Swede

Creek is working full blast now, and a bricklayer told me he had a contract for putting up one of the first brick buildings in Dawson at \$30.00 a day.

“Hundreds of people are leaving the country daily, but this creates a greater opportunity for those who remain. We hear rumours of a stampede to Cape Nome on American territory.

“Those who remain are very much for, or very much against, the country. There is no half-way feeling. Yet as a new country it does not present the serious problems that confronted the little band of Pilgrim Fathers who landed at Plymouth Rock. Health, determination, and self-denial are necessary for success here.

“I miss my little ones, but I am planning many things for them.

“The banks of the Yukon are now becoming vividly spotted with a variety of vetches, the golden rod, and the wonderfully brilliant magenta vines.”

One day toward the end of July unexpectedly Father walked in. My joy was unbounded, and his was too, especially when I showed him my beautiful baby son, who immediately held out his little arms to him.

“Daughter, I have come to take you back,” he said, and added quickly, “Have you heard from Will?”

“I have not. Nor do I want to hear from him—nor see him again,” I reiterated emphatically.

“I cannot understand any man allowing his wife to go alone on such a trip as this—not even accepting his legal responsibility,” commented Father.

“As soon as I got your letter telling of the baby I was thunderstruck,” he continued. “Immediately I took

the ringlet of hair to your Mother, saying, 'Look, Susan, see what Martha has sent us. Guess what it is.'

" 'Oh, probably the hair of some little animal.'

"Then I told her. As usual, she cried. I caught the first boat to the Klondyke. I want to take you away from all this hardship."

Suddenly his eyes rested on the wall behind the stove. A horrified look came into them as he pointed to many skin-covered cartons on a shelf there and shouted to my brother :

"George, are you crazy ? Dynamite over a stove !"

We soon assured him that the dangerous-looking packages contained nothing more deadly than our "desiccated vegetables" and powdered soups. We had grown to hate their taste too, "desecrated" we called them now.

We decided to celebrate Father's coming by a good meal. A scow of foodstuffs had come in that very day. My brother George was elected to do the marketing, and he returned with a half-pound of moose liver, to be fried with bacon, one medium-sized onion, and one huge potato, these vegetables costing a dollar apiece. No more could be purchased, and one of each to a family was considered a fair allotment to the many eager buyers.

The cooking of the vegetables was a matter of grave discussion. It was agreed finally to fry the onion and bake the potato, because the latter could then be eaten "skin and all." I had a few bad moments when the thought occurred to me—what if the potato has a bad heart ! Large potatoes sometimes have. But it hadn't, and never was a meal enjoyed more thoroughly—even our dessert, which was brown bread without butter, tea without sugar, rice, and molasses.

Father was eager for me to leave as soon as possible.

"Catalpa Knob is a wonderful place," he said, "healthy for the elder boys, perfect for the baby, much better than this crude cabin. And now that you are determined you will never go back to Will, there's not a reason in the world why you should not come to live in your Father's home again."

Then I told him of the new life I intended to make for myself in this new country—of the placer claims I'd staked on Excelsior Creek. We finally agreed that we would leave these in my brother George's care, and if they did not yield at least ten thousand dollars before the next year I would never mention "Klondyke" again.

We booked our passage on the *Canadian*, which, like the *Utopia* which brought us in, was crowded to the "gunnels" with people, baggage, and boxes of gold dust worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. We had an uneventful journey until we came to Five Fingers. Going down-stream was easy compared to up-stream. Now the swift, seething waters, forced between the narrow rocks, piled high, and our steamer had to mount her way. As she entered one of the whirlpools she lurched toward one Finger and smashed part of her upper deck to kindling. For a second her wreck seemed inevitable, but skilful navigating saved her. Once again, breathing freely, we were on our way.

At Whitehorse we left the steamer and went round the portage in a tram. Being on the outskirts of settlement we were accompanied by an armed escort of Mounted Police, because of our gold dust. I never knew of any gold-stealing hold-ups on hinterland trails or waterways in the early days. This was due probably to the impossibility of getting the "loot" out of the country by the main routes, and any attempt to blaze a new trail, especially

in winter, invariably meant death. Besides, those were the days when the Mounted Police were building up that world-famed reputation—"They always get their man."

At the end of the portage we boarded a small river steamer and had a pleasant trip through the lakes to Bennett, where we took the train over the new narrow-gauge railway to Skagway.

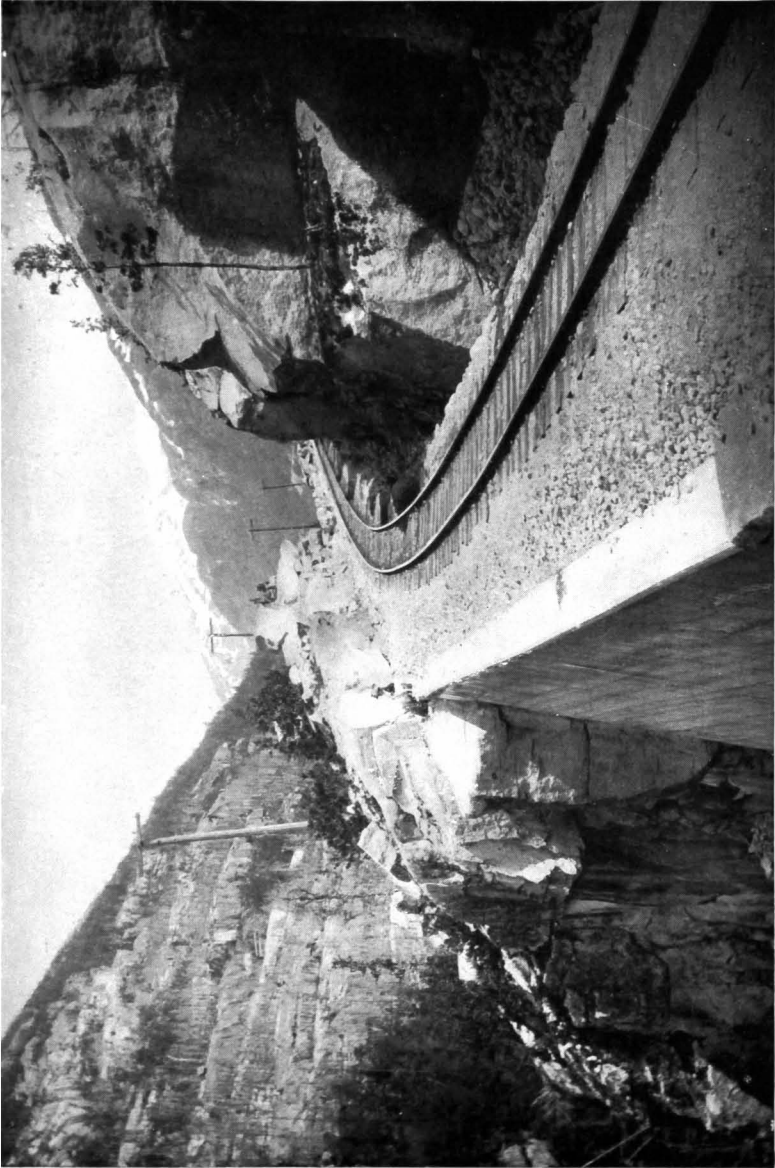
This road was just completed, and literally had been blasted out of the face of the rocky wall of the gorge, on which it gradually wound down to the stony bottoms of the Skagway River.

As we went over the Pass in the train we caught glimpses of the old trail. I recalled vividly the agony of the year before. Once again in my memory I staggered up and up. Dead Horse Gulch brought back to me the screams of dying horses.

But now, exhilarated with deep breaths of bracing air, I could take time to give myself completely to the enjoyment of the constantly changing scenes of splendour before me : glorious snow-topped mountains glinting in the sun, bearing on their bosoms jewels of gleaming glaciers, or draped with countless waterfalls whose lacelike folds fell to the dark tree greenery at their feet.

The small streams which fed the Skagway River were edged with gorgeous golden rod, marsh marigolds, some with blossoms as large as yellow pond lilies. As we descended we noted that the vegetation became more luxuriant ; the old trail was fringed with wild raspberry and currant bushes, scarlet and yellow feathery columbines, sumach, lilies, and sedges, while the chocolate or bronze lily grew in profusion on the outskirts of Skagway.

It took only two hours to make that downward trip from the summit to the town—in complete comfort and



Near Clifton, White Pass and Yukon Route To-day.

enjoyment, over a road on which, only a year ago, thousands had sweated blood for two days.

Skagway, too, had changed. The wild lawless town had become a well-ordered place of ten thousand people, with several first-class hotels and a daily newspaper.

The homeward trip was wonderful—Lyman was, as usual, good, and a general favourite with everybody. Father and I contributed songs and riddles to the programmes which are always part of ship life. And what do you suppose I ordered for my first outside meal? Tenderloin steak, a double order of French fried potatoes, olives, and ice-cream!

CHAPTER XVII

YUKON LURES ME BACK

WE arrived at Catalpa Knob safely. I have no adequate words to describe that home-coming—reunited with my little ones and my dear parents ! The ranch was a gorgeous spectacle of beauty and plenty. The ranch house seemed huge in contrast to my Klondyke cabin home. Father, always a good provider, had grown an abundance on his fertile acres—an abundance not only for his family and friends but even for wayfarers. How different from the North, I thought, where I had to count so carefully each potato, onion, egg, or orange, where the struggle for existence had been such a battle, where Nature's first law—the survival of the fittest—had demanded such a gruelling day-by-day observance.

On "Susie's Farm"—one part of the ranch—there were waving fields of golden grain ready for the cutting ; large orchards of rapidly ripening fruit ; strawberry beds ; berry bushes ; garden plantations, field vegetables ; arbours of grape-vines and windbreaks of mulberry trees. Near the house were fenced meadow pastures for the dairy herd ; beyond, grazing land for the beef cattle and horses—the best breeds in finest condition.

I looked with new respect at the pigs, squealing, grunting, wallowing in their pens. The noises from the poultry runs were almost as a great symphony of music to me, vain old gobblers gobbling, hens cackling, roosters crowing

and ducks quacking as they pursued their luxurious barnyard life of feeding, scratching, drinking, or swimming.

Most fascinating of all were the birds. There had been few in this part of the country until Father came. When the trees, particularly the mulberries, became large and leafy, they began to come every season, to build their nests and bring up young. In a few years the catalpas, orchards, and mulberry trees, their branches almost reaching across the roads, became cathedrals of song—the mocking birds filling the night and early hours of the morning with sweet notes as they mocked the voices of the red bird, the oriole, the meadow lark, and others.

One morning Father got me out of bed at daybreak to hear the birds sing, and as we listened to the mocking bird he told me of its habits. One was swinging from the tip of a catalpa when suddenly it sprang into the air still singing. "Look, daughter, the mocking bird has a soul! See that one spring into the air, with the pure joy of living!" A rare old woodsman—a rare child of nature was Father. In his travels far and wide he had studied bird life and all else in Nature.

Father and Mother were so kind to me. As always, they seemed to understand. There was no trace of long-suffering duty in this consideration. Time and time again Mother said, "Daughter, it is good to have you and your children in your Father's house again. I love to hear the children's happy voices as they laugh and play." And they adored the baby.

In such a setting I suppose I should have been content—yet I wasn't. For a time I rested in the peace, plenty, and security of it. Then came the dark short days of November, when the Kansas winter sets in. Days and days of mournful winds and cyclonic dust storms, which later turned into

howling, blinding blizzards. The snow whirled and drifted. When the helpers left for the barns they had to tie long ropes as guide lines to the doors to enable them to find their way back.

Shut in for days, time began to hang heavily. There were too many long hours—with nothing to do. I brooded upon my troubles. My marriage had been a failure. My Klondyke trip had been a failure. Even my children seemingly had no urgent need of me. Father and Mother surrounded them with every care and kindness. I was only thirty-three years old. So many years stretched ahead of me—interminable—uninteresting. Somehow the mainspring of my life had snapped, my zest for life, for adventure was no more. I lost interest in my clothes—which to a woman of my temperament who loves pretty things is one of the last props. I pulled my hair back from my face and wound it in a tight little knob at the back of my head. My weight went down to ninety pounds. Silently, moodily, I went around—not even rising to the emotional relief of tears.

Then one day I overheard Father and Mother talking in subdued tones—and about me. Mother was saying, “George, what can we do for Martha? We have lost our beautiful daughter. Can you think of anything to arouse her interest?”

I listened no longer. I hurried to my room—flooded with misgivings of ingratitude to my parents. No girl ever had a better father or mother. How infinitely kind they'd been to me. How patient! How self-centred I had been—grieving these dear ones. I looked into my mirror. I saw a prematurely old-looking pinched face—corners of the mouth turned down—hair tightly drawn back like an old woman.

I went to my clothes cupboard. I picked out my prettiest dress—old-fashioned and all as it was. I fluffed my hair and dressed for dinner. I remembered one of Mother's slogans of my childhood, "Daughter, always keep the corners of your mouth turned up."

During dinner I turned to Father, saying, "Will you buy me some new clothes?"

"Anything you want, daughter," was his quick reply.

The following week he took me to Chicago on a shopping trip. We called on Father Purdy, who pleaded with me to take Will back, but I had closed for ever that chapter of my life. He offered to help with the education of the children, an offer I accepted later for Warren.

I began to get a new perspective of life—a new ideal. I persuaded myself I had much to live for. I had three sons. I became eager to live, to accomplish something worth while, something of which my three boys would be proud. This is still the dominant motive of my life.

I tried so hard to fall in with my parents' scheme of life for me—tried to repay their kindness in this way. Always my restlessness triumphed, leaving me with the feeling that I was marking time instead of marching on. Once again my eyes turned North. Once again I felt its mysterious drawing power.

The recurring "wanderlust"! I suppose if one is born with a restless urge for travel and adventure, although it may be quieted for a time by a form of living or force of circumstances, it is seldom suppressed.

If I should tell you some quests that are beckoning me now, and which I hope to pursue before I die, I think you might say, "Oh, be your age!" And I should answer, "You know, specialists tell us that age is not a matter of years—but glands."

I could not shake off the lure of the Klondyke. My thoughts were continually of that vast new rugged country, its stark and splendid mountains, its lordly Yukon River, with all its streams and deep blue lakes, its midnight sun, its gold and green of summer, its never-ending dark of winter, illumined by golden stars and flaming northern lights. What I wanted was not shelter and safety, but liberty and opportunity.

As the days went on, with the straining impatience of a prisoner I waited for the letter telling me of my investments, of my Klondyke placer diggings. It came in June. The Klondyke had not failed me. As soon as I could, accompanied by Warren, a boy of twelve years of age, I was speeding to the North. Father not only sent me with his backing and blessing, but made plans to follow with Mother, Donald, and Lyman next year, to bring in machinery for a saw and quartz mill.

In the interim I formed a claim-working partnership with two men, and established myself at Gold Hill, a mining camp near Dawson. We built a cabin, storehouse, and bunkhouse for a crew of sixteen men who worked for us. It wasn't a life of leisure for me, as I did the cooking for the entire party. Most of our provisions were still in dried form, and I racked my brains to make the meals tasty and nourishing. I did my own washing and that of Warren as well as the cleaning. I am the type of house-keeper who likes to get most of the housework done in the morning, so I arose at five o'clock. We had the "big meal" in the middle of the day, after which I took a short nap, arranged a simple supper, and had the evening free to read, talk business, or write in a journal I started, and which I have kept ever since—thirty-six years.

In 1901, true to their promise, my family came in,

Father bringing the first two-stamp Tremaine Prospecting Mill, a sawmill, and a hydraulic monitor. The two mills were set up on the left bank of the Klondyke River, about a mile from Dawson, on thirty acres of land, the surface rights of which we purchased from the Canadian Government. The hydraulic outfit was installed at Excelsior Creek, where I had staked my first claims when I came over the Trail of '98. We also built a beautiful six-roomed cabin which we called "Mill Lodge," a number of one-roomed cabins, and an assay office. When Father and the family left next year they took Warren with them, and Father Purdy entered him in the Junior Department of Notre Dame. Father made me the manager of the mills.

The fall and winter passed uneventfully, but toward spring there was trouble with the mill hands, the chief complaint of my foreman, Brockman, being that he wasn't "goin' to be run by a skirt." This was brought to a head because I had spoken to him about the careless throwing around of the mill tools, peevies, wrenches, wheelbarrows, and other equipment. Being a person who likes order in all things, I did not think I was unreasonable. I felt it was just as easy, when finished with a tool, to put it in its proper place. Our wages and working hours were identical with those of other mills. I had the right to expect the usual efficiency of mill workmen. When I first spoke to him I expected that he would agree with me and see to it that the workmen were more careful. To my surprise he growled, "You rich folks is always grouchin' and pinchy. Ain't you got a whole storehouse full of tools?"

Not trusting myself to say anything at the moment, I walked away. I was very anxious to avoid all trouble as it was the beginning of the summer season; logs were pouring in from up-river almost faster than they could be

handled. I had all that I could do with the supervising, and checking in and out of two mill crews, as well as the checking of logs coming in and timber going out. I had also taken over the selling end, as my only salesman had to be let out because of drunkenness. Night after night I was up until two and three o'clock, scaling and seeing that loads left the yard. I was at work again by seven.

I talked the matter over with Donald, a lad only nine years of age, but unusually practical. I asked him to see that all the tools were put in their proper places every night. Matters were not satisfactory, and although I could point to nothing definite, I knew my men were not giving me their best service. I did not want to find fault or nag without good reason. One morning, as I was returning to my cabin, I picked up a hammer, a little farther on an oil can, then a wrench. Donald evidently had not made a clean-up, which surprised me as he was a loyal little worker, especially when interested. I asked him about it at breakfast time.

"I have always put everything away at night, but sometimes lately I have had to put lots of tools away twice," he answered.

So that was it, I was up against deliberate trouble making.

Before the mill started up I called Brockman into my office. I explained quietly that I was working for others just as he was; that I would like the men to be more careful about putting away tools; that only that morning one of the iron wheelbarrows had been found under the brush in the slough back of the mill.

"I'm sick of bein' ordered about by a damn skirt, and I'm through," he said angrily as he walked away, a string of oaths fairly making the air blue.

"Very well, I will make up your time, and you can come and get your cheque," I called after him.

While doing this I heard a shuffling of feet. On looking up I saw the whole crew but one, headed by Brockman, facing me. "If you don't take back what you said about us bein' careless of tools and shirkin' on the job," he spat at me in a most impudent manner, "we'll all leave now, and that'll close down your little old tin-pot mill this season."

With sinking heart but indifferent manner, I asked each in turn if he agreed with Brockman, and received in reply a sullen "Yes" or a shamefaced nod. "Very well. I'm sorry to see men act so foolishly, but there is nothing for me to do but let you go. I am responsible for this property, and men who will not do their duty cannot remain on the place." Then, calling Donald, I said to him, "Go to the mill with these men while they get together their belongings, then come back with them and their cheques will be ready."

Brockman started to talk, but I stood up, looked him squarely in the eye, and said, "You have your cheque. Get out of here and never set foot on this property again."

The men came back shortly. Some seemed inclined to talk, but I refused to listen.

"Where's Ed?" I asked, and was handed a shingle on which was scrawled roughly, "Please send my pay by Jack. Sgnd. Ed." This was done. So Ed hadn't the nerve to face me—to stay with me, or to stand out against me.

It was the height of the busy season. Another raft of logs was due immediately. Orders were coming in beyond my fondest hopes, and here we were closed down. I was discouraged, exhausted, and near tears. I might have given

in too, when I felt a pat on my shoulder. That nine-year-old boy of mine was saying, "Never mind, mother. I'll work for you."

In a few minutes we were in the mill, banking the fires. Looking up, I saw Sergeant Smith of the Mounted Police, and asked quickly, "What's the matter?"

"That's what I came here to find out. The O.C. sent me. One of your men has just been to the barracks to tell us you might need some help."

It was Ed, I thought; a decent kid after all. Didn't have the nerve to come out in the open but was not going to see any real harm done.

I told the sympathetic sergeant my story; that at the moment I didn't need his help; that I was going to town to rustle another gang, and if I did need help I'd phone the barracks. Smith, however, insisted on leaving a man at the place while I went to Dawson.

Early in the morning, about two, when the last load of sluice-box lumber had left the yard (during the summer months in Yukon the heavy hauling is always done at night, when the rays of the sun are not so fiercely hot), Donald and I again carefully banked the fires and a sleepy boy and his tired mother were eating a few sandwiches before turning in. Looking out of the window I caught sight of a man going into the mill, bending over as he walked. We ran out, but the intruder was nowhere to be found. Next morning everything at the mill seemed as usual, and we decided that the late-caller was probably one of the former workmen returning to get something he had left in his hasty departure the day before.

The news of my labour troubles soon spread throughout the country, and within three days I had a complete crew and was ready to start up again. Brockman did everything

in his power to prevent men from working for me, but they only laughed at his efforts.

All was in readiness to start. "Let 'er go easy, boys!" called my new foreman, Dandy Smith. There was a whirl of wheels, followed by a sudden rending splitting noise. The little engine was running wild. In a second the power was turned off. We all stood looking at one another in wonder, until brought to our senses by hearing Dandy say, "Damn the man!" A hurried examination showed the trouble. The bearing caps on the main drive shaft had been loosened and the bearings and oil cups filled with steel filings! Had the machinery been going full tilt it would have been ruined, and the whole summer's business lost.

We notified the police at once. All former employés were questioned, and all, save Brockman, who was living alone in a cabin not far from the mill, were able to give satisfactory accounts of themselves. He might have been the prowler we had seen two nights before, but I could never prove it. He made so many threats of "getting me" that the men finally informed the police, who told him he'd better get out of the country by "the down-river path."

He obeyed (as everybody did an order from the Mounties). Later I was told, as he shoved his boat from the wharf, he shouted back, "I'll get that hell cat yet! Anyway, me for God's country!" The threat still hangs over my head, although I "should worry," as long as the Mounted Police stand guard over the far-flung Yukon Territory.

Neither did Brockman receive the welcome he expected in "God's country," for I heard that when he landed on American soil the sheriff was waiting for him, and took him into custody to answer a charge of long standing.

CHAPTER XVIII

DAWSON'S FIRST AND ONLY HOLD-UP

IT was during the winter of 1901 when I was still running the sawmill that Dawson's first and only hold-up occurred—one sixty-below-zero January night at two o'clock. A heavy fog hung over the town like a soft grey blanket. Electric lights blinked suddenly at passers-by and as quickly winked out. Now and then footsteps crunched through the snow with ghostly sounds. Front Street, usually teeming with the night life of the dance halls, saloons, gambling joints, was deserted. The terrific cold had driven most of the night-hawks to their cabins.

Listlessly the dealer at the roulette table in the old Dominion Saloon rolled the little black ball without a bet being made. Black-jack dealers were making phoney bets with the boosters, who sat around waiting for suckers who failed to appear. A few miners lounged at the bar, buying occasional drinks for the dance hall girls, who crowded about the huge Klondyke stove, which blazed and roared until its sides were a dull red.

Suddenly the rear door of the saloon was flung open. Swiftly and silently two masked men stepped into the room. "Hands up!" shouted the taller of the two, as he and his companion covered the company with a Winchester rifle and a Colt six-shooter. Amazed, there was nothing to do but obey. Swiftly the smaller of the two bandits emptied the cash drawer of the bar, the tills of

the gambling tables, and went through the pockets of the victims. The women, frightened and whimpering, huddled together. One screamed as the short bandit approached them. "Another yap out of you," he said with an ugly gesture of the Colt revolver, "and you'll never roll another sucker. Come through, and be quick about it."

The job finished, the hold-up men backed to the door, the leader threatening, "I'll croak the first damn one of you who moves," and then they disappeared into the fog as silently as they had come.

Simultaneously the first hold-up victims leaped into action. The Mounted Police were informed, and the man-hunt was on. The desperadoes had the advantage of the fog as well as a few minutes' start. To make a clean getaway they would have to travel either up-trail to the coast, or down-trail to Alaska—a new trail was certain death.

The police at both boundaries were warned immediately by wire. It was impossible to send much of a description of the men, as their faces had been completely masked and they had worn ordinary clothes with no distinguishing marks. The one point of agreement was that one was tall, the other short. Indignation was general, for violation of the law under the Canadian flag, indeed under the very noses of the Red Coats, was unheard of. It wasn't good form. It simply wasn't done. The thieves had no friends or sympathizers in the whole town.

A house to house search was instituted at once, and within a couple of days a tall, bland, baby-faced gentleman, named Tommerlin, who could not give a satisfactory account of his whereabouts the night of the hold-up, was held by the Mounties. (It was acknowledged that their efforts were considerably assisted by information given by a dashing brunette.)

Under the promise of partial immunity from punishment, Tommerlin turned King's evidence, confessed he was implicated, and surrendered his share of the loot. He said he was one of a band of three, the others being Harris and Brophy. Harris had planned the whole thing to the minutest detail, but at the last minute had lost his nerve and wouldn't go through with it.

Disgust at the lack of loyalty of his companions undoubtedly excited the sympathy of the public for Brophy, the little bandit in some hide-out. Double-crossing a partner is not "playing the game" in the North, or as Service has aptly put it, "A promise made is a debt unpaid, and the trail has its own stern code." Many were heard to say openly that they hoped Brophy would never be captured. There were strong expressions of disapproval of Tommerlin, who had "sold out" to save himself. This might have had something to do with the fact that the search went on for months.

One morning as I was finishing the breakfast dishes I heard the door creak (we never locked our doors in the old days). Turning round I saw a bullet-headed little man peering into the room and casting suspicious glances about.

"Are you alone?" he asked in a voice hardly above a whisper.

"Yes. Come in. Close the door."

He stealthily closed it, then opened it quickly and started to back out as Donald came into the room.

"I thought you said you were alone."

"Well, I am, except for this child. What's the matter with you? What do you want?"

"Food. Only food. I haven't had anything to eat for three days."

I had plenty of that. There was cold ham, muffins,

and coffee left over from breakfast. It took only a few minutes to warm the coffee, and the stranger was soon devouring wolfishly.

Fascinated, Donald watched him. "Are you very poor? Can't you get work? Where did you come from? Where are you going?" he asked, almost in one breath, as children do.

"Donald, get at your lessons," I said peremptorily, before the man could answer.

From the moment of his entrance, his stealthy manner, his evident fear of meeting anyone, aroused my suspicions that he might be Brophy, the much-hunted bandit. I wanted to get rid of him, yet I didn't want to give him up. Without further word I did up a parcel of bread, butter, ham, tea, and sugar, and, handing it to him, said, "I am not sure who you are, and I don't want to know. But now that you are warm and well fed, take my advice and mush on."

With a grateful "Thank you," and a look that haunted me for several days, he went out.

Late that night a loud knock at my door brought me to my feet with a jump out of bed. Hastily donning a wrapper and slippers I opened it, to see a mounted policeman. Looking around, he said, "I take it you have no strangers here." By this time Donald, in wide-eyed amazement, was standing beside me. He asked for the keys to the assay office and quartz mill, which I promptly handed over. While we were awaiting his return, Donald snuggled up very closely to me and whispered, "Mother, will they get the man?"

"What man, son?"

"The poor little man you fed."

"Who do you think he is, Donald?"

“Brophy, the hold-up man, mother. He stayed in our old Carmichael cabin two nights, and I heard some men at Gilkers talking about him. But I won’t tell. It was mean of that old, fat Tommerlin to tell on him. He was a coward.”

Marvelling at the child’s sympathy and understanding, I was wondering what I would say when the policeman returned, especially if he should question me.

But he didn’t. As he handed me my keys he warned, “Better keep your doors locked at all hours. A tough character has been seen hanging around this neighbourhood.”

Shortly Brophy was captured at the Old Stockade Roadhouse on Bonanza Creek. He had been my visitor. He was tried, found guilty and given a life sentence. Harris got ten years’ hard labour, while Tommerlin, the informer, was deported to the United States territory, from whence he came.

Brophy absolutely refused to divulge the hiding-place of his share of the loot, several thousand dollars in gold dust. Possibly some day some lucky person will discover the cache of jewellery, money, and gold dust, or maybe it will remain where it was hidden until the end of time.

Friends have asked me many times if I were not frightened. But I wasn’t. I would have been in Chicago—Montreal—Ottawa, but we Yukoners, who have been guarded so long by the Mounted Police, have the feeling that we are immune from the dangers that beset most communities. Their very presence seems to eliminate murders, robberies, and violence, which were much more prevalent in Alaska.

To this day we never think of locking our doors, except when strangers are in town.

CHAPTER XIX

DAWSON SETTLES DOWN

I SHALL always remember the first three years of the present century—years which passed so quickly that, when a weekly mail service was established in Dawson, I had not been conscious of the need of it. Of course it was not all easy going, and there were times of “tough sledding,” but there were no tragedies. I liked the life, the vigorous challenge of it—the work and play of it. I had faith in myself—that this tide in the affairs of my life would lead me on to fortune. My first claims proved to be rich—real pay dirt. If only I had had the sense to cash in on them I should be wealthy to-day. Instead, I bought other claims . . . grubstaked men . . . but why tell the old, old story ?

I had indeed made a new life for myself. Except for my relatives I was entirely out of touch with Chicago friends and associations. I applied for my divorce—received it with no difficulty—and with what meant more to me than all else, the unanimous approval of my family. I had Donald and Lyman with me, the former going to public school, the latter, when he was four, to an excellent kindergarten. I had a capable French housekeeper, wife of the mill watchman.

Donald received the most expert teaching in the Dawson public school, as the finest teachers from every part of Canada sought the chance of going to Yukon, because of the large salaries and adventurous atmosphere.

One day in early spring Donald came home from school at noon, feeling badly because of the death of a schoolmate—a little negro boy. “There won’t be a flower at the funeral,” he mourned, “and he was the whitest boy in the class. I told the fellows I was sure you’d get some flowers—you always have them around.”

“But, Donald—where?” I asked.

“I dunno—maybe you could make some of paper.”

I have always taken my children’s reasonable requests seriously—and the boy had paid me an unconscious tribute. Looking toward the hills, I noted they were faintly green. Maybe the crocuses were coming out. I walked to them, and searching in the grass found some buds. Gathering these I hurried to the general store—bought a yard or so of mosquito netting. Through each mesh I put a single stem, fastening it securely with a darning needle and thick thread.

After school I called the boys, sent them to the hills, and they came back with quantities of buds. We worked diligently, and by night had the entire netting covered. We placed it on newspapers in a warm room, sprinkled it with water, and in the morning the buds had flowered. The little schoolmate was carried to his grave—his small coffin covered with a beautiful pall.

Father Purdy had persuaded me to allow him to take full responsibility for Warren, and he had now entered him at Annapolis, Maryland. To-day I feel I should have followed my intuition and urge to keep him, if for no other reason than that of his health. Yukon is noted for its lack of sickness, so much so that doctors complain that if it weren’t for new babies and accidents there would be little need for them. In pioneer days the larger part of their incomes was from mining investments. No normal

mother, if the economic situation can be adjusted, should give up her child against her will.

The sawmill made me plenty of money. I was continually sending for furniture and other things, which I selected from Eaton's and Simpson's catalogues, to make Mill Lodge more comfortable and attractive. I was able to buy the most beautiful clothes—a yearly Paris gown from Madame Aubert, who visited the world's centre of fashion annually to choose the loveliest and latest creations for the women of Dawson, who thought nothing in those days of paying five hundred dollars for a gown. I also ordered many clothes from White's in Woodstock, Ontario. I sent my exact measurements, a photograph, and a description of my colouring. They sent me a princess slip, which they asked to have fitted by a local dressmaker, and samples of various silks and woollen suitings, and style books. I used to step right into these clothes—the results never failing to live up to the fashion sheet pictures.

My business brought me in touch with all kinds of people—good and bad. I recall one young woman who was one of my customers. She ran a questionable boarding-house. She and her boarders were arrested on the usual charge of selling liquor without a licence. Their lawyer advised them to plead guilty and pay the customary fifty dollar fine. After the usual question of "Guilty or Not Guilty?" to the consternation of the court she broke out with a fine scorn, "Me plead guilty? Why should I plead guilty, when half the men in this town are living in open adultery? There's so-and-so, and so-and-so (pointing to individuals in the courtroom), and you know, Your Honour . . ." but the judge stopped her. There was a hurried adjournment of the case, and it was only the fear of the blue ticket which made her finally plead guilty.

One time she came to me with a pathetic story. She had had a letter from her Mother, saying she was coming to visit her and was bringing her grandson. "My own little boy," she added confidentially. "Saturday and Sunday are apt to be wild days at my place; and will you help me and ask them to visit you week-ends? I'll pay you anything you want," she said.

"Oh, I couldn't make money that way," I answered quickly. She turned away, all the misery of the world in her eyes.

"But wait, you haven't let me finish. Why not rent one of my mill cabins for your mother and son? Your little fellow can play with my boys, and I'll see that your mother has plenty to do over the week-end."

"God bless you! God bless you!" she said as she walked away, the tears running down her face.

As the gold dust grew less plentiful the wild frontier life of Dawson's stampede days subdued. No longer were there miners who thought nothing of a thousand dollars a night for champagne, who "set 'em up" round after round. Convivial celebrations still continued to be popular, and were particularly rampant over the New Year. Some of the early day party songs of Sourdoughs are recalled almost in the light of traditions at their present-day gatherings. The man who had "never refused a drink since 1882" was only beginning to be in good form when he had the urge to sing "The Harp that once through Tara's Halls." The Scotsman insisted on "Loch Lomond," the Irishman, "Killarney," and the Frenchman, "Alouette," while one now nationally known Sourdough claimed exclusive singing rights to "Annie Laurie."

They did the most ridiculous things. One winter morning we women looked out in the twilight to see a

well-known citizen, "after a night of it," dressed in pyjama pants, evening coat, high silk hat, parading the town arm-in-arm with a red-headed woman of the demi-monde, she wearing full evening dress and a merry widow hat and carrying an umbrella.

Revellers, often becoming lonesome for other friends, aroused them and carried them in their night clothes into bars.

Once they tied the doorknob of a very nervous hotel resident to another doorknob across the hall. They then let loose a cat and dog in the corridor. Hearing the wild commotion both occupants rushed to their doors, tugged frantically, each closing more securely the door across the hall.

Several men made pathetic efforts to set up homes. One man, after living with a girl for many years, decided to marry her. He had struck it rich, and they were going to do it in style. They had Madame Aubert send to Paris for a wedding gown, which came over the trail carefully packed in a zinc-lined box, the express alone amounting to one hundred and fifty dollars.

Another, described as "lousy with money," was tricked into lavishly financing a pretty but unscrupulous girl, who said she was with child by him and wanted to go out to her home, where she would like their marriage to take place. He was so pleased, especially about the baby, and was cruelly disappointed when he discovered she had "double crossed" him to get money to give to another man.

Wanting a homey cabin of his own, another miner paid a housekeeper her weight in gold—one hundred and twenty-three pounds—and when she left him she had a poke worth twenty thousand dollars.

There was plenty of good wholesome fun—dancing

being the favourite winter diversion, and many a good time I had at "Honour yer pardners all ! Grand right and left."

"The big social event of the season," as the society editors would say, was the annual ball of the Arctic Brotherhood—membership in it being the most coveted and greatest honour that could befall a Sourdough, as he had to prove that he had been "inside the watershed prior to the first day of July 1897." This fraternity built the A.B. Hall, one of the finest buildings in the country, the hardwood for the floor being imported at an enormous cost.

And what an orchestra ! Herr Freimuth, the leader, was a graduate violinist of the Conservatory of Leipzig ; Signor Lopez, the cornet soloist, had played at the Royal Opera House, Madrid ; Telgmann had been first clarinet in the Boston Symphony Orchestra, other members each having attained some musical distinction.

What a colourful assemblage ! The Mounted Police in their brilliant uniforms, the women in their magnificent Paris gowns, and the members of the Brotherhood and other Sourdoughs (mostly men of magnificent physique) in the most formal "black and white," even white kid gloves, quite evidently not comfortable but definitely very proper.

At these affairs might be seen such men as Commissioner William Ogilvie, the second Governor of the Yukon, one of the straightest men who ever staked a claim, an explorer, prospector, untiring land surveyor, and good fellow. He was better at finding gold than keeping it. It is certain that he could have had the famous Bonanza fraction, generally conceded as the richest piece of ground for its size in the world, discovered by Dick Lowe, who was surveying for him at the time. Ogilvie let Lowe take it, and he washed out of it over seven hundred thousand dollars of gold dust in six weeks.

It was at an A.B. ball that Alex MacDonald, the "Big Moose," sometimes called "King of the Klondyke," introduced to Dawson his young and beautiful wife. MacDonald was one who struck it rich—his pack train sometimes bringing from his claims sacks of gold dust worth three hundred thousand dollars.

I think of other personalities who added to the gaiety of these occasions. Joe Boyle, to go down in history as "Saviour of Roumania," "Duff" Pattullo, now Premier of British Columbia, "Foxy" Grandpa Walsh, later Governor of Alberta. Walsh was a lawyer and a fine scout. He ran for Mayor of Dawson, but was defeated by a saloon keeper, Jimmy McDonald, which induced the Commissioner's secretary, "Clemmie" Burns (now Supreme Court Librarian, Ottawa), to remark, "That's how much the mob appreciates real worth."

There were two Pattullos in the North—"T. D.," the younger, now the Premier of British Columbia. He was in the Government service, resigned, and went into the brokerage business. His elder brother, "J. D.," was a King's Counsellor, and was affectionately known as "Pat" by his familiars. The Pattullo family also played important parts in the early gold rush days of British Columbia, and an uncle of the two Pattullo boys struck it rich on Williams Creek, in the Cariboo gold rush of the '60's.

Another popular winter diversion was skating and ice carnivals. I remember a bitter controversy waged over the matter of allowing the dance-hall girls to buy season tickets to the new rink. The final decision was in the affirmative, this accompanied by an emphatic warning that if any girl were caught smoking or using profane language in the ladies' dressing-room her ticket would be forfeited. The fancy dress carnivals were equal to and even surpassed

those in other parts of the world. There was every kind of costume from "Night" (long black dress with silver paper stars), "Day" (blue dress with gold suns) and "Bowery Girls" to "Fairy Queens."

Odd evenings were filled in with card parties—progressive whist, euchre, and 500, and bridge whist was introduced at this time. Poker never went out of fashion, and, as in stampede days, all-day and night games are a part of Yukon life to-day.

In summer tennis was the chief women's sport, the long light making play possible until ten or eleven. We organized "mixed" tournaments, which added teas, suppers, and dances to our social life.

Sometimes we women Sourdoughs like to boast how popular we were with the menfolk. But again I owe it to the girls of to-day to admit that we did not have the competition they have. Indeed, in those days, we single women, with homes in which to entertain, were so few that our number could be counted on the fingers of one hand, and I don't think it would take all the fingers. Scarcely a fortnight passed that I did not have a proposal of marriage. If I missed I thought that I was falling off and getting old. I've had a number of men tell me they "couldn't live without me," but most of these same men are alive to-day, all happily married with families.

CHAPTER XX

I BECOME MRS. GEORGE BLACK

ONE day it became necessary for me to consult a lawyer as one of my mill hands had bought goods for himself and charged them to me. George Black, of an old New Brunswick family, a Sourdough, who had caught the gold fever and had come to the country in 1897, was recommended. I liked him at once. He was good-looking and clever. As we talked I learned he was interested in politics, and had a sincere desire to serve the Yukon—to devote himself to the development and tremendous possibilities of this great, rich part of Canada.

I invited him to my home. The affairs of human beings move quickly in the North, and within two weeks he proposed. I was not eager to marry again, yet I liked him more than any man I knew. He was attractive, serious, and a good companion. He was an outdoor man, a real sportsman, and a lover of nature. From the beginning he was interested in my boys, and won them completely.

He always included them in our outdoor expeditions. Together we studied the birds, canoed, and tramped far and wide, as he photographed our feathered friends—with fine results. We learned their migratory habits, followed their flights, and there is no finer place in all the world to see the birds at their best than the valley of the Yukon,

especially in the spring, when they have their new and beautiful dresses, are ready to make love, go housekeeping, and raise a family.

As soon as the ice-locked rivers are gradually released from the grip of winter by the longer stay of the sun, and the water shows around the edges of the lakes, there begins that wonder of wonders—the five-thousand-mile northerly flight of the migratory birds. They come from their southern winter homes to the vast uninhabited stretches of the Arctic lands, where, unharried by hunters, they can raise their families in peace and plenty.

First come a few stragglers, or scouts, usually mallard drakes. But the main flight never arrives until the ice moves out of the Klondyke River some time in May. Many a morning we have crawled from our warm, comfortable beds at two o'clock to watch this miracle, for it can only be seen during the early hours of the cold grey dawn. By five o'clock it is over for the day, and scarcely a bird appears in the sky.

While it lasts it is fast and furious. Before it is light enough to distinguish individual birds, we hear the swish of onrushing wings, the continuous honking and calling of the geese and cranes. Then shadowy forms appear, and at daybreak the sky is literally lined with the regular formation of flock after flock of noisy, cackling Canada geese, sandhill cranes, swans, silently flying ducks of all kinds—mallards, pintails, widgeons, teal, mergansers, bluebills, harlequins, shovellers, spoonbills, old squaws, butter balls, gold eyes, and, last of all, the old black surf scooters.

Usually at the beginning of the flight the males and females come in separate flocks, all in perfect plumage, every shining white, black, brown, grey, or iridescent feather in place. Towards the end mixed flocks and pairs

appear—this stream of birds flowing every morning until the end of May.

Following behind the bigger birds come plovers of various kinds—jacksnipes, dowitchers, sandpipers, and waders.

Many swarm over the marshes, stop to rest and feed, but the great flight goes farther north into the land of the midnight sun—the Yukon flats above the Arctic Circle, and all over the Arctic slope of the continent.

Robins, yellow warblers, several kinds of thrush, western bluebirds, juncos, blackbirds, martins, and humming birds, also innumerable swallows—ground, cliff, bank, and barn—come each summer in ever-increasing numbers, mate, nest, rear their young, and fill the air with sweet songs, then follow the sunshine south, before Jack Frost puts in an appearance. Swallows do not drift away leisurely as other birds, but on a fine August morning swarm together in thousands on telegraph and telephone wires, then, suddenly, as if at some mysterious word of command, the whole flock takes the air, not one to be seen until the following spring.

As elsewhere in Canada very few small birds remain throughout the winter. Among those that have no fear of the long, dark, cold days and nights are the small black water ousels, which flit about any open bit of water just as jauntily in sixty below as in mild weather; chickadees, snow buntings, Arctic three-toed and northern hairy woodpeckers; occasionally grosbeaks, crossbills, and Bohemian waxwings; big black ravens and Canada jays or “camp robbers.” The latter are all that the name implies, for just as the camp-fire is started, or at the slightest sign of food, they appear seemingly from nowhere. They become very tame, and if not startled, perch contentedly on our

hands to be fed bits of food, bread, bacon rind, and other table scraps.

Our many shooting expeditions gave us close-up views of the kinds and habits of wild ducks. Often we arose in the "wee sma' hours" and concealed ourselves in the duck blind. Many times I've listened to those weird sounds of earth as the darkness changed to light. I've watched the slow-changing beauty of the sky turning from midnight blue to battleship grey, silver, rose, and turquoise, and vivid crimson, as a red-faced sun rises to begin his day's work of melting away the last snow and ice. With the daybreak came the birds, flock after flock tearing into the decoys. Did I shoot? Not often. I was too interested in watching the others.

We were never game hogs, and the comparatively few birds we shot were eaten by ourselves or given to friends. Although the spring flight of ducks is considerably smaller now than formerly, it is not because of the numbers killed at any time by northern hunters. There are more ducks slaughtered in one day at many California gun clubs than are shot in the whole season in Yukon.

As soon as the ducklings are able to fly, which is about August tenth, the ducks begin to leave the country. By September first, which, under the Migratory Birds Act, is the opening of the shooting season, they have nearly all gone, and their fall migration is not by way of the valley of the Yukon River.

We learned, too, about the non-migratory game birds—the many varieties of ptarmigan, sometimes called Arctic grouse. By observation we found that the willow ptarmigan, in winter, turns pure white, except for the black tips of tail feathers and wing quills, and the rock ptarmigan, entirely white, making them almost indis-

tinguishable in their snow-covered haunts. In other seasons the plumage changes to mottled brown and white, which blends with rocks and brush. This colour protection is about their only defence against their natural enemies. Like grouse, they build ground nests, lay twelve to fifteen eggs, and so fall easy prey to many marauders. In the old days it was no uncommon sight to see thousands of these beautiful birds in almost every part of the country. To-day they are comparatively rare.

Other species of grouse abundant in Yukon are the ruffed grouse, the gamest and most beautiful of all the family ; the Canada grouse, commonly called spruce grouse or fool hen ; the Richardson grouse, locally known as the blue grouse, a fine bird with plumage of dull greyish-blue, weighing from five to six pounds, and frequenting the heavily timbered mountain sides ; and the Columbian sharp-tail grouse or prairie chicken, seen occasionally in small flocks.

Waging continuous war upon these permanent feathered residents, both game and song birds, are wolves, coyotes (there should be a bounty on these in Yukon), and many birds of prey. The latter include : owls of all kinds, the Pacific, horned, snowy, great-grey, northern, spotted, saw-whet, and pigmy ; the Alaska bald and golden eagle frequenting high cliffs along the rivers ; and many species of hawk-pigeon, duck, western, goshawk, and gyrfalcon.

But most murderous of all are the thousands of ravenous gulls which make their way miles and miles into the interior of both Alaska and Yukon, nest in ever-increasing numbers and ruthlessly and wantonly destroy countless game birds each year. Ducks' nests are regular lunch counters for these voracious birds, and, impartially, they gobble eggs and nestlings. Often I have seen a gull swoop down on a

mother duck with a flock of little ones, seize the downy ducklings and devour them. They comb the mountain sides for ptarmigan and grouse eggs, and break down the mud nests of the cliff swallows, gluttonously devouring eggs and baby birds. Seagulls may be useful along the coast and in harbours as scavengers (I doubt it), but they are a terrible menace to the nesting birds, much worse than crows, the killing of which game conservationists encourage, while they protect the murderous gulls.

What wonderful times we had ! So fond did the boys become of our new friend that they began to ask, "Mother, when are you going to marry Mr. Black ?" and I would answer, "Did George Black give you two-bits to-day ?"

For once in my life I let my head govern my heart. It took me two years to make up my mind.

We were married on August 1, 1904, at my home, Mill Lodge ; my husband's parents, his uncle, his brother, and my boys and a very few dear friends being present at the wedding.

My wedding dress, made by Redfern, New York, was a very beautiful creation of pearl-grey velvet, and I laugh to myself now as I recall it. The floor-length skirt, lined with blush-pink silk, was gathered into a sixteen-inch yoke, with rows and rows of shirring, and fell in a short train. The high-necked bodice was fashioned with a lace yoke over blush-pink silk, the leg-o'-mutton sleeves being trimmed with lace and pink silk piping, fastened tightly at the wrist. I carried a "granny muff" of flat pink roses, with long loops of pale pink ribbon reaching almost to the floor, while cosily nestled among the roses were three small birds, one white, one pink, and one pale lemon. I wore a merry widow hat made entirely of pink roses, the brim raised at the left side and three little birds like those on the

muff reposing under it. It all sounds too ridiculous now, but at the time the outfit was considered very swanky.

Among other dresses in my trousseau was a white panne velvet made in princess style, low on the shoulders, and finished with a fichu of real lace, which had trimmed mother's wedding gown. I shall never forget wearing it for the first time at the "Bal Poudre" in Dawson, that winter of 1904. I had powdered my hair, built it high on my head with innumerable puffs, and made up my face with rouge and black court plaster patches. An old-fashioned tiny lace fan that had belonged to Grandmother Munger was the finishing touch. As I entered the hall, Madame Bergholz, mother of United States Consul in Dawson, sitting next to Mrs. Wood, wife of Col. Z. T. Wood, O.C. North-West Mounted Police in Yukon, said, "What a beautiful woman! Who is she?" and, receiving the reply, "Mrs. George Black," remarked, "Impossible! I've known her for years." Mrs. Wood thought the joke too good to keep from me.

Early in the fall we moved from Mill Lodge into Dawson. From that time on life seemed to flow as easily and normally as it does with the average married couples. The boys loved their new father. Lyman, only five, immediately called himself Lyman Black, and later, when he enlisted, asked his stepfather if this might be legalized, permission being gladly given.

No father could have guided or trained young boys better than George Black. He taught them to handle a canoe, make camp, shoot, and fish. He was a real chum with them. I shall never cease to be grateful to him for his guidance of the physical, mental, and moral training of my sons at an age when every boy needs a father.

I am a firm believer in the principle that married

couples, from the beginning, should be in complete harmony in religion, in country, and in politics. So immediately after my marriage, without compunction, I became an Anglican, an Imperialist, and a Conservative. Not only did I become a member of the Anglican Church, but I took an active part in the Women's Auxiliary, later being elected president, which position I held for a number of years.

I am an average Christian, but as a child there had been so much compulsory going to church, Sunday school, and prayer meeting that to-day I am sometimes neglectful about going to church. Mother continually impressed upon us that if we followed the golden rule we would be acceptable in God's sight—and I believe that.

The pioneers of the church in the North had gruelling tasks before them, and on the honour rolls of intrepid missionaries will ever be the names of those, whom I shall always be proud to call my friends—Bishops Bompas, Stringer, Rowe, and their wives; Father Judge, Archdeacon Stuck, and the Sisters of Ste. Anne, who to-day are carrying on their work of mercy, begun in the North by their Order over a half century ago.

They came, these men and women of God, not at the call of gold or greed, not with visions of accumulated fortunes and things of earth, but in the great cause of their Master—to save souls. With no sparing of self, they braved the cruelties of the country, brought hope to the hopeless, faith to the faithless, and comfort to the sick and dying. That was their mission and that was their reward.

CHAPTER XXI

EARLY YUKON POLITICAL HISTORY

UNTIL I married George Black I had little knowledge of Canadian politics, but I learned from him that almost coincident with the discovery of gold in the Klondyke, in 1896, there had come a change in federal government, that, after eighteen years in opposition, the Liberals had come into power. They hailed this new El Dorado as a God-given opportunity to place many of the eager office and job seekers—the usual camp followers of political upheavals. Then, as now, it was, “To the victor belong the spoils.”

At first the government had been in the hands of the North-West Mounted Police, and administered by Major Thomas Morro Walsh, who had established Fort Walsh in the Cypress Hills in the '70's, and who lived up to the highest traditions of the force in establishing law and order. Well they fulfilled their task. They made short shrift of the criminal element, in marked contrast to the uncontrollable lawlessness of Alaska.

In August 1898, by Dominion Act of Parliament, the Yukon Territory was created. It comprised a tract of land, over two hundred thousand square miles, that portion of the North-West Territories bounded on the north by the Arctic Ocean, south by the Province of British Columbia, east by the height of land between the Yukon and Mackenzie

rivers, and west by Alaska. This Yukon Act (the Constitution of the Yukon Territory to-day) provided for the establishment of a territorial government consisting of a Commissioner, appointed by the Dominion Government, a position similar to that of Lieutenant-Governor, and an appointed council of ten, inclusive of the chief officials of the Territory—the Gold Commissioner, Senior Judge of the Territorial Court, Registrar of Land Titles, Comptroller, and Officer Commanding North-West Mounted Police. (Major Walsh was appointed the first Commissioner or Governor.)

The administration of criminal law continued to be by the North-West Mounted Police—sound, swift, relentless, and effective; but that of civil affairs, under the Government of the day, reeked with graft and crookedness, and will ever be a blot on Yukon history.

Establishing this first civil government meant the letting of numerous contracts for erection of public buildings—post offices, courthouses, administration buildings, and an elaborate government house at Dawson.

This official residence, situated on a prominent site at the confluence of the rivers, was a splendid example of "contractor's art," and was one of the sights of the country. It was ornate to the superlative degree, loaded with fancy fretwork of fantastic design. On either side of the third storey were large boxlike ornaments, which in these early days were derisively called "ballot boxes," in reference to alleged ballot box frauds. (Following a fire, 1905, the house was remodelled somewhat after the colonial style.)

Commissioner James Hamilton Ross (third Commissioner) was the first to live in Government House. He brought in his wife and family, and after a brief time Mrs. Ross with their little daughter and niece left on the *Islander*

for the outside to buy the remaining furnishings for the official residence. This ship, loaded heavily with thousands of dollars of gold dust, struck a rock near Juneau, and Mrs. Ross and family were among those drowned. Commissioner Ross was ill for many months, many fearing he would not survive the shock of this tragedy. He left Dawson, and while outside was elected the first Yukon member of the Canadian parliament.

I often used to walk by Government House and deplore that only the prosperous and important were entertained there. I wished that its doors were thrown wider open to the real makers of Yukon—miners, prospectors, and others who had sacrificed so much and had so few comforts or lovely possessions. Little did I think the time would come when I should see this wish fulfilled and I, as chatelaine, would have the power to carry it out.

In 1902 the Territory was given the privilege of electing a member to the Dominion Parliament, with full right not only to sit and speak in the House of Commons, but to vote, this differing from that of the Alaskan representative in Congress, who has no vote.

My husband told me that the flagrant corruption of the first election was the worst in the political history of the country. Numbers of foreigners were railroaded through a fake form of naturalization and allowed to vote. In some instances these foreigners were totally ignorant of the fraud, and did not discover until later years that they had been duped. Credulous hotelkeepers gave Government supporters large credits on I.O.U.'s or "Tabs," as they were called then. After the election these were repudiated and unredeemed, and the party responsible and its followers nicknamed "Tabs."

In one transaction the agent who went to Skagway

with money to hire pluggers, lost his roll at the roulette wheel and had neither money nor tabs to pay the carload of imported aliens who, in the meantime, had voted. When they found that the agent had skipped the country, in their rage they smashed train windows, tore up seats, and raised general ruction. It was said that for years he dared not appear within miles of Skagway. So complete was the frame-up among the "higher-ups" that these election frauds were beyond the law.

Ballot boxes were stuffed. Polls at which there were not over thirty or forty inhabitants returned boxes containing hundreds of ballots.

Flushed with victory the political ring carried on with a high hand. My own mining activities brought me into close touch with their administration in this respect, and I was indignant at the gross injustice and dishonesty of it. Huge concessions of mining land compared to claims staked by prospectors and miners were given to political favourites. This prevented development, and in some instances these lands were unworked for years. Miners were cheated out of claims by the merest subterfuges, or by falsifying of records. It was a common experience for a man who had staked a claim on a distant creek, after having given a description of it on his application to record, to be told, when he called a few days later, that the claim had already been staked.

Men stood in line for days to reach recorders' wickets, while the favoured used the "side door." Similarly at the post office, the long customary wait could be shortened by an investment of "ten dollars and up."

Intoxicating liquors could be imported into the Territory only by permission of the federal Minister of the Interior. Again Government favourites obtained permits,

and brought these in by the boatload and sold them at fabulous prices.

Indignation meetings were held, resolutions and protests were drafted, delegations sent to Ottawa. But communication was so slow, and direct evidence so hard to produce at a distance of four thousand miles, that nothing was done.

Came the news of the Treadgold concession, this surpassing all others in flagrancy. Under its terms, all claims lapsing in the Klondyke area reverted to the concessionaire. It had been "put over" at Ottawa. Such a storm of indignation followed that the matter became serious, and the Government cancelled it and appointed a commission, headed by Judge Britton of Ontario, to investigate these alleged illegal methods of obtaining concessions, their evil effects on the mining industry, and the injustice to the individual miners.

At one of the sittings of the commission, Judge Britton threatened to commit a witness, who had been using strong language, for contempt of court. To the Judge's surprise the miner pointed out that as a member of the commission he had no power to do this, and besides, "the whole damn thing was beneath contempt."

Well do I remember when Judge Britton came to Yukon to inquire into wrongs of the people. He was accompanied by H. N. Rowatt, who had been instructed particularly to investigate living allowances of civil servants, as distinguished from salaries. One day shortly after the arrival of the party a local resident overheard Rowatt wrangling with a laundry driver over an eight-dollar bill. Rowatt insisted he could get the same work done in Ottawa for less than two dollars, and declined to pay the bill. The driver took the bundle back, and before Rowatt could get his laundry he not only had to pay the bill but carry the

bundle back. This was "cream" for the civil servants living in the North who never yet have convinced outsiders of the high cost of living in Yukon.

Even to-day we pay twenty-five cents for a loaf of bread, twenty-five cents for a quart of milk, fifty cents to a dollar for steak (depending on the cut), and two to four dollars for a chicken (according to age and size). Oranges and apples generally sell two or three for a quarter, a watermelon for three dollars, and other food prices range accordingly. Wood is eighteen dollars a cord, moving picture seats a dollar apiece. Charwomen (when we can get one) charge fifty cents an hour. It takes money to live in the North, and when I hear people criticizing us for high living I would like to send them to Dawson and have them try to live on the same amount there as they do outside.

The year of our marriage, 1904, the country was in the throes of another bitter election campaign. The local Liberals were divided into two camps, the notorious "Tabs" and "Steam-beers," so named because their leader was the president of a brewing company. The latter joined the Conservatives to form an "Independent" party, and nominated Dr. Alfred Thompson—an erstwhile Nova Scotian, a pioneer physician, always ready to answer the call of sickness at any time, any distance, and in any weather—to oppose the leader of the Tabs. George was working "tooth and nail" for Dr. Thompson.

A local newspaper disclosed a Tab plot to win the election. This was to post voters' lists for public inspection a short time before election day, and later to revise them, striking off enough names of opposing voters to guarantee their victory.

There ensued a terrific row. It was "open season" for hunting enumerators. A committee of two well-

known citizens was appointed to get in touch with the senior judge of the Territory who had appointed the enumerators. The returning officer was rounded up. An angry and excited mob followed the three down the street. Suddenly a rope was produced and the crowd seized the ashen-faced, trembling returning officer and quickly slipped it round his neck, to the cries of "String him up! String him up!" They were about to do it on the nearest telegraph pole, but the committee prevented it. A number of enumerators with their lists fled to the Mounted Police barracks for protection from the now thoroughly aroused public.

A larger committee was appointed—clergymen, lawyers, doctors, merchants, and miners. Affairs reached such a crisis that one of the clergymen said to the commanding officer of the Mounted Police, "When I came to the North I brought along a rifle and plenty of ammunition. I have that rifle hanging on the wall of my study. It is still in good condition. I have ammunition. If it becomes necessary I will take that rifle down and use it. There are hundreds of men on the creeks just waiting a telephone message to come to town and bring their rifles. This is not a bluff." For weeks a guard of Mounted Police patrolled the residence of the nervous senior judge.

The combined "Steam-beers" and Tories elected Dr. Thompson with a big majority. The back of the ring was broken, and since then the government of Yukon has been "spotless."

As my husband was going in for a political career, I stood ready to do my womanly bit to help him. This meant cooking meals for his supporters and attending political meetings. In the ensuing years he was elected to the Yukon council three times, once by acclamation.

With the passing years my political enthusiasm grew. I recall attending an election meeting at the A.B. Hall, when George, as a council candidate, was one of the speakers. As he arose, the woman next to me said, "They'll never let that man speak!"

"That man will speak if he stands there till hell freezes over. I'm his wife, and I know he won't be scared away by any damn bunch of hoodlums," I said. That silenced her. George did speak, while I and others cheered to the roof.

Every election night we were at home to our friends, supporters and non-supporters, who were invited by a newspaper notice. From two to four hundred came—to rejoice or commiserate. I prepared for two days—cooked hams, chickens, and turkeys for real "he-man" sandwiches. I'd hate to offer a Sourdough a plate of decorated, one-bite, open-faced sandwiches of to-day's fashion. I could never survive his dirty look! I made gallons of salads, dozens of cakes, and quarts of punch, "wet" and "dry."

As a member of the Yukon Council my husband introduced and piloted through the Miners' and Woodmen's Lien Ordinances. Prior to this it was a common occurrence for miners and woodmen to work all winter and not get a dollar's wages. This was due to the fact that employers often financed camp supplies and equipment by mortgages or credit, and the entire output of gold and wood could be seized by mortgagees and creditors—leaving the workmen nothing—not even the price of the next meal. Thanks to George Black, to-day wages have the first lien on production.

CHAPTER XXII

DAWSON ON THE WANE

HAPPY years, especially in retrospect, flash by. George Black and I were eminently suited to each other—each interested in and promoting the other's special pursuits. I liked the municipal and federal political activity that centred about our home ; being "in the know" of the who and why of political nominees of our party and the plans of election campaign ; and later their wild excitement. (No election campaign in Yukon is ever mild.) We both enjoyed splendid health and had a host of friends—always welcome at any meal to take "pot luck" with the family. Although not lucky enough to make a clean-up in our mining investments, my husband's law business provided a good income, and each year we added some new treasure to our comfortable home. We had our two growing boys, sturdy and full of life, keeping us young with them.

Donald and Lyman were average boys of their age, not over studious, had a fine scorn for dressing up, were addicts of "cupboard love," and deep into sport, pranks, and fights.

I remember Donald coming home with a black eye and swollen lip, but triumphant. "I sure licked the stuffing out of Billy Smith. . . . He'll leave my things alone after this !"

“ Well, if Billy Smith did this to you—I’d hate to think what you did to him,” I scolded as I washed his battered face. “ I’ll bet I’ll hear from Billy’s mother.”

In a short time over Mrs. Smith came, head in the air, light of battle in her eyes. “ Never have I been so insulted. . . . Never have I known such a young ruffian as Donald Purdy. . . . Do you know what he did ? ” (I thought I did.) “ He grabbed Billy’s cap, threw it on the ground, spat on it, and said, ‘ That for your dirty old *louse cage* ’ . . . and, Mrs. Black, I want you to understand that none of my children have lice . . . and never have had lice ! ”

Both boys agreed that of all their chums’ homes, that of Mrs. Kunze was the best to visit. “ She is a better cook than you are, mother, and she makes such good bread.” Visits were so frequent I became concerned. I felt they might become nuisances, and spoke to Mrs. Kunze. She laughed as she told me that Lyman had said, “ Gee, that ‘ koffee-kuchen ’ smells good, but mother told me never to ask for anything to eat.” (I know that he got the coffee cake.)

It was my custom to gather as many “ homeless ” for Christmas dinner as our house could accommodate, and one hectic Yuletide holiday (1905) stands out clearly in my memory. We had decorated our tree on Christmas Eve, and then, as usual, gone to midnight Mass at the Roman Catholic church. Arriving home, we looked upon a scene of complete devastation. Our pup had pulled down the tree, torn open parcels, and was still hard at it. We set up the tree, aroused the proprietor of the store which sold decorations, and it was well on to morning before we had restored order and filled the boys’ stockings, our lights in the meantime attracting numerous friends, who became more convivial as the hours went by. After putting to

bed one who had "passed out" (in a spare bed in Lyman's room) we ourselves turned in, hoping for a few hours' sleep.

I had barely dropped off when I heard a bellow from Lyman's room. When I got there I found our "guest" had come to, was making spitballs and flipping them at Lyman. I was righteously indignant, and expressed it in no uncertain words. But Lyman, once awakened, aroused Donald, and the boys were on the tear to investigate their Christmas presents.

There was no further sleep, so we arose, had breakfast, and went to the Anglican service. We had just settled down to this when the fire-bell rang, and looking from the church window we saw that Government House (two doors away) was on fire. The service was broken up and the whole town turned out to see the fire. It was several hours before I returned home to supervise Christmas dinner, which was another lingering, all-night affair.

Investigation into the Government House fire led to the general belief that it was a case of incendiarism; that there had been a robbery, all traces of which the thief purposed to remove by setting the house afire.

In this connection I had a strange experience. Next spring it was necessary that I should go out to see Father on the business of closing the mill. I took an up-river steamer, and to pass the time away I started palm reading, of which I knew nothing beyond the "heart, fate, and life" lines. A fellow traveller told me that Kennedy, one of the passengers, would like me to read his girl's hand. I turned it aside by saying, "I don't know anything about palm reading." Kennedy sent another message, and so, for want of something better to do, I agreed. I picked up "Swiss Louisa's" hand and told her

the usual heart-fate-and-life-line stuff, then added, "Some man, in whom you are deeply interested, will come to a violent end in three—days, months, or years, but it seems very close."

On arrival at Whitehorse three days later the steamer was met by a mounted policeman, who arrested Kennedy on the charge of being connected with the Government House robbery and fire. He asked his guard for a drink of water, and with a quick move swallowed a pellet of poison which he had concealed in his coat lapel, and was dead in a few moments. When I got back I was besieged by girls to read their palms—but never again did I dabble in palmistry. You know there is such a thing as quitting while your reputation is good !

Towns and small cities are noted for good times, and Dawson might easily have headed the list. There were teas, receptions, dinner and card parties, and dances, and I must not forget the amateur plays. Ridiculous incidents of these come to me : the finale of a first act when the courtier was kneeling to a queen and was, without warning, struck down by the descending curtain ; the heroine holding an empty hand to a warrior saying, "Drink from this goblet, and may its contents infuse your will with new life," and the accompanying stage whisper, "In heaven's name, where's the Scotch ?" I am still convulsed over the transposition of that dramatic curtain line, "Your lover lives" to "Your liver loves !" The player had looked too long upon the wine "when it was red."

Each spring and fall regularly the whole family went camping to shoot or fish. Rolled in our sleeping-bags or fur rugs we slept on bough beds in the open in fine weather, or under canvas or a wicki-up (a brush camp built like a lean-to) when it was raining. We did our own cooking,

replenishing our larder with the fish we caught, or the wild fowl or big game we shot. Generally we pitched our main camp on the bank of some stream, and from there travelled up and down in our canvas canoes.

On one of these trips I actually shot my first bear. It was not a large bear, nevertheless it was a bear, and I was inordinately proud. After returning to town a friend was having tea with me. She congratulated me on my accomplishment, and as Donald entered the room, said to him, "Aren't you proud that your mother really killed a bear?"

"Oh, I dunno; it was a mangy old thing that no one else wanted."

His answer was true—the pelt wasn't much good.

We had the privilege of knowing some of the big game hunters who came to Yukon these years, among them Frederick Courtenay Selous, a British explorer of South Africa, ethnologist, and one of the world's most daring hunters. Accompanied by Charles Sheldon, a famous American sportsman, Carl Rungus, a Danish artist, and a party of local hunters, he went up the Macmillan River, where he shot a bull moose with a spread of horns said to be one of the finest in the world. Charles Sheldon gave me a copy of his book, *Wilderness of the Upper Yukon*, and his last book, *Wilderness of Debnali*, published two years after his death, was given to me by his hunting companion, Fenley Hunter, who has been instrumental in the erection of cairns both in Alaska and Yukon to mark spots of historical significance.

Caribou or Arctic deer, moose, mountain sheep abound in Yukon despite the merciless slaughter by Indians with high-power magazine rifles, and by amateurs or head hunters, who formerly wasted much of the game they

killed. Sometimes visiting hunters complain of the lack of big game, but we Northerners, who study their habits and retreats, know better. Moose or mountain sheep seldom come to river banks, mining camps, or towns asking to be shot. They instinctively protect themselves by moving to more isolated places.

In early fall large herds of caribou, feeding on mosses, young willows and birch as they travel, begin their southern trek from the far north "no-man's land." Day after day, through field-glasses, I have watched the main run sweep up either side of the Sixty-mile River, these herds extending on both sides to the crest of the watershed, which in this neighbourhood is twelve to fourteen miles wide. It is a magnificent sight, and in the distance seems as though great patches of the country were on the move. Hunting caribou is not real sport : they are so stupid, but their flesh makes fine eating.

There are plenty of thrills when out for moose or mountain sheep. These are found far away from the beaten track, the sheep in almost inaccessible places. Good field-glasses are the first necessity. The experienced hunter knows where to find a moose lick, and, having found one, builds himself a look-out in some tree, and waits until the animal comes that way, usually in the early hours of the morning. Moose generally travel in pairs, largely depending on the season. Sometimes there are two cows and a bull, but one time my husband had the unusual luck and experience of meeting two bulls together in the woods ; while one summer I saw a bull, cow, and yearling calf at the head of Twelve-mile River. Moose meat is good to the taste, but that of mountain sheep is far more delicately flavoured, tender, and just gamey enough.

In duck-shooting season we were keen to bring down

unusual specimens, as my husband was a remarkably clever amateur taxidermist. One spring the boys and I spotted a pair of ducks unlike any we had ever seen. We decided that the boys should carry the canoe some distance up-river, while I, concealed behind some bushes, would remain to signal the location of the ducks. The scheme worked perfectly, with the result that we secured a magnificent pair of king eider ducks, the only ones ever seen in our part of the country, although they are fairly common in the Behring Sea region. We gave these to the Canadian National Museum at Ottawa. Another spring, quite unexpectedly, a lucky shot brought down a perfect canvas-back duck, a rare kind so far north.

During the summer of 1909 Dawson was on the tiptoe of expectation. For the first time in its history a Governor-General of Canada was to visit Yukon. Word had come that His Excellency Earl Grey, his daughter Lady Sybil, her friend the Honourable Miss Middleton, daughter of Lord Middleton, Lord Lascelles (now the husband of the Princess Royal), and party were coming for a three-day visit in August. Headed by Commissioner "Alex" Henderson, a committee of government officials and leading citizens made enthusiastic plans for His Excellency's visit—these including trips to near-by mining camps on Bonanza and Eldorado Creek, and two picnics at King Solomon's Dome and in West Dawson.

Chartering a boat the committee met the Vice-regal party in midstream, some thirty miles above Dawson. His Excellency, his charming daughter, and friend and aides were transferred to the special boat, where a stirring speech of welcome was read by the Commissioner. The party reached Dawson in the evening and went at once to Government House, which had been entirely renovated

since the fire, and from which Commissioner Henderson and his wife had moved temporarily to provide suitable quarters for the Governor-General and his suite. Before eight-o'clock breakfast next morning the first question asked by His Excellency of Commissioner Henderson was, "Does Robert Service live far from here?"

"No, only next door."

"I would like to meet him. Send for him to breakfast with us."

This royal recognition of Robert Service, the bank clerk "who wrote verses," had Dawson all agog. Till then Yukoners had not paid much attention to the shy young Scotsman who weighed gold dust and kept the ledgers of the Canadian Bank of Commerce.

The Governor-General gave three dinner-parties at Government House. As George was a member of the council we attended one, and Lord Lascelles was my dinner escort. While His Excellency expressed surprise at the superior type of people he had met in Yukon, and their sophisticated mode of living, I fancied Lord Lascelles was unduly surprised, and gathered that his preconceived idea was that people who chose to live so far from accredited civilization were more or less savages.

He was quite concerned that Service had not sent a formal acceptance to his dinner invitation. He took the matter up with "Clemmy" Burns, the Commissioner's secretary. Within an hour Clemmy had "old Alec Ross," the bank messenger (who left a hundred thousand dollars to his relatives on his death) speeding over with the required *R.S.V.P.* Service more than made up for any omission by presenting Lady Sybil and Hon. Miss Middleton with autographed copies of *Songs of a Sourdough*.

Service was an outstanding example of the Scriptural



Robert Service's Cabin.

saying, "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country." This dreamy modest Scottish bank clerk came to Yukon in 1905 as a ledger keeper in the Canadian Bank of Commerce at Whitehorse, and two years later was transferred to Dawson. The first time I saw him was at an ice carnival, when he represented one of the Gold Dust Twins.

As no one else before or since, he was able to interpret in rhyme the lure of the Northland, the wild raw life of stampede days against Nature's magnificent background. He told in vivid irresistible measure of "The Spell of the Yukon" where :

"There's gold, and it's haunting and haunting ;
It's luring me on as of old ;
Yet it isn't the gold that I'm wanting
So much as just finding the gold.
It's the great, big, broad land 'way up yonder,
It's the forests where silence has lease ;
It's the beauty that thrills me with wonder,
It's the stillness that fills me with peace."

Enclosing a cheque to pay for their publishing, he sent his first poems, *Songs of a Sourdough*, to an eastern publishing firm. His friends say he was astonished to the degree of "nearly dropping dead" when the publishers returned the cheque and offered to take the risk. And risk it was, thought the publishers at first, until they heard their printers rhyming them off as they were setting them up in type. After this, publication was so rushed that the publishers' salesmen took their orders on galley proofs, which, as they crossed the country, they read to fellow travellers on the trains. *Songs of a Sourdough* (published 1907)

has gone well over the fortieth edition since and is still a popular record of the early hectic life. . . . "Of those Dawson Days, and the sin and the blaze, and the whole town open wide . . ."

Soon Service became the vogue in Canada and United States, and the man in the street and professional and non-professional elocutionists recited his rollicking, virile rhymes, especially his narrative poems, "The Shooting of Dan McGrew" and "Cremation of Sam McGee." It seemed the whole "outside" had discovered this new poet, but at home in Yukon he was still a nobody.

The new Commissioner (Henderson) came in reciting Service. He was tendered a civic banquet at Whitehorse. One of his first questions was, "Where is Robert Service?" But the poet had not even been invited. They sent for him, and Commissioner Henderson asked him to recite some of his verses. "Oh, I couldn't without the book," replied the nervous young man. Many thought this was just an excuse to cover up his shyness, but other Yukoners said that Service actually forgot his poems as soon as they were on paper.

Yet Service did recite his verse in the presence of a few close friends and on one or two rare occasions. I recall one "recital" which was the talk of the town next day. Clement Burns, secretary of the Dawson Amateur Athletic Society, had invited him as his guest to the association's annual banquet. Service accepted only on the condition that he would not be expected to recite his poems. It was a bitterly cold night in midwinter. The large gymnasium was heated only by two stoves, one at each end of it, and it was like an ice house. "Hot Scotches" were passed in quick succession to keep the "inner man" warm, even if his exterior were freezing. The company mellowed, and

Service, leaning toward the secretary, said, "Burnsie, I have written an unpublished and uncensored poem or so, which I might recite. . . ." "Burnsie" lost no time in getting word to the chairman, and cheers lasting several minutes greeted the announcement. Service recited "Touch the Button, Nell," the story of a poor old faded dance-hall girl who had become sodden with liquor, but kept touching the button for still another round. Three parsons hurriedly left the room in complete accord with the publisher who had expurgated this "gem" from the printed volume!

I recall only one time that Service did appear before the whole public of Dawson, and this was at a charity performance. The only person able to persuade him was Mrs. Sinclair, wife of the Presbyterian minister, a most cultured woman who before her marriage had been an artist on *Punch*.

Service left the bank in 1909, retired to a small log cabin in Dawson (one of to-day's tourist sights) to write his one and only novel, *The Trail of '98*. This prose work never became as popular as his verses.

At this time the Yukon Government offered a prize of two hundred dollars for the best exhibit of native wild flowers. This gave a new impetus to my zeal of many years of studying haunts and habits of our wild flowers. My interest had now become known, and I was asked to speak on this topic at various women's teas, church and sewing meetings. I found my talks more interesting if illustrated, and I began to press and mount flowers—washing in the backgrounds with water-colours. I called this hobby "artistic botany," for in no way do I claim to be a scientific botanist.

I was interested at once in the Government's competition,

and set to work arranging an exhibit. I planned it with a three-fold purpose : first, to show as many varieties as possible ; second, to stress the scientific angle by mounting whole plants ; and third, to demonstrate artistic effects by unusual arrangement.

Friends brought me flowers of every kind. Children combed the hills and valleys for me. Others hearing of my work—rough miners from the creeks—called at my door, sheepishly and tenderly taking from their pockets rare delicate flowers and plants.

I assembled four hundred and sixty-four varieties. I made a harp of four-leaf clovers, with strings of the finest grass ; “ Odd Fellows ’ ” links of canary creeper ; and a heart of pink and white immortelles. It was really a beautiful display, and I won the prize.

The exhibit was sent to the World’s Fair, which was being held in Seattle that year, and where it did much to disperse the too prevalent idea that Yukon is a barren, frozen land.

The golden days of Dawson began to wane. The gold fever had worn itself out. The population dwindled to six thousand. Law work grew less and less, and George decided we should go outside for a year while he studied and took the law examinations of British Columbia.

In 1909 we left for Vancouver, and the next two summers I spent on one of the happiest missions of my life—gathering and mounting wild flowers of the Rocky Mountains for the Canadian Pacific Railway.

CHAPTER XXIII

GATHERING WILD FLOWERS FOR A RAILWAY

IT was my Yukon wild flower work that was responsible for this commission to gather and mount wild flowers of British Columbia for exhibition purposes in Canadian Pacific Railway stations and hotels.

After we moved to Vancouver, one day I invited to lunch Mrs. Hayter Reed, well known for her work in the interior decorating of Canadian Pacific hotels and chalets, of which her husband was general manager. For place cards I had some wild Yukon pressed flowers, mounted on water-colour paper, with pretty ribbon bows. Mrs. Reed admired them. I told her of my Yukon flower exhibit. She suggested the possibility of assembling similar floral exhibits for the railway, which she thought would be valuable in attracting tourists. The idea "clicked," and, after leaving my boys, much to their delight, on a friend's farm at Thunder Bay, I was soon on my way.

Among many delightful experiences in carrying out this work was a trip through the Fraser River cañon by railway motor, which provides, as in no other way, a glorious view in every direction. As I travelled through this stupendous grandeur I was filled with the joy of living, a reverence for the Almighty, the Creator of this wondrous beauty. Thankfully and humbly my lips formed this heartfelt prayer, "Oh, God, how good it is to live! How wonderful are Thy creations! How small a thing am I!"

Leaving sleepy little Yale (a hundred miles east of Vancouver) in the early hours of a beautiful summer morning, with the faintest breeze stirring in the woods, we glided over the Yale Creek bridge, by the old construction shops, where, in our swift passing, the hollow of the turntable looked like a buffalo wallow, on through tunnels, round rocky turns at what seemed suicidal speed, while below, the tumbling tortuous river whirlpooled through its narrow bed. We crossed many little streams and torrents, cascading down the mountains in a mad endeavour to join the chorus of the roaring, rushing river—a symphonic blending eminently suited to the setting.

I begged my driver to stop a few moments that I might gather the wild forget-me-nots, the gorgeous yellow buttercups, the dainty harebells and maidenhair fern, growing profusely on the embankments above and below, sometimes in such tiny niches in the rocks that I was filled with amazement that so much beauty could be nourished seemingly on air.

Along the railway tracks, in countless numbers, were blue long-stemmed scented wood violets, putting to shame their Californian sisters; tiny white violets, their timid modest growth suggestive of the cloister, and in marked contrast to their brazen yellow brothers who seemed to scoff at prayers and beads as they flaunted in the breeze. I have always thought flowers were like human beings. I have often watched the dainty harebells in their God-given beauty, bending over a little stream, turning their delicate heads from side to side, almost singing with the sheer joy of living.

We crossed and recrossed and paralleled the old Caribou trail (built in 1859), which in many places resembles old Roman roads, so stable was its construction. These parts

were carpeted with delicate mosses and many varieties of ferns, from sturdy bracken to perishable maidenhair.

We came to Hell's Gate, where the Fraser so narrows between precipitous rocks that we could almost step across. I wondered at the name, for it is usually conceded that the entrance to this well-known place is wide and easy—but perhaps the wildly flowing river is a lost soul, fretting and storming in a mad attempt to escape.

On we went, stopping an hour or so when and where we pleased. At such times the men lifted the motor off the main line as I pursued my mission. Everywhere the names are significant of persons or events connected with the construction period of the railroad, when men took their lives in their hands that two parallel bars of steel might reach from sea to sea ; or reminiscent of the days of the Fraser river gold rush, such as China Bar, so-called because Chinamen rocked gold on a bar in the river.

I made no permanent stop until Sicamous, on the shores of Shuswap Lake, a clear mirror reflecting perfectly its lovely mountain setting. Here I gathered and mounted some of my most beautiful specimens, all found within four miles of the right-of-way. For the first time I saw the scarlet Indian paint-brush. (In Yukon this flower is either an ugly magenta or a sickly lemon colour. In fact, in all my Yukon rambles I have never found a really scarlet flower.) The hillsides were aglow with pink and blue or purple bearded tongue, while four-leaf clovers grew, not only singly, but in families and villages. Everywhere there was a riot of bloom, and I collected over two hundred varieties.

In the vicinity of Sicamous, at Maro Lake, I came upon my most thrilling floral find, only a hundred feet from the railway. Walking aimlessly along the tracks one

beautiful June morning, my eye caught a bright spot of yellow in the green marsh beyond. I scrambled across the ditch, through the underbrush, and into the bog. I was almost mired, but a few frantic struggles brought my reward. Spread before me, in a glory of golden colour and a profusion of bloom, was a wonderful natural bed of yellow orchids (*cypridium pubescens*) probably one that had never before been invaded by a flower seeker. There were hundreds of beautiful blossoms so superbly lovely that I looked at them a long time before I could bear to pick a single flower—to take one from its perfect surroundings. When I did, I smelled it, but there was practically no odour, although the hundreds of blossoms filled the air with an elusive fragrance as rare as it was enchanting.

At Sicamous, too, I found more beautiful butterflies and moths than anywhere. While I caught many by hard running, I discovered another way. I had noticed on warm drowsy days that butterflies hovered over moist places. I selected a place and poured over it an enticing concoction of syrup and Scotch whisky. Within a few hours a dozen or more gauzy beauties were helplessly intoxicated. Later, as I dropped them into the cyanide bottle prior to pressing them between the pages of a magazine, I had a few twinges of regret, but not enough to give them their freedom. After a severe rainstorm, on a tramp through the wet woods, I found many winged beauties hanging under leaves and branches.

The majority of butterflies are so like moths that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish them, but the main differences are : The antennæ of the butterfly are thickened at the very tip, while those of the moth are not ; the body of the butterfly is smaller in the middle ; and the butterfly, at rest, folds its wings over its back, while moths spread their wings.

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Mrs. George Black in 1908.

The most common varieties of butterfly which I found for my collection were the swallowtail, none the less gorgeous in colouring than the orange tip, clouded yellow, brimstone, meadow brown, and ringlet. To "McGregor," the friendly baggageman at the station, I owed some fine specimens of beautiful emperor and tiger moths.

From Sicamous I went to Glacier, where there was almost a complete change of flora. Here I found the saucy yellow violet; the dog-tooth violet or "glacier lily," as it is more appropriately called, a lemon-coloured flower growing over the mountain-sides and in quantities at the foot of the Great and Asulkan glaciers, and higher up—after climbing over an exquisite carpet of pink-rose and white false heather—the dwarfed mountain larkspur and yellow columbine. Between Glacier and Golden, on the grey rocky mountain-sides, were colourful patches of orange and scarlet lilies.

For a time I made my headquarters at Field, the little railway village under the frowning dome of Mount Stephen. As I wandered up and down the tracks I became acquainted with railwaymen and schedules of way freights. Whenever I wished to be picked up, I signalled them by placing in the middle of the track a piece of white cotton tied to a stick. At first the men were alarmed at my solitary trips, and warned me that I might meet tramps and hoboos. But I never met any dangerous individuals. I often shared my lunch with wanderers who seemed to be on the road for the sheer love of it. In this district were wonderful orchids—the rare white *cypripedium passerinum*, coral root, lady's tresses, calypso, and fragrant white bog orchid.

From here I took the well-known Yoho valley trip, a jaunt of four days. From Field to Emerald lake we rode in a buck-board drawn by four horses. We stopped at the

famous Natural Bridge over the Kicking Horse River, one of the scenic wonders of the Rocky Mountains. We went up the winding mountain-view drive, lined on either side by tall, sentinel-like pines, through which we glimpsed alluring peaks and glaciers, before we came to the picturesque chalet on the shores of the green lake where we spent the night.

Early next morning, mounted on the sorriest-looking cayuses, the guide, Bagley, leading extra saddle and pack horses, we started for Summit lake, on the top of Burgess pass. Before my mount was chosen, Bagley asked me if I could ride. I replied, "Fairly well." He paused a moment and said, "'Boy' is the best of the bunch; hang on to the pommel when we come to a windfall or stream." (I found out the real significance of this advice later.)

Twenty minutes' sharp canter brought us to the foot of the lake, where a moving picture outfit was there to photograph us. Just as we started to climb I was watching the others when Bagley shouted, "Look out, there!" At the same minute "Boy" raised his four feet and cleared the small stream before him in one jump, and made ready to take another. No wonder the guide had told me to hang on to the pommel, for, during the whole trip "Boy" insisted on jumping over all obstructions. Later, when he cleared a hornets' nest at one bound, I was certainly glad that he showed "horse" sense.

We then climbed steadily for three hours, until we reached Summit lake, where we rested, having our lunch in the cool green pine-scented silences. (There was a log cabin for those who wished to remain overnight, or for use in bad weather.)

Another three-hour ride brought us to Lookout Point, below which there is a drop of nearly two thousand feet,

to the first camp in the Yoho valley. After drinking in the panorama of beauty around us we descended slowly to the camp, and were met by two smiling Chinamen, a white guide, and a good-natured dog. The camp consisted of a dozen small tents, furnished with iron camp beds, rustic stands, stools, and Klondyke stoves, circled about a huge teepee (a general meeting-place in bad weather), a large dining-tent with two long tables, a kitchen, and supply tent.

After I had dismounted (and I needed assistance, for I was stiff from my long ride), I walked a half-mile to see the imposing Takakaw Falls pouring over the twelve hundred foot drop, to limber up and look for flowers. Returning to a delicious dinner, I adjourned with the others to our "sky parlour," where we sat about the camp-fire, singing and telling stories until nine o'clock, when, thoroughly tired, we turned in for the night. Soon the camp was in deep silence, save for the mighty roar of the falls, like the sound of a fast-travelling train. I slept soundly, as nearly everyone does in the mountains, and was awakened by the vigorous chattering and scolding of a squirrel couple. They were still arguing when we left after breakfast.

We travelled Indian fashion, making Wapti glacier for our noon meal, after which we stood in the marvellous ice cave, its roof at least a hundred feet high, although at a distance the opening looked like a thimble hole.

Resuming our trip, for the first time the narrow trail was really bad, full of windfalls and mudholes, and crossed by swift streams, swollen from recent rains, in which our horses floundered and fell, while "Boy" did his usual nerve-racking jumps. We finally arrived at Twin Falls, which to describe adequately would exhaust my stock of superlatives. Leaving here, we mounted up and up, until

we reached a height of eight thousand five hundred feet, the second Yoho camp. Here we were welcomed by a good-natured Chinese cook, who told us to "glet walm."

After tea and toast I wandered off, across a glacial valley and up a mountain-side covered with pink mossy campions, yellow anemones, spring beauties, arnica, and Indian paint-brush, ranging in colour from the brightest scarlet to the palest creamy green. Absorbed in the flowers I had not noticed that the sky was getting dark. I looked up to find the mountain-side enveloped in clouds, and a fine mist which in a few moments developed into a furious snowstorm. Fortunately I was able to retrace my steps, helped greatly by the tinkle of the bells on the grazing horses and the excited halloos of our guide, who was much worried over my disappearance. I was drenched to the skin, but some borrowed dry clothes, a hot drink, and a good dinner soon set me up.

Next morning we broke camp and headed for Burgess pass by way of Summit lake again. There were places on the trail which even the guide pronounced "ticklish," and he warned us to give the ponies their heads. The trail was indeed narrow, rocky, and slippery from an all-night rain. Above, there was nothing to reach; below, not even a tree-stump to stop a fall of hundreds of feet. For more than an hour we were filled with mixed feelings—horror of what might happen to us if our ponies slipped, exultation from the magnificent scenery around us.

At noon we came upon the Smithsonian Institute camp, in charge of Dr. A. Wolcott, the secretary, an authority on fossil vertebrates. He was superintending the digging of these fossils—this particular place being considered one of the greatest beds in the world. I was greatly concerned at the time that these should be taken from Canada, and

wrote my opinion to Ottawa. I learned later that a division of his discoveries was ordered for the Ottawa museum. After lunch here we commenced the descent to Field, making the final stages as the clouds parted and the sun shone down on a glorious landscape.

I left Field and worked my way down to that world-famed beauty spot, Lake Louise, with its borders and terraces of brilliant-hued Arctic poppies, ranging from purest white to deepest orange, enhancing the grounds of a spacious mountain chalet. Here I noticed that pansies grew almost as large as in Yukon, while luscious wild strawberries were an unbelievable size.

It was but a step to "Banff the Beautiful," where I remained many weeks, the railway placing at my disposal spacious rooms in its fine hotel which commands a magnificent view of the Spray and Bow rivers. Father joined me here, and we had many delightful tramps far and wide over mountain paths. I recall being asked by the railway officials to look over and give suggestions for the de luxe camp being prepared for the Rothschilds, miles from any habitation, in the mountain fastnesses. It seemed to me to have every luxury—real beds, collapsible bathtubs, tables, chairs—all toted by pack ponies over seemingly impassable places.

I met many interesting people—Julia Henshaw, the well-known journalist and author of *Rocky Mountain Wild Flowers*; Mrs. Charles Shaffer, who illustrated Stewardson Brown's wild flower book; the Duke of Sutherland; Dr. and Mrs. Murphy, of Chicago, the former well known in the medical world as the inventor of the "Murphy Button," and the latter a St. Mary's graduate; Col. and Mrs. Longstaff and two sons; and the Westheads, he, Walter B., a well-known "City man" in London.

Summer waned, and with the first breath of fall the hardy golden rod, purple fleabane, and wild aster followed the golden gaillardia, harebells, orchids, and mountain lilies. Soon the mountain-sides flamed with gold and red autumn foliage, and it was time to go home.

I had had such a glorious summer that I was eager to pass its joys on to others, to tell them that similar pleasures are within the reach of all. Who does not love flowers? And the mere gathering is the first step in a series of most fascinating nature studies. Mothers who are often at their wits' ends to keep children busy should send them picking flowers and show them how to press and mount them. Patience, fresh flowers, absorbent cotton (second grade), blotting-paper, and cardboard are all that is needed. Here are the directions :

1. Place blotting-paper on cardboard and lay flowers between alternate layers of cotton and blotting-paper, taking care to tuck tiny wisps of cotton between each petal of many-petalled flowers.
2. Press under medium weight.
3. Open in ten or twelve hours, to see if flowers are in good shape. If very moist, replace upper layer of cotton with fresh supply; press again lightly until dry.
4. When flowers are dry, remove all cotton threads with moist finger and thumb, using great care, as dried flowers are fragile and break easily.
5. When pressing lady's slippers, stuff pouch with tiny wad of cotton.
6. When preparing to mount flowers, sweep in background of suitable colouring on water-colour paper.
7. Study flowers with a view to using a wash that will best bring out the natural colours of the flowers.

8. Paste flowers on card with paste made from flour, to which may be added one-fifth mucilage and a liberal amount of salt.

9. Wash in shadows to make flowers stand out.

10. Cover with maline, pink, white, or yellow, and your "artistic flower" will be ready for the mat and frame.

11. In making score or place cards, maline is unnecessary, but narrow, bright-coloured ribbons add to the effect and general beauty.

Although this flower pleasure may be had at nearly every man's door for the taking, it is strange that to a "soulless corporation" (which we generally associate with hard-fisted money grabbers)—a great Canadian railway—goes the credit of the first organized effort to popularize this work—"artistic botany."

This is due in a large measure to Sir William Van Horne, whose policy of encouraging the arts has been continued by his successors in the presidency. I still have my letter of commendation from Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, who told me the only pictures in the royal suite at the Banff Springs hotel prepared for the visit of the Governor-General and his wife—the Duke and Duchess of Connaught—in July 1912, were those of my mounted wild flowers.

My summer's work brought an offer from the Belgian Government to do similar work for it. This would have meant spending three years in that country, and at the time I did not feel that I could break up my home and leave my growing boys, so, with reluctance, I declined the offer.

In 1924 and 1925 I prepared other exhibits for the Canadian Pacific Railway, which they sent to the Wembley Exhibition.

CHAPTER XXIV

CHATELAINE OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE

WHEN I returned to Vancouver I found George in the throes of a Dominion election campaign—the famous Reciprocity election of 1911, when the Laurier Government went down to defeat on that issue. George himself was not running, but was in Yukon working night and day for the Conservative Party in support of Dr. Alfred Thompson, and later stumping in Vancouver for “Harry” Stevens, now originator and only representative of the Reconstruction Party in the Canadian Parliament.

Echoes of the main issue of the campaign had reached me in Banff when Father was visiting me. He had received a letter from Uncle Charles Morse (Fairbanks Morse), saying :

“There is an election campaign in Canada. The Government is advocating reciprocity between Canada and the United States. We have halted our building in Montreal and will do nothing in Toronto until after the election, for *if* reciprocity goes through it will not be necessary to build in Canada.”

(Little did I think then that this letter, a quarter of a century later, would become the governing factor in my decision to vote against the 1936 Reciprocity Bill in the Canadian House of Commons.)

The Conservatives carried the country, and next year George was appointed seventh Commissioner of the Yukon Territory.

Filled with joy at the opportunity to live again in the country we both loved so well, accompanied by Donald and Lyman, we left for the north in March. With nine or ten others, at Whitehorse we took the White Pass sleigh, to begin the longest continuous stage journey in the world (almost four hundred miles). We jolted, slipped, and slid up and down steep and icy hillsides, over frozen rivers and lakes, stopping every fifteen or twenty miles at roadhouses, where we changed horses, daily ate four dollar-and-a-half meals, and nightly rested in two-dollar bunks. After journeying ten days, eight miles from Dawson we were met by several sleigh loads of friends, and the reunion celebrated with suitable conviviality.

A few days later we were deeply touched by the huge official reception of the Territory, almost a thousand attending this event, which was held in the A.B. Hall in Dawson. "And they say Dawson is on the down grade . . ." I wrote in my journal.

We took up residence at once in Government House, which I soon found was conveniently laid out. On the first floor were the large drawing, reception, living, and dining rooms, kitchen, and pantry; the second, writing and bedrooms; the third, servants' quarters and billiard room. As no money had been allowed for renovation for years, the place was badly run down. Actually there were cracks in the kitchen and attic so large you could see outside. But I was soon heart and soul in the fixing of it.

As soon as we were settled I planned our first reception. My time had now come for the realization of a dream of years—that this beautiful "house of the people" should

be open to all who wished to come, irrespective of social position.

Preparing for an indefinite number of guests with no precedent to guide me was an anxious bit of organizing, the only help from George being, "Madame, you run the house the way you like—but see that you have plenty to eat and drink."

We had a staff of servants—cook, butler, housemaid, gardener, and assistant. Much to the disapproval of our German cook and the ill-concealed amusement of the butler, I gave orders for a thousand sandwiches, forty cakes, twenty gallons of sherbet, and the same quantity of salad. Friends helped make twenty pounds of home-made candy, and there were the "makings" of gallons of punch. I insisted that my orders be carried out to the letter, feeling that a failure to have enough to eat at my first reception would indeed be a calamity. My estimate of the appetites of my Yukon friends turned out to be accurate, for there was very little left over—only enough sherbet and salad for lunch next day, half a fruit cake, and about a pound of candy. Fresh sandwiches and coffee had to be made for the select few who remained to "talk the party over" in the early morning hours.

Aside from supervising food preparation, I directed half a dozen helpers to get the place ready for the reception. They moved furniture, put up flags, while I personally decorated the refreshment tables in the dining-room and writing-room upstairs, which opened on a veranda. For the former I chose a colour scheme of scarlet and white, carried out by bowls of scarlet poppies and maidenhair fern (from the small Government greenhouse), and wide bands of scarlet satin ribbon, placed on a white cloth, from corner to corner, where they were tied with large upstanding

bows ; for the latter, pink and white, developed by cut-glass baskets of variegated sweet peas, bows of ribbon, white lace cloth, and candies of these colours.

All was in readiness at 2 p.m., after which I had a nap ; then George and I had a light supper brought to our rooms before dressing. The first guest arrived at 7.55 p.m., and from that time to 5 a.m. a steady stream kept coming and going. At midnight we had the rugs taken up so that we might dance, a five-piece orchestra having been engaged. Almost six hundred attended. The highest compliment paid to its success was the remark of a well-known Tab, which was repeated to me, "The Blacks didn't have to go to Government House to learn how to entertain ; they always did keep open house."

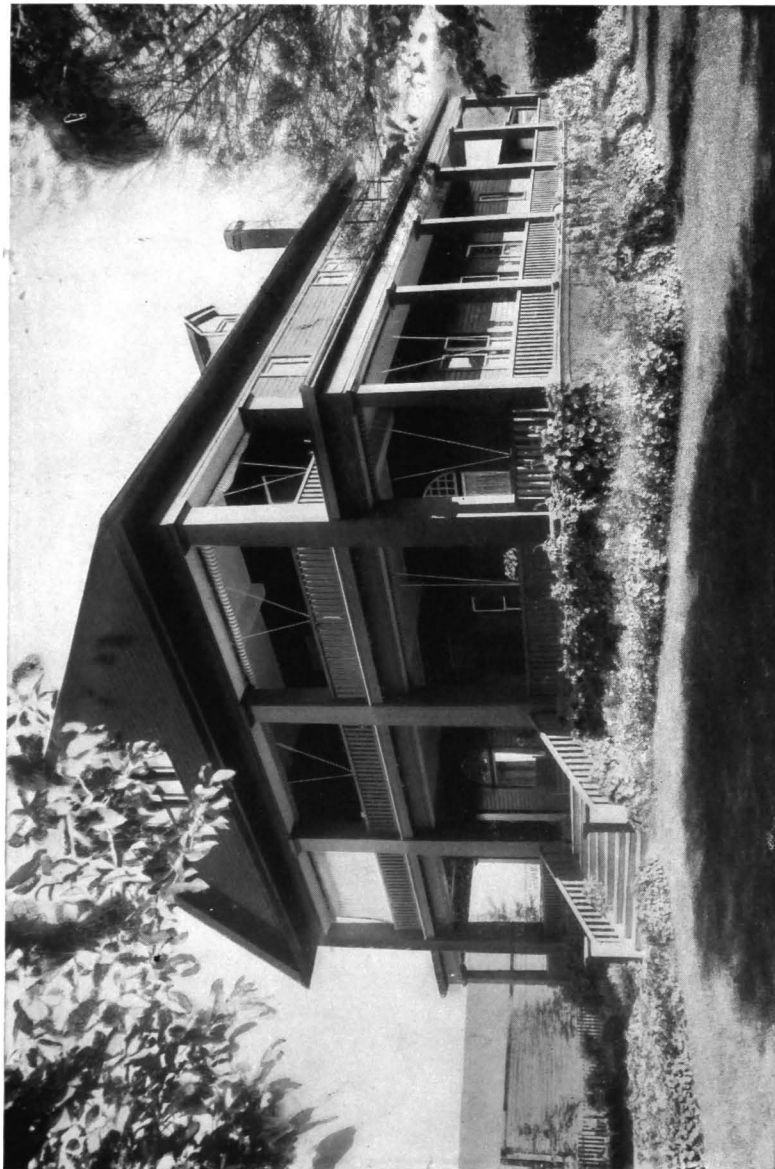
The following beautiful May days lured me out of doors, and I decided to concentrate on the garden, both for its use and beauty. I went into consultation with the "royal gardener," who also attended the furnace. (This latter was no small job either, as we burned wood to the cost of twenty-two hundred dollars each year). We decided to enlarge the greenhouse, add a root house, and raise our own vegetables. Our indefatigable work coupled with Arctic-zone sunshine had extraordinary results.

We grew head lettuce, radishes, peas, carrots, beans, turnips, salsify, potatoes, celery, squash, and vegetable marrow. I sent outside for pounds of mushroom spawn, which was broken up and placed here and there in the garden and on the lawns. (To-day quantities of mushrooms can still be found on the unoccupied grounds.) In the greenhouse we raised enormous tomatoes and cucumbers—the northern tomato being meatier than those grown outside. I cannot say that our gardening was economical, but it did make for "good eating."

We transplanted wild fruits of every kind—currants, gooseberries, raspberries, and cranberries, which improved every year under cultivation, and we had unusually good yields. This was a real food boon, as fruits imported to Yukon are too expensive to can or jelly. A basket of fresh outside fruits has cost as high as ten dollars.

But I revelled in our flower gardens. We discovered that it was possible to winter out-of-doors many bulbs, corms, and roots, and we started many others in the greenhouse. We transplanted these, never later than 24th May, and soon the place was a riot of colour, with hundreds of daffodils, tulips, irises, jonquils, lilies of the valley, and even the old-fashioned bleeding heart. Our pansies were particularly lovely, these growing to abnormal size, many four inches across. As summer advanced we had every known variety of flower found in north temperate zone gardens. Against the house were canary creeper, trailing nasturtiums, delphiniums, which came up yearly in a magnificent range of blue, pink, and mauve colourings, and snapdragons; along the fence sweet peas of every hue, the vines often growing to a height of twelve feet; behind the residence, on either side of the long path leading to the Commissioner's office, borders of California, shirley, and oriental poppies in countless shades.

Having eaten cold storage food so many years in the North I decided to keep chickens to assure us a supply of fresh eggs and poultry. I sent to Vancouver for six dozen hens. They arrived and did their duty nobly—especially in the long-light summer days, but the long-dark winter days were not conducive to the laying of eggs. From a book, *Care of Chickens*, I read that a mixture of chopped meat and red pepper would remedy this, and I told the gardener to add this to the chicken feed.



Commissioner's Residence, Dawson, Yukon Territory.

We had at this time thirty laying hens, and within a few short days we seemed again to have plenty of fresh eggs. I began boasting about it—sending eggs to invalid friends. Every day the number increased. One day the cook reported thirty-two eggs ! Thirty hens—thirty-two eggs ! I went to the kitchen to investigate. Yes, there were plenty of eggs all right, but I discovered that George had been playing a joke on me. He had been buying eggs by the case. My boasted precious fresh eggs had been store eggs !

I was chatelaine of Government House four years, and we always kept open house. Everyone was welcome, but I did insist that there be no hoaxes. When a Sourdough friend rang up saying, " May I come over to-night and bring the Missus," I replied, " You're sure she's your real wife. You have already introduced me to several 'wives,' and George and I owe a duty to the dignified office he holds."

Neither did I overlook the children's parties. Donald had graduated from High School, and was earning his way through Leland Stanford University, California, where he was taking engineering. Each summer holiday he came home, as he found it more advantageous to work for the Guggenheims than stay outside. But Lyman was with us all the time. I recall one Hallowe'en party for him. I was determined to attack the problem of the usual rowdyism, in which my boys played their part, by inviting a number of boys to Government House.

During the festivities I was startled by the ringing of the Anglican church bell. " For once they can't blame this on my children," thought I smugly. Citizens rushed to the church, but no traces of culprits could be found. Boasting of the boys' innocence at mealtime next day, I caught a wild gleam in Lyman's eye. " Lyman, you didn't . . . !"

" Surely, mother, we didn't put that over you. We

tied a rope from our upstairs window to the bell. We took turns ringing it. When you got excited one of the fellows cut the rope, slipped out, and took it off our lawn."

Lyman discovered a unique way of making pocket money. A former employé of the Bank of Commerce, which was next door to Government House, obtained a "lay" of the surface rights of the bank lot, and constructed a set of small sluice boxes into which he shovelled the surface dirt, washing it with water from the "borrowed" Government garden hose. He recovered several hundreds of dollars' worth of gold, mostly in the form of buttons from crucibles which had been handled by the bank. Later, when the building was moved, the carpenters, using the same equipment, washed up more gold from immediately under the bank floor. Then along came Lyman and his school chum, and again using the same sluice boxes and Government hose, sluiced an additional seventy-five dollars' worth of dust.

Lyman's teacher arranged for the children to write to others in all parts of the world. Lyman had an Australian correspondent who asked if he lived in an igloo. His teacher was anxious that he send a picture of Government House, but Lyman thought this would be "putting it on." He answered—that he had lived in a tent and a little log cabin, but now he lived in a board house.

During George's term of office, among our distinguished guests were John F. Strong, Governor of Alaska, and his wife, a remarkably fine pianist, who visited us on a trip out; Sir Douglas and Lady Hazen, the former a member of a notable Loyalist New Brunswick family and Minister of Marine in the Borden Government. Preparations were under way for a visit from Their Royal Highnesses the Duke

and Duchess of Connaught (the former Governor-General), but the war changed their plans.

Women's clubs began to penetrate into Yukon in 1912. While at Government House I organized the first Chapter of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, this called the Dr. George M. Dawson Chapter, named after the leader of the Government geological expedition sent out in 1887 to explore "that portion of the North-West Territories drained by the Yukon River." When organizing this Chapter I well remember the impertinent remark of one young woman, "Many of us, Mrs. Black, are interested to know how long one has to be a Daughter of the American Revolution before becoming a Daughter of the Empire?" I smiled and replied, "Only until one marries George Black." I also organized a girls' Chapter, named after one of our heroic police officers, Inspector Fitzgerald, who lost his life the year before when in charge of the Dawson-McPherson patrol.

One of the greatest traditions of the North-West Mounted Police centres around Inspector Fitzgerald and the lost patrol of the winter of 1910-11. It was the time of the annual police trek along the rim of the Arctic from Fort McPherson to Dawson. With an ex-mounted policeman as a guide, Inspector Fitzgerald and two members of the force had started from McPherson in December and were due to arrive in Dawson by the end of January. They did not arrive. February drew to a close and still they had not come. Nor was there any word of them. The whole town became aroused. Anxiety grew so intense that a search patrol was ordered from Dawson. This was in charge of Sergeant Dempster, one of the most capable and fearless men of the force, who took with him three others of the police and an Indian guide.

From the window of Government House I watched the patrol set forth. Later Dempster described this trip to me. "Almost three weeks had gone by, when we discovered traces of white men's camps on the Little Wind River bank. We supposed them to be Fitzgerald's camp, and suspected that the patrol had been forced to turn back for lack of food, as there were evidences that the men who had camped there had killed and eaten their dogs. Within twenty-five miles of McPherson we came upon the frozen emaciated forms of two members of the party, huddled together under a pile of blankets. We now felt certain of the fate of the others. Eight miles farther on we found the lifeless forms of Inspector Fitzgerald and his companion, frozen beside a dead camp-fire, over which hung a pot of ice containing pieces of leather and moosehide, mute evidence of the tragic struggle to ward off starvation."

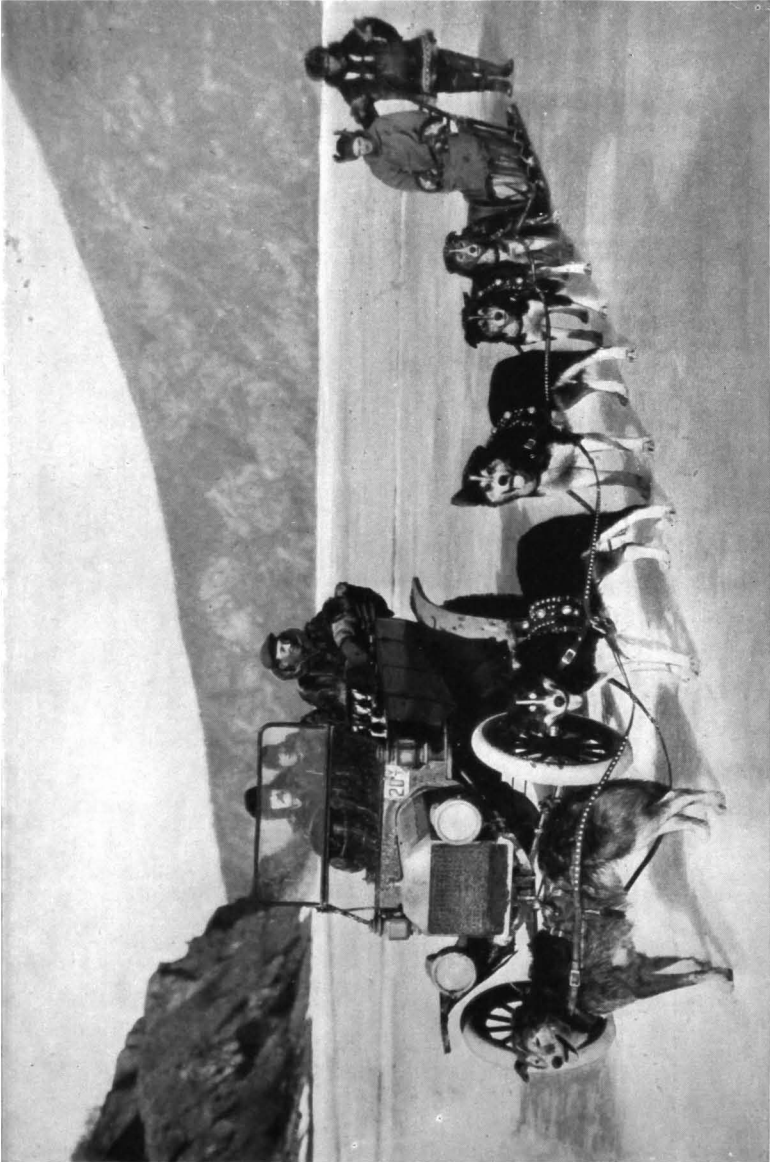
With Fitzgerald's body was his diary, the last entry being made on 5th February. It told how he had lost the trail at Little Wind River, and of ten days' fighting through blizzards to find it; of the decision to turn back toward Fort McPherson as their rations were running low; of their sicknesses, especially scurvy, which they blamed upon eating dog's liver; of the agony of the final struggle.

In his pocket was this brief will :

"All money in despatch bag and bank, clothes, etc., I leave to my dearly beloved mother, Mrs. John Fitzgerald, Halifax. God bless all."

Dempster is now an inspector, retired, living in Vancouver, and to this day is as homesick for Yukon as any child sent away to school could be for his home.

Life pursued "the even tenor of its way" until August 4, 1914. That memorable night George and I were enter-



On the Yukon River.

taining a theatre party in Dawson's one moving picture house, which was crowded to the doors.

During an interval a telegram addressed to Hon. George Black, Commissioner of Yukon, was handed to my husband. He read it, and without comment passed it to me. "England is in a state of war with Germany," was the message from the Secretary of State at Ottawa.

The news was not entirely unexpected, as our daily paper had been featuring the European situation with huge headlines. Yet when the blow fell it was both startling and sudden. Immediately the Commissioner went to the stage, and, raising his hand, in a voice filled with emotion, read the telegram. Men and women looked at each other in silence, aghast, trying to realize the significance of the words.

Twenty scarlet-coated members of the Royal North-West Mounted Police were seated in the centre of the theatre. Two of these, brothers, former members of the Coldstream Guards, well over six feet in height, looked at each other and whispered to the other members. As though answering an overwhelming urge, they stood and in unison commenced to sing "God Save the King." The effect was electrical. With one move the audience was on its feet, and never in the world, I dare say, was our national anthem sung with greater fervour or more depth of feeling than in that moving picture house in that little town on the rim of the Arctic. Although eight thousand miles of mountain, land, and sea separated us from London, the heart of Empire, yet England's King was our King, and England's Empire was our Empire. We realized as never before that we were not English, nor Irish, nor Scotch, nor Welsh, nor yet Canadian, but *British*, bound together by the Anglo-Saxon ties of blood.

From then on life lost all serenity. There was no contented settled-down feeling. From week to week, month to month, men began leaving Yukon—not to the inspiring sounds of massed bands nor the thrilling sight of magnificent battalions marching past—no, only in response to a still small voice within, “Your King and Country need you!” With packs on their backs they mushed from two to four hundred miles. I knew one man who walked three hundred miles to enlist, and was rejected because of flat feet. Could a joke go further? (Both he and a brother finally got to France.)

Month by month I could see that George was growing more restless. I hurled myself into war work—Red Cross, I.O.D.E., and completed two St. John’s Ambulance first-aid courses, to be ready for the time I knew was coming.

It came in the spring of 1916. I have it recorded in my journal:

“George has just come in and told me he has to enlist—that he cannot stand it any longer, seeing our men go away, while he sits in his office and we have the comfort of this beautiful home.

“Of course, there’s nothing for me to do but to act as though I like it. It will be a wrench—to leave this lovely place. There’s the dreadful anxiety of our future, too. What will this horrible war bring forth? I dare not think of it. Yet why should I hesitate or try to keep him back? Thousands, yes, millions, already have suffered the horrors of this terrible war for over a year.”

George Black, seventh Commissioner of the Yukon, sent in his resignation to Ottawa, and proceeded to organize a Yukon Infantry Company, of which he was appointed captain.

This is his recruiting letter :

“ COMMISSIONER’S OFFICE,
“ DAWSON, Y.T., *August 1916.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Men are needed to complete the Yukon Infantry Company for Overseas Service. You cannot fail to realize that it is the duty of every able-bodied man in Canada, who is not supporting helpless dependents, to offer his services to fight for the Empire in this great crisis.

“ That Yukon has done well, that many of her MEN have gone, that Yukon women are doing their duty, does not relieve you. It is a matter of individual manhood. Each must decide for himself whether or not he will play the part of a man.

“ We have remained at home in safety while others have been fighting our battles for over two years, although no more obligated to do so than you or I have been. They have, for us, in many cases, made the supreme sacrifice. They are calling to you and to me for help. Are we going to fail them, or will you come with us ?

“ Yours very truly,

“ GEORGE BLACK, *Captain,*
“ Yukon Infantry Company, C.E.F.”

He got a splendid response. I recall his telling me that he noted that one of his friends, an Englishman from “ up the creek,” was not speaking to him. He stopped him and said, “ What’s the matter with you ? ”

“ Matter with me ! You’ve asked every damned man in this town to enlist but me ! ”

“And who in hell got us into this war? Wasn't it the English? You ought to know enough to enlist.” A grinning recruit signed up.

One of the first to join George's company was Lyman, who, like a dozen or more Yukon boys, was far too young to go. Warren wrote that he was to command a troopship moving Siamese troops. Donald was still at Leland Stanford University, California, within a few months of graduation, but he was granted his degree on his school record and his purpose to enlist.

All my men in war service. What was there for me to do? There was only one answer. Follow them!

PART III
LONDON AND OTTAWA

CHAPTER XXV

I GO TO LONDON

THE Yukon Infantry Company, two hundred and seventy-five strong, recruited and commanded by "Captain George Black," left Dawson on the s.s. *Casca*, October 16, 1916. Aside from them and the ship's crew, I was the only other person aboard—and the only woman. For the time being my sadness and anxiety over leaving our beautiful home and many friends, and going we knew not where, were submerged in the comfort that I was with my husband and son.

The soldier boys had been given a rousing farewell banquet, with many speeches. They had been showered with gifts—tobacco and candy (to last several months), socks, and other necessities. I do not remember the donors of these, but I do recall we were all deeply touched by the gift from the Japanese of Dawson—tobacco to the value of sixty-nine dollars.

I had been fêted and honoured to the degree of being ashamed to accept more attention. My dear friends had formed a "Martha Munger Black Chapter" of the I.O.D.E. Another group had collected a sum of money, the Yukon Comfort Fund, which they entrusted to me to be spent on the boys at my discretion.

The entire population seemed to be at the waterfront to see us off. The *Dawson News* was distributing souvenir

numbers headlined with "FIGHTING MEN OF THE NORTHLAND SAY GOOD-BYE. EPOCH-MAKING OCCASION IN HISTORY OF YUKON."

The hoarse whistle of the boat signalled "All ashore." There were last hurried tearful farewells. As we drew away from the wharf, mid loud cheering, the band struck up "Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching," and I recall the verve of the singing of this Yukon wartime parody :

"There's a land of pale blue snow,
Where it's 99 below,
And the polar bears are dancing on the plain ;
In the shadow of the Pole,
Oh, my love, my own, my soul,
I will meet you when the ice worms nest again.

Chorus

"Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching,
Cheer up, Dawson, we'll return
When the Kaiser's on the blink,
We'll sail back across the brink,
And put the old town on the hum again.

"There's a land of midnight sun,
Where Boyle's dredges groan and hum,
And the ptarmigan are warbling in the trees.
And the whisky that they sell
Makes you wish you were in—well,
Our thoughts will float to you on every breeze."

We were like a big family party, and there were many surprises on the way out. The Martha Munger Black Chapter had made "housewives" (small sewing kits

which the men called "hussies") on which were hand-worked names of each member of the Company. They had also knitted several pairs of socks for George and each of the others. These were presented with due ceremony. I, too, was called forth to receive a poke of gold nuggets, one from each member of the Chapter. I have these to this very day—my "ace in the hole" in the last round of this game of life.

The boys felt that these gifts merited a verse of thanks from the Company's poet, Sergeant Barwell, with this result :

" Daughters of the Empire, please accept our hearty thanks
For your thoughtfulness—you really have been kind ;
Though we're resolute and happy, yet the Captain and
the ranks
Still cast a longing lingering look behind.

" We have stolen Mrs. Black, and we will not bring her
back
Till the Germans quit, and when the Allies win,
Till we nail the Union Jack on the Kaiser's chimney
stack,
And we toast the Yukon daughters in Berlin."

The Martha Munger Black Chapter had given me several yards of white linette to make an autographed quilt, which they intended to raffle to raise funds for war work. The men helped me tear this into four-inch squares, on which they autographed their names. These were sent back to be worked with red cotton. We bought and sold dozens of chances at "two bits apiece." Months later I learned I was the lucky winner of the quilt. I gave it to Lyman as a wedding gift.

The Company went in training at Victoria, British Columbia. During this period I visited Father and Mother.

"Did you encourage George in enlisting?" asked Father.

I nodded.

"Well, you are a fool! . . . A damn fool! But no Munger would have done otherwise."

I returned to Victoria in time to spend some of the Yukon Comfort money on a "bang up" Christmas dinner for the boys—turkey, plum pudding, and a plentiful supply (but not too much) of the "cup that cheers."

Early in January George received orders to "Stand by."

I determined to try to go overseas on the troopship with him. To determine was easy, but to untangle the yards of official red tape which would permit a wife to go over on a troopship with her husband, this third year of the war, was another and no small matter. I decided to go to Ottawa and try to get permission.

While there I interviewed everybody who might have influence or authority in the matter—Sir Robert Borden, the Prime Minister, our old friend Sir Douglas Hazen, Minister of Marine. Lady Hazen helped me considerably by making several personal calls on my behalf. I found all "so sympathetic," but the only answer I received from the "powers that be" was that they would raise no objections if General Bigger, Officer Commanding Transportation at Halifax, would consent.

I hurried to Halifax, saw the General, who was pleasant, smooth, but evasive.

"But, Mrs. Black, you wouldn't want to be the only woman on board a ship with two thousand men, would you?" he asked.

"General Bigger, I walked over the Chilkoot Pass

with thousands of men and not one wanted to elope with me."

"Well, we'll see, we'll see!" was the only satisfaction I got.

The Yukon Company arrived. George was to be Officer Commanding troops aboard ship the s.s. *Canada*. He went at once to General Bigger for orders, and Lyman went immediately with the others to the ship. I was left alone several long weary hours fairly "hanging by the gills." "Well, you can go," were George's first words when he returned. He also told me that General Bigger had called him aside, saying, "Your wife tells me you want her to go to England with you. I have held back permission until I found out from you personally if you really want her. Some husbands prefer their wives to stay at home." (That's just one example of how men gang together.)

I was so thrilled that even now I find it difficult to express it. In my journal I have recorded :

"I AM GOING. The ship leaves in an hour. There may be danger, but who cares? I can face anything with my loved ones at my side."

I was taken to the ship on a small launch, and we were soon settled in our stateroom. Immediately on sailing we were given lifeboat drill, and ordered to carry life preservers constantly when on deck.

It was an eight-day voyage, and according to Captain Davies the stormiest trip he had experienced on the North Atlantic in five years. The vessel tumbled about like a cockle shell, and for several days we were lost to the other troopships and our convoy, the French destroyer, *Admiral Aub*.

I kept to my berth during the rough weather, sitting up only to make two pneumonia jackets. One of the boys was very sick, and George had him moved into the state-room next to us in order that we might look after him.

During the worst part of the storm Captain Davies gave me a small packet, telling me that if the ship were torpedoed, or he be taken prisoner, I was to destroy it, unopened, or give it to someone in whom I had complete confidence. I sewed the oil-silk envelope to my corset. What it contained I never knew.

Every day we received marconigrams—one, that United States and Germany had severed diplomatic relations. We met several American ships ablaze with lights, their sides painted and lettered with "Stars and Stripes" and "United States." We wondered if they would get safely home.

I seem to be followed by fires even on the high seas, for in the distance I saw a blazing ship, yet we continued on our way as though nothing had happened. That night we heard the *Floriddian* was torpedoed within sight of our troopships. Within two days of Liverpool we were met by several destroyers, and from then until the ship docked all was quiet.

On arrival, before the company left for "Camp Unknown," we planned to meet at the Savoy Hotel, London (where I was to go in the meantime), when my men received landing leave. On the train from Liverpool to London I had my first experience of English kindness, when a good-looking English woman, Lady Davis, assisted me in securing a room in the Savoy, where I did not have a reservation.

The next day I ordered a taxi to take me to the Red Cross offices to offer my services to Lady Drummond. After giving the address, "13 Cockspur Street," to the driver, I added, "But I haven't the faintest idea where it is."

He took me down the Mall, past Marlborough House, Green Park, Buckingham Palace, Kensington Palace, Albert Memorial, and back by the Horse Guards and Scotland Yard, before bringing me to my destination. I asked the fare, and he said, "Eighteen shillings." I gave him a pound note, saying, "Is this your usual tip?" to which he replied, "Thank you, ma'am," and hurried away. As I parted from Lady Drummond she asked where I was staying. "At the Savoy, a very long way from here."

"That's only two blocks away," she said.

We had a good laugh over the way I had been "taken for a ride."

I told Lady Drummond that I did not care what kind of work I did as long as I was warm. She placed me under the direction of Mrs. Rivers-Bulkley (formerly lady-in-waiting to H.R.H. the Duchess of Connaught when she was in Canada) in the Prisoners-of-War Department, where from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. I typed letters—just ordinary work with no frills or glory, only the reward of knowing that I was doing something useful.

In a few days my men met me at the Savoy, and well do I remember that first dinner-party with friends there. It was then I first realized there was a food shortage. It was just at the time the people had been put on "honour" rations. One guest asked for more sugar for her strawberries. The waiter brought a dessertspoonful on a large plate. When coffee came, again she asked for more sugar. He put his hand into his trousers pocket and pulled out three lumps. I saw him do it. At the Savoy! One of the swankiest hotels in London! But the time was to come soon when I used one week's sugar ration (half a pound) to make Lyman's favourite layer cake; when it was so dark brown and sandy that I almost forgot what normal sugar

looked like ; when we could not even buy it and had to use honey and saccharine instead.

After the men left I moved from the Savoy to a tiny inexpensive three-roomed apartment. They went into strenuous training at once. Both were transferred to a machine-gun unit, and the machine-gunners were being put through their courses in half time. In order to get to the front sooner, George signed an order to revert to lieutenant, while Lyman was so eager to get to the firing line he felt he was being "trained to death." His very impatience made him work harder, and he studied as he had never done before. I recall a post card from him, "Made a hundred in a machine-gun examination—not too bad for the family's prize bonehead."

The Press gave much publicity to the arrival of the Yukoners, "who had come eight thousand miles to fight for the Empire." They told how we had sent ten per cent. of our population to fight for King and Country ; that we had given twenty dollars ahead to the patriotic fund—more than any other part of Canada. The members of the Boyle-Yukon Machine Gun Battery had distinguished themselves, all original officers getting military crosses, twenty-four men military medals, and one man a D.C.M. for conspicuous gallantry at Passchendaele.

In consequence we received a great deal of attention. One of our first invitations was to dine with T.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. The Duchess was amused at my account of the raffling of a dozen pairs of socks she had knitted on her machine, and given to me to sell for war work. Three pairs were raffled for twenty-five dollars, and three pairs sold for the same amount. One winner returned the socks to me. I, in turn, raffled them, netting in all one hundred dollars. We made one

hundred and fifty dollars from the royal socks, which pleased Her Royal Highness immensely. The Duke of Connaught took a special interest in Yukon troops, and wrote George high praise of their work.

We had cards of admission to the House of Commons. George was taken to the Distinguished Visitors' Gallery, while I was led by devious ways and dusty passages to the top of the building and put behind an iron grille in the Ladies' Gallery. I told some of the members later that this was my first visit to a country where men were so frightened of women that they had to keep them behind bars!

Everywhere I was introduced as "The Lady from the Yukon." "Is it cold there?" was always the question, and my invariable answer was, "I have never suffered with cold there as I have here." And it was true—the misery of trying to keep warm over grate fires which barely took the chill off the rooms! It was a criminal waste of fuel, too, as most of the heat went up the chimney. Our little Klondyke stoves could have warmed the rooms with half the fuel. Preparing for the night was a real ceremony. First I took a "red hot" bath, then put on my long-sleeved, high-necked flannel nightgown and bed-socks, and crawled into a bed warmed by two hot-water bottles. To think I had to go to London to get chilblains!

Occasionally some one would say, "Yukon, where is that?" One of our officers overheard that question, just before undergoing an operation. An attendant answered, "Oh, I don't know. Probably somewhere in China." The patient, whose previous lack of vitality had been causing considerable anxiety, raised himself and shouted, "Hell! Yukon is in Canada . . . near the North Pole!" The operation was successful.

As each visit from George and Lyman ended, we thought

it might be the last before they were ordered to the front—yet we seldom spoke of it. Finally they did go, leaving me trying so hard to be brave, to cultivate the habit of believing all was well, to convince myself of the utter uselessness of worry, to prepare myself, even if the worst came, to take the blow on the chin without flinching.

CHAPTER XXVI

YUKON MOTHER

MEN never seem to get over the need for mothering. Sometimes the farther away from home the more definite grows this mother-need. I had not been travelling with the Yukon Company long when a delegation waited upon me (shy and diffident they were too, apparently afraid they were going to hurt my feelings by casting reflection on my age) to ask me if I would mind if they called me "Mother." I have never minded telling my age. Being nearly fifty I had accepted the fact that I had reached middle life, although I did have a twinge of resentment when a contemporary remarked, "You must have been good-looking when you were young." I consented gladly, and from that day on I was "Mother," not only to my own three sons, but to hundreds of soldiers. And no honour I have ever had, not even the "Honourable Member for Yukon," has been greater, than to be known as "Mother" to those intrepid men of the North, who travelled so many thousand miles to face the hell of trench warfare.

I remember seeing in an English paper that the name "boys" was undignified for Britain's soldiers, but despite their bravery, self-sacrifice, and devotion to duty, many were just boys, craving and needing mother sympathy, understanding, and love in lonesome hours, even more than that of wife or sweetheart.

As I was the only Dawson woman in London, many of our boys made my small flat home when on leave. They took the place of my own boys and helped me forget my troubles, for there were times when I did not know where any of my sons were. They brought along their buddies to visit me. Both Canadians and Americans seemed so glad to meet anyone from the other side of the Atlantic. They told me their troubles and joys. Perhaps they hadn't received their letters from home. (I didn't get mine either—probably feeding the fishes.) They showed me pictures of “my wife and kids” or “my girl.” Sometimes they asked advice.

There was the man who had heard “how kind I was,” who wanted to know “what to do.” He had married an English girl, and they had one child—but he also had a wife and two children in Canada. Could I help him? My advice was to offer himself immediately for front-line service and die for his country. He didn't like it, and went away storming that the English girl had pestered him, so he had to marry her.

Women also told me their love troubles. I remember a young genteel English girl, who frankly said she wanted to know life “as married women did,” and was deliberately planning to live with a Canadian married officer on his next leave.

I was sorry for this war generation. Life was abnormal—out of focus. It was all in the present. Like many human beings in times of stress and strain—like the Klondyke stampedees—irrespective of moral codes, they succumbed to the will of the moment. They shrugged their shoulders and said, “*C'est la guerre.*”

I received many letters from Yukon boys—letters written just before they went over the top, or after they had

come through the hell fire of No-Man's-Land; not literary masterpieces nor historical records, but boyish letters of life in the trenches, letters through which runs a marvellous sportsmanship, a sublime acceptance of being a player in that game of death. I have saved them all. Let me quote from a few :

“ . . . We are within a few hours of going in as part of the big noise, and we all expect to come out . . . but you can't always tell. I have an absolutely bomb-proof job now (so I wrote the folks at home—but I lied). If anything happens to me I have had a good time anyway, and when this reaches you I'll have had considerable experience.”

“ We are surely in the midst of the real thing. Do not worry about us—it won't help. We'll carry on and hope for the best.”

“ . . . We have arrived almost where the real fighting begins, and we'll be doing our bit in a few hours—eager to get into it ! ”

“ . . . Been up every night. The road has only been shelled twice—a big one fell twenty yards ahead of our car and another near enough to kill our lead horse and his rider. When a fellow goes up this road he realizes what the poet meant when he said, ' Through the gate into the Valley of Death. ' ”

Rarely was there a complaint of the cold, dirt, and discomfort of the trenches ; all taken in a day's work, as shown by these letters :

“ . . . At the present moment (11 p.m.) I'm in a semi-dugout, like a camp of the most careless and shiftless prospector who ever went North—a cross between that and a shack of a Moosehide Indian, but it's so much better than most that there's no kick coming.”

There wasn't much “ trench news,” but here are some homely bits which the boys would write only to mothers :

“ . . . Can you believe it ? I am actually wearing the coarse scratchy issue underwear. Had a chance to get a bath and have 'em on right now. We nearly lost our underwear. The Boche turned on the 'hate,' which splashed mud all over our washing. 'Little Joe,' our cook, ran out and rescued it, shouting gleefully (while running back), 'I've saved the clothes.' The rest of us cursed him to high heaven for being such a fool. I wish you'd send me a pair of Boston garters. My legs are too skinny to support socks on their shape.”

“ . . . We've had a week of regular Yukon May weather. Some of the trees look as though they will take a chance on putting out a few leaves. I'm sending you some daffodils and violets. It was a hot place where I found them—one of those forests that you see pictures of, nothing but a few busted tree stumps, but the flowers didn't seem to mind.”

“ . . . I had the honour of my best breeches and leggings being presented to the King, on William's person, at his Investiture. The breeches were new, and I was surprised to get them back.”

“ . . . Please find out how my bank account stands.

I want to get married when I am on leave. The girl's no foolish doll, capable and willing to go through all right."

"... I had a dandy time on leave and enjoyed every minute, even the few hours at the Palace, when the King pinned the Cross on me."

"... I'm learning to speak English. I can say 'pawss the buttah, please,' and no one bats an eye."

They were most appreciative of the parcels sent by the Daughters of the Empire or by me as administrator of the Yukon Comfort Fund. They'd ask me to thank the "Dawson women" for the socks—"the only way to escape trench feet is to change socks every twenty-four hours." They wanted chewing tobacco—"not that we have the habit of chewing, but it makes us forget we're hungry and cold." I sent meat grinders and sterno stoves. "That last parcel was fine. Thanks for the fruit cake, puddings, home-made candy, cocoa, writing pads, indelible pencils, jack knives (and how we like the big strong blades), a corkscrew, and a file."

When the wartime election took place, I think 90 per cent. of the soldiers voted for conscription. "Let those who vote against it come over here," wrote one man, "where shells are dropping faster than you can breathe. There's plenty of room, too, and they'd find some difference from 'safety first' at home." Another wrote he was fearful the women's vote would defeat conscription, as many who had already lost husbands or sons would vote to keep other men at home.

I was a very proud Yukon mother, too, when the Press of the day was featuring "the bravery of a Yukon youth

of nineteen, who caught a company of Hun cavalry as they rushed through a chance gap in our lines." That youth was my son Lyman.

Lest this outburst might be considered the innocuous drivelling of a doting mother, I have all the clippings and letters on this, tied up in a special bundle. This letter is from a friend who was an eye-witness :

"During the night the infantry fell back without warning the machine-gunners. At dawn we saw the Huns advancing in fours, only two hundred yards away. We opened up with the guns, point blank, and mowed them down in swaths. We held them up and stuck to it until the enemy opened up on both flanks. A whizz-bang battery in front put one of our guns out of action. We retreated a quarter of a mile to a better position.

"While retreating Sergeant Blaikie and Private Fisher fell. Lyman stopped to see if he could help them, but Blaikie was dead and Fisher, who was dying, urged him to save himself. As the Huns were right on our heels he had to run for it. He then remounted the one remaining gun and opened up on them. For twelve days he was in fighting like this, and how he ever came through without a scratch is a marvel. Much of the time he was cut off from his O.C. and was entirely on his own. His stories are great thrillers—that is, after they have been picked out of him."

Another friend wrote :

"The O.C. says that boy of yours is a perfect wizard with motor lorries and cycles—a born organizer, as brave as a lion, and sometimes 'a damned little fool for running into danger.' But he and his battery have

made the Yukon name immortal, for I hear it was the machine-guns that saved the day."

I tried to get Lyman to tell me the story, but this is all I got :

" Really nothing to it. We just had a hell of a fight. How I came through I don't know. I wish I could have brought out Blaikie and Fisher, but hadn't a minute to spare. The Huns were right on top of us and bullets were tearing up the ground all around me. I had to get back to the gun and get it going again.

" The Huns tried to come on again and again, but they fell before the guns like grass before a scythe. When they worked round to our flanks and we had no support, we simply had to withdraw. When we struck a good place to set up our guns again, you bet we let them know that we were there."

Lyman was awarded the Military Cross.

The morning of the Investiture was a busy one at our little flat. The boy had his buttons and shoes to shine, his uniform to brush (no batman there), while I was excitedly getting breakfast and donning my very best dress.

We (relatives and close friends) had received beautifully engraved invitations, " with the compliments of the Master of the Household, Derek Keppel," to witness the Investitures, which were to be held in the grounds of Buckingham Palace — " weather permitting " outlined on the card in red ink.

On arrival at the palace, Lyman was ushered into the hall, while I was taken to the garden, where an inner quadrangle was roped off with thick scarlet woollen cords. In the centre of this was a canopy of shabby and worn-looking red and white awning, supported by bare, rough, ugly wooden props. Under this was an elevated platform with

crimson-carpeted inclines on either side, while the platform furniture consisted of a very ordinary-looking table, on which rested a crimson velvet cushion for the decorations, and two gilt-backed straight chairs upholstered in crimson brocade. I thought at the time that with very little expense or effort this setting could have been made much more effective with a beauty and elegance which would have suited the occasion, but I presumed, too, that Their Majesties wished it as simple as possible, to stress the economy and plainness of living necessary in wartime.

The King and his aides, all in full service uniforms, arrived, followed by about two hundred others, twenty of whom were nursing sisters. Although I had seen King George V. many times, from my very "good seat" I had my first opportunity of watching a continuous performance in which he played a leading part. I thought him very attractive, especially when he smiled, more with his eyes than his mouth. He was just beginning to get grey, and looked very dignified and fine in his uniform, resplendent with red tabs and rows of decorations.

He gave the first decoration, a Victoria Cross, to a young Australian lieutenant, who had lost his right arm during the March offensive, 1918. He chatted cordially with the young hero, who, after the first trying moments, quite lost his shyness. His Majesty then pinned a decoration on each, with whom he had a few words—all the while looking pleasant and interested.

After Lyman received his decoration, "the M.C.," a handsome silver cross pendant from a crown, the whole hanging from blue and white moiré ribbon, he went to an anteroom of the palace, where he was given a box for his cross, then outside to be photographed by the Canadian official photographer.

CHAPTER XXVII

OVERSEAS SERVICE

I NEVER worked as hard in my life as I did those overseas years. After three months of arduous steady service in the Prisoners-of-War Department, the routine became disorganized by loss of Canadian mails, delays of prisoners-of-war letters, governmental regulations cutting the amount of food parcels in half, an epidemic of measles (which meant double shift), and two personal attacks of appendicitis. I filled in the odd hours by doing Y.M.C.A. canteen work, attending meetings and investigations of the Women's Battersea Pension Board, sewing for the Red Cross, administering the Yukon Comfort Fund, visiting wounded Yukoners in hospital, giving lectures on "The Romance of the Klondyke Gold Fields," writing letters to family and friends and to two Yukon papers, as I was "our own correspondent" for the *Dawson News* and *Whitehorse Star*. I tried magazine writing, but when I came to the actual recording, my pen scratched, my typewriter needed cleaning, and when this was done, inspiration was ever jeering at me from the bough of some distant tree outside my window, and I set to work darning socks.

People used to envy my opportunity for service, but there were many times I was deeply discouraged. My poor efforts seemed like those of a caged squirrel, always turning the wheel but to no avail. As I saw the Red Cross

ambulances standing in long sombre lines at Charing Cross, Waterloo, and Victoria stations, while the wounded were gently hurried from the train to them, like so many others not in front line service I felt indeed only "on the outside looking in."

It was hard to keep up my spirits through the many long, long lonely days in London. One dark murky day, on returning to my flat after a most trying time, which had ended at the deathbed of a soldier's young wife, my little Cockney maid asked :

"Wot 'ave you bin doin', ma'am ?"

"Oh, I don't know—nothing, I think."

"That's always hit, ma'am—somethink doin' and nothink done."

I shall never forget the week of anguish when Lyman was reported missing and the great joy when he was located. I would go in rags the rest of my life if we all could be in our Yukon home again, I thought. Would those days ever return ; days of peace and prosperity, and would we ever renew old friendships or become the happy care-free people of olden days ?

Once in a while I exploded. I surprised one beautiful woman who was grumbling about poor food, incompetent servants, by turning on her fiercely. "You don't know what hard times mean. You don't live alone in a dingy, cold little flat. You have a magnificent centrally-heated house, beautifully furnished, many servants, good clothes. You have nothing to do but be pleasant. If you were in my shoes you might grumble."

I was a bit shocked at myself, but George and Lyman had not been gone very long, Warren had been ordered to Bangkok, Siam, to bring an interned German ship to San Francisco, I did not know where Donald was, and I had

just received word of Father's death. Besides, this woman was wearing a new black satin dress, trimmed with real seal, and, what was still worse, I had to buy and wear English "boots," and they made my feet, which are fairly small, look like badly shaped hams. It always peeves me to wear old clothes.

Once, completely unnerved by an air raid, I packed my doll rags for a week's holiday, but I felt almost wicked when I thought that such a short distance away men were dying for us.

The air raids more than anything else brought personal realization of the horrors of war, and I went through twelve. It is a fearful and nerve-racking sensation to know that sudden death is lurking in the heavens above you.

Here are a few diary notes on one of the worst air raids :

"Guns have been going hours, and they do make a devilish noise. What must it be like for our men in France, where they never cease ? Fire engines are tearing up and down. Sirens are screaming. The London searchlights, huge phantom fingers, not unlike northern lights without colour, are sweeping the sky, making it as light as day."

I remember the first moonlight raid—clouds scudding across the sky, and quite a wind. I was one of the hostesses at a dinner-party of eighty, at the Lyceum Club, in honour of the Anglo-Roumanian Alliance. The warning had been given, the guests knew what to expect. Yet the boom of the guns, punctuated by the squashy muffled plop of exploding bombs, was terrifying. On arrival, the trembling little maid who took my cloak said, "Oh, ma'am, I do be that nervous." "And so be I!" I answered. Only four guests

showed any signs of being perturbed, these leaving the room. Conversation, and later our programme, went on as usual, and we drank the toast to the King to music punctuated by German bombs.

Whenever I was in the depths of discouragement, Battersea was the place to go to. There wives and mothers of disabled soldiers living on mere pittance, and bringing up families, were so uncomplaining and cheerful. This work took one very full day a week, when I left my flat at 8 a.m. and was seldom home before 7 p.m. My "job" was taking down statements of applicants for pensions, with pursuant investigations. There were many illicit love affairs, complicated by children. In my Government reports I always recommended pensions for unmarried mothers for the sake of the children.

"But these children are illegitimate!" objected several members of the Board.

"And what about the 'bar sinister' of some of your first families?" I replied.

The Yukon Comfort Fund buying meant hours of shopping in crowded stores. Here is a typical order—machine-gun buttons, razor blades, a basket of green grapes, four fresh eggs at twenty cents apiece. After the battery went up the line the casualties were heavy, and some days I'd visit as many as seven of our boys in hospital, always taking some "comfort."

There were with the Yukoners about twenty-five or thirty Slovaks, most of whom had worked for Col. Joe Boyle. They were splendid physical specimens and loyal to the core. One of the men, Mike by name, came to me and said he wanted "fifty do-lar and no flour." I knew their rations were good, so I wrote to Lieutenant Bradford of the company, asking him what Mike meant. Investiga-

tion showed that some of the boys had told him that Mrs. Black had fifty dollars for every member of the Yukon Company, that if she did not spend it on him before he was killed she sent flowers to his relatives afterward. I saw to it that when Mike went to France he received a parcel of comforts, and I am happy to record there was no need for flowers.

One day I received word that a Yukoner in hospital at Willesden would like to see me. I got out my trusty guide-book, which told me to take "Bus 8" at the corner of Oxford Circus to Willesden. Starting out briskly after lunch I first hied me to a florist's, where, with Yukon Comfort money, I bought a huge "burning bush" in full bloom. I waited long for a "Number 8." When it did arrive every seat was taken. However, I got on and stood for miles, my plant growing heavier and heavier. Finally I got a seat behind two nurses who were discussing "tactless and stupid hospital visitors who brought flowers instead of cigarettes or fruit."

Minutes had lengthened to hours before we reached Willesden. At a chemist's shop I asked for further directions to the hospital, which were, "Walk down seven blocks, turn to the right, walk one block, then to the left three or four until you come to a field."

"Are there any animals in the field?" (Goats, rams, bulls flashed through my mind.)

He thought so.

By this time it had begun to rain.

"Can I get a taxi?"

There were no taxis.

I started. The rain settled to a steady downpour. The paper covering my plant became sodden and I threw it away; rain would be good for the plant. I came to the

field. Yes, there were cattle all right. What if there should be a bull? How would he like my burning bush? But there wasn't one, and the cows were contentedly chewing their cud.

I plodded across to the hospital, which I could see—arriving cold and wet just four hours after the time I had left my flat.

My Yukoner was so glad to see me that I forgot the long tiresome trip, that my hair was out of curl, that I was looking my very worst in a room full of men. He liked the plant. I was glad I had brought it. After all, nurses do not know everything.

As I was leaving he said, "Mother, would you mind very much if I gave this plant to one of the sisters? It's her birthday, and every other fellow in the ward has given her a present, but nothing as swell as this. And she just loves flowers."

Before I could give my consent he said eagerly, "Here she is now! Oh, Sister, do meet my old Yukon friend, Mrs. Black! We all call her 'Mother.'" I turned to meet her. She was one of the nursing sisters whom I had sat behind on the bus!

The boys were so appreciative of these visits and gifts that I was more than compensated for any efforts I made. There was the occasional fraud, but usually they were concerned about any trouble they might have caused me. At Christmas 1917 the Yukon Machine-gun Battery presented me with their badge—specially made in gold.

I particularly enjoyed talking about my Yukon, on which I gave almost four hundred lectures—the majority illustrated. I averaged a daily talk for months, to audiences which numbered fifty to seven hundred. One day I gave three, but this was too much.

My most strenuous lecture trip was one lasting three weeks under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A., in South Wales, where the barren rugged Cambrians reminded me of the hills of home which flank the Yukon and Klondyke rivers. It meant catching trains at all hours to all places, carrying heavy "boxes" of slides and clothes, blocks on end in all kinds of weather, and all kinds of accommodation, from the humblest to the highest, as my "hospitality" was provided.

I recall, at one hospital, two cots being placed head to head directly in front of me—in one a man who had lost a leg, and in the other one who had lost an arm. When the lights were lowered for my slides, one man rolled over and was soon "audibly" asleep. The other man raised himself, gave the sleeper a poke—but to no avail. Such an incident to any speaker at least serves as a barometer—that it's time to quit.

One lecture trip took me to Southampton. During the day I was sought out by the superintendent of a big English hospital there, who asked me if I would come to see a terribly wounded patient who, when brought in, was wearing an American uniform but had no identification disk. He had barely regained his power of speech, and to date his only audible word was "Hun." The doctors felt his hatred of the Germans was preying on his mind, and, because I had come originally from United States, they thought possibly I might know him. It seemed a long chance, but I was glad to go. The minute I saw him I exclaimed, "Fred Hunn!" To my great surprise this soldier was a third cousin of mine from Chicago, one whom I had not seen for years.

Once I spoke at Church House, London, on the "Missionaries of Yukon," having been invited to take the place

of His Lordship Bishop Stringer of our Territory. On arrival I was shown into a committee room with fifteen clergymen, bishops and others, who eyed me with as much suspicion as though I were a bomb. After we had waited ten minutes, the Bishop of London arrived, breathless and apologetic for being late—he had been visiting troops with the King. We hurried to the platform, where his Lordship made a few preliminary remarks, mentioning all speakers but me. When he introduced me, in my turn, on the programme, he said, "Oh yes, Mrs. George Black, wife of the Commissioner of Yukon, will speak. I think she is what they call a 'Sourdough.'" (Later I was asked if they called me this because I made sour bread.)

By this time I was provoked at his casual treatment as I had been officially invited to speak. I began, "My Lord Chairman, my lords, ladies, and gentlemen, if this be the way you usually treat women who are invited to address you I do not wonder suffragettes go around with axes over here."

The Bishop half arose, began to speak, but I continued, "My Lord, several times in London I have had to listen to you without interrupting when I should have very much liked to do so. Now please listen to me without interruption." The audience of some five hundred applauded. I then expounded the theory of my basis of married life (harmony in religion, politics, and country), and continued: "And so, because I married an Anglican, I am one. But had I married a Fiji Islander I would probably be eating missionary now instead of talking missionary."

After tea a meek little "picked-sparrow" type of woman said to me, "You do not really mean that you could eat missionaries, do you?" The Bishop of London was with the group, and, looking at him, I said, "Well—I did

feel like taking a bite out of His Lordship." He laughed heartily at this.

My lecture work resulted in a distinctive honour. On July 18, 1917, I was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. My name was proposed by Miss Pullen-Bury, F.R.G.S., F.R.A.I., author of *From Halifax to Vancouver*, and seconded by Sir Thomas Mackenzie, High Commissioner for New Zealand.

CHAPTER XXVIII

JOE BOYLE—SAVIOUR OF ROUMANIA

ONE quiet Sunday afternoon in the Spring of 1918 I was busy preparing a chicken dinner for several Yukoners who were on leave, and who had given me their food coupons for this spread. The door bell rang, and on answering it I was delighted to see my old Klondyke friend, Joe Boyle. I knew our boys would give no other man in the world a greater welcome than our own Joe Boyle, who at the time was being heralded everywhere as the "Saviour of Roumania." He had been one of the first Britons in the Empire to answer the call of the Motherland that fatal August of 1914. Ten days after war was declared he had offered the Government of Canada, through my husband, Commissioner George Black, to equip a contingent of fifty Yukoners, to be known as the Boyle Yukon Motor Machine Gun Battery, for, with almost uncanny foresight, this great adventurer recognized the part motor machine-guns were to take in the war. The offer was accepted, and in October 1914 fifty of our finest men left Dawson.

But my friendship with Joe Boyle, who might have been the hero of a dozen Henty books, began in the gold rush days of the Klondyke, when my brother George was managing Joe's laundry. Joe was then a young man—the roving son of one of Ontario's well-known stock breeders.

Brought up in the quiet seclusion of an eastern farm, he filled his mind and heart with stories of the sea, and before his eighteenth birthday had run away from home and was sailing before the mast. Adventure met this Canadian boy at every turn. Quarantined in an Indian hospital, clad only in nightclothes, he escaped, found his way to the busy docks, and, seeing his boat in the stream, plunged into the water and swam to it. Pursued by native policemen, he dived under the boat and was finally hauled aboard by sympathetic seamen who had witnessed the performance.

Later, as the ship was lying in tropical waters, one of the swimming sailors screamed "Shark!" In a second Joe Boyle snatched a knife, and, holding it between his teeth, dived overboard, came up under the man-eater, buried his knife to the hilt in its belly, and carried to safety the man who was being dragged to a horrible death.

Love for his mother drew him back to Canada, where he became interested in trotting horses, this taking him to the race-track centres of the States. Then came news of the Klondyke gold strike. Among the many excited thousands who met the northern ships at Seattle in 1897 with their "tons of gold" was Joe Boyle. He formed a partnership with Frank Slavin of prize ring fame, and they got as far as Skagway. They had no money to go on to Dawson, the heart of the Klondyke. Joe could play the banjo and sing popular songs to his own accompaniments, so he and Slavin formed a vaudeville team and sang and boxed their way to Dawson. Here they started a steam laundry, made money, and Joe sold out.

Again he hit the trail, to ask from the Canadian Government a concession of mining land. With his wonderful foresight, he saw the possibilities of hydraulicking and dredging in the valley of the Klondyke River. He succeeded in

interesting influential men in his mission, and returned to Dawson with a concession of forty square miles of mining leases. The wealth of Golconda was his. He married and appeared to have settled down for the rest of his life.

During these years he contributed much to the life of Dawson. A man of iron build, good-looking, a dominant personality, he was welcomed everywhere. 'Tis true he was quarrelsome, overbearing, and intolerant, determined to the point of obstinacy in business dealings, but we who knew him intimately and treasured his friendship found him gentle and kind, at times generous to a fault, and possessed of a great love for children, animals, and poetry. Most of all he was loved by the children of Dawson. Every year he gave them a picnic, at which he romped and played with them, seemingly enjoying it as much as they did.

Then came the declaration of War! The call of the Motherland! Although he had organized and personally financed that first Yukon contingent, he, the master mind, had been left behind. Gold, gold, and more gold, was needed for the sinews of war. English stockholders clamoured for better returns, giant dredges wallowed deeper into the pay dirt, and the fires of the assayers burned hotter and brighter. But the heart of Joe Boyle beat in unison with the tramp of many feet thousands of miles across the sea.

The call of adventure and patriotism finally triumphed. The mines were left in charge of capable men, and Joe Boyle was soon in London, keen for foreign service "in action." He quickly discovered that he, to whom Government red tape and diplomacy meant nothing, was only a small cog in the millions of wheels of the monstrous machine of WAR. He stamped and chafed at delay, but Joe Boyle was never known to give up. His persistence was of the



Joe Boyle at a Children's Picnic at Dawson.

constant-dropping sort that wears away a stone. Within a year he was sent to Russia in charge of British transportation in the Moscow area. Then came the Revolution, and he was ordered to take back Roumania's national treasure to Jassy from Moscow, where it had been sent for safe keeping.

During the days when Roumania was cut off from the Allies, surrounded by foes on all sides, her main road for transportation of food supplies completely blocked by the Bolsheviks, Boyle made many air flights to Odessa for provisions. He was placed in full charge of the Bessarabian railways. Undoubtedly but for him Roumania would have starved, and his deeds were considered by both the Roumanian and British Governments as miraculous. He became a close personal friend of King Ferdinand and Queen Marie, who honoured him with many decorations. He came and went at will in the royal household, and the royal children called him "Uncle Joe."

Was it any wonder that I welcomed my old friend literally and figuratively with open arms that Sunday afternoon? Questions and answers flew thick and fast.

"When did you get here?"

"Yesterday."

"Why didn't you come right up?"

"Had dinner with Their Majesties the King and Queen at Buckingham Palace. They were most anxious to have personal word of their relatives."

"Well, if you want to talk to me you will have to come to the kitchen while I get dinner for some of our boys. Maybe we'll let you in on it too, even if you haven't 'antied' with a food coupon."

There in a corner, in an easy-chair, he related the most thrilling adventures as simply as one would tell of quiet

days at home. He told me of his Russian and Roumanian experiences, of two trips to the Crimea, at the request of two kings and three queens (a pretty full house), that he might see the Dowager Czarina and those few members of the Russian Court who were with her.

He showed me snapshots and autographed photographs of two-thirds of the royalties of Europe, and a box of medals and decorations, until I was fairly bewildered, and nearly sugared the gravy.

Previous to the Revolution he had been given audiences with the Czar, whom he thought a sincere patriot, but weak, a man driven and harried by underground cabals and jealousies. He described the early days of the Revolution. He had stood beside Russian officers who had had their swords broken and their decorations torn from their breasts. He had seen men struck down, women outraged, and the streets of St. Petersburg literally running with blood. He was in Tarnapol at the time of the Austrian advance, and there, because of assistance given refugees and the organization of a Red Cross Service, had been decorated twice by the Loyalist General Korniloff.

He had sat in a Bolshevik council round the magnificent table which had been used for centuries in the state office of the Czars, and beside him was a common soldier carving a hunk of bread with a bayonet, singing as he did so a Russian lament, "My little Brown Mother lies under the Snow." The new Government asked him to take charge of transportation, but he refused, as he was a firm believer in stable government.

With only two British officers to assist him, he was then sent with Roumania's national treasure to Jassy, and he told me of the emergency when he had to leap into the cab of a railway engine and drive it himself.

He calmly described his rescue of sixty-three Roumanian members of parliament, who had been given hospitality at Odessa, while Russia was Imperial, because Jassy was so crowded with refugees. The Revolution came suddenly, and the Roumanian deputies were seized by the Bolsheviks, thrust aboard a ship to be taken away to the probable fate of being put to death. In Odessa at the time, hearing of their capture, unarmed, he rushed to the harbour, arriving at the moment of the ship's departure. Resisting all efforts to put him off, he leaped aboard the ship. For ten days they sailed the Black Sea, Joe all the while protesting at the arrest of the deputies. Finally they put back to Odessa, and the Roumanians were released.

You ask HOW? I cannot tell, nor even give to myself a satisfactory explanation of how he accomplished this. Joe Boyle spoke no language except English, but he was fearless and dynamic, and through an interpreter, gestures and pantomime, was able to convince the Bolsheviks of the sure and certain vengeance of the British should a single hair of the Roumanians be touched.

When the deputies returned to Jassy, weeping wives, mothers, and children knelt before him with prayers of gratitude. King Ferdinand and Queen Marie decorated him and conferred upon him the title of Duke of Jassy. The people proclaimed him ROUMANIA'S SAVIOUR.

At this point the Yukon soldier boys arrived. The feast was spread and the Boyle stories told again, after which each man had tales of France, Belgium, or the Nile, and the wee sma' hours were upon us before good-nights were said.

Shortly after this Queen Marie was in London. She expressed a wish to thank Canadians personally for what Canada had done for Roumania, and so Sir George and

Lady Perley (Sir George was then High Commissioner for Canada), invited about a hundred of us to be presented to Her Majesty.

George and I went with "Joe Boyle" as we continued to call him. (A high official at Buckingham Palace once said to me reproachfully, "You know, Mrs. Black, we always speak of him as Col. Boyle," to which I replied, "He would be surprised and hurt if we ever called him anything but 'Joe.'")

The room was well filled when the Queen entered, exactly to the minute. (I have discovered that royalty is always on time.) Shrugging her shoulders, a gorgeous sable cape lined with ermine slipped into the hands of the King's equerry, Sir Charles Cust. She had golden-brown hair, a fine complexion, large blue-black eyes, and a really majestic carriage. She was wearing a handsome gown of panne velvet, coloured and patterned like an Indian shawl, the skirt *en traine*, with side panels bordered with sable; a silver turban with gold and bronze flowers, and a short delicate brown veil that fell in graceful folds; a string of beautiful pearls, reaching almost to her waist, also enormous pearl ear-rings mounted with solitaire diamonds; and she carried a sable muff edged with ermine.

Sir Charles Cust, Sir George and Lady Perley, Lady Drummond, Lady Turner, and Matron Macdonald of the Canadian Nursing Service, hastened to receive her, and a general tour of the room was begun.

Almost half the company had been presented when Queen Marie caught sight of Joe Boyle. At once she walked across the room, caught his hand and said, "Where have you been? We have not seen you for three days."

"I'm sorry, Your Majesty, I've been with old Yukon friends. I have two with me—Captain and Mrs. George

Black. You've heard me speak of them often. Your Majesty, I should like to present them."

The Queen impulsively took my hand in both of hers, saying in a pleasant voice, "Then you know Col. Boyle! He is a miracle man. He is Roumania's Saviour. When everyone else ran away, deserted us, Col. Boyle knew no fear. He remained. He saved our people."

By this time all eyes in the room were riveted on us. Time was passing; royalty has no spare moments, and others were waiting eagerly to be presented to the beautiful Queen. Smilingly she left us, saying, "Col. Boyle will bring you to me again."

Later, when I was presented at the Roumanian Legation, I could not help noticing how dear "Our Joe" was to this lovely Queen and her family. She told me of the night of anguish when she and the King were saying good-bye to representatives of the Allies, who had been ordered back to their respective countries because of a forced armistice with Germany.

"Then came Joe Boyle. His very presence was a tower of strength. 'They have all gone,' I mourned. 'But I shall not leave,' was his reply. And Joe Boyle alone remained to console, help, and encourage." As she related this so feelingly, I noted she was wearing Joe's gift—his golden nuggets—with her glorious pearls.

Joe was a great favourite with the two younger royal children—the Princess Ileana and Prince Nicholas. He told them stories of Yukon with such realism that Queen Marie said, "We travelled with him over its vast snow-covered spaces, felt the biting cold, heard the howls of the huskies, saw the camp-fire's smoke, and even smelled the frying bacon. . . . No one could spin a yarn like Uncle Joe.

“ He taught us rhymes of Service which he loved—
rhymes like this :

“ ‘ There’s a land where the mountains are nameless,
And the rivers all run God knows where ;
There are lives that are erring and aimless,
And deaths that just hang by a hair ;
There are hardships that nobody reckons,
There are valleys unpeopled and still ;
There’s a land—oh, it beckons and beckons,
I want to go back, and I will.’ ”

After the war Joe brought the Princess Ileana, who had been suffering from a severe attack of 'flu, to Paris to join her mother. He was also entrusted to bring “ Nicky ” to England, where he was to be put in school. I was introduced (not presented) to this youngest Roumanian prince on this occasion. I was buying an umbrella at an Army and Navy Store in London, and there I met Joe Boyle with two young officers. Addressing one of his companions, a most personable teen-age youngster, Joe said, “ Nicky, I want you to meet Mrs. George Black of Yukon.” He shook hands, saying cordially, “ I am happy to meet you. I have heard so much of you and your family from Col. Boyle.” “ Who’s Nicky ? ” I asked as the youth walked away. Then Joe told me.

While in England, Joe Boyle was paid much attention by all members of the royal family. However, no adulation turned his head, and he was always loyal to his old friends. No one had a higher opinion of, or greater respect for, the monarchical form of government, but with his great intimacy at the Roumanian court, and the marked friendship shown him by the British royal family, there was no servility, but fervent loyalty and affection.

After the Armistice Joe became interested in Roumania's oil wells, which the exigencies of war had compelled the authorities to wreck. He again settled down to civilian work, but two attacks of paralysis sapped his strength and brought on a lingering illness. Cared for by a former Klondyke friend, Braden Burg, he died in England, April 24, 1923, and is buried in an old country churchyard.

Three years after his death, when Queen Marie planned to come to Canada, she said in a Press interview: "A dream I never thought to realize is coming true. I am actually to see Canada. Ever since I was a child Canada has always been dear to my heart. Its very name spelt elemental force, health, grand endeavour, large sweeping landscapes, great forests, magnificent lakes and rivers, magic winters of frozen white, green pasture-lands with model farms, and giant orchards full of luscious fruit.

"Many years after I had formed my childhood vision of Canada a Canadian came into my life as a personal friend. And such a dear friend he was that now, whenever the name of Canada is pronounced, I see him standing strong, steady, and true, against that gorgeous background of my childhood's vision.

"Joe Boyle was his name, and he came into our lives at a moment of great distress. Betrayed by Bolshevik Russia, Roumania found herself surrounded by enemies. And suddenly Joe Boyle was there, a man who knew no fear. He was a real son of his race—strong and true.

"His was a life that some of the great writers would like to chronicle. I feel my pen is much too weak to relate such a thrilling story, but one day I mean to tell what he meant to us and why his memory is kept holy among us, and I shall tell how I had an old stone cross

carried all the way from Roumania to England to put on his grave, and had engraved on it :

JOE W. BOYLE
SAVIOUR OF ROUMANIA

and these lines from Service :

“ ‘ A man with the heart of a Viking
And the simple faith of a child.’ ”

“ But I would not feel as though I could enter Canada without having first sent a thought of ‘ Dear Uncle Joe,’ because I feel certain that his brave spirit will meet me there, happy that I have come to the country I know so well, so intimately, so dearly, because of him.”

When Queen Marie arrived in Montreal I was fortunate in being granted a twenty-minute interview, and we talked of Joe Boyle the whole time. She told me of the last years of his life—of his longing to go back to Yukon. “ I am a roving man of wild unsettled places—a fighter—I do not like court life, fancy dress, and polite society.” He quoted Service as he was wont to do :

“ I’m sick to death of your well-groomed gods,
Your make belief and your show ;
I long for a whiff of bacon and beans,
And a snug shakedown in the snow,
A trail to break and a life at stake,
And another bout with the foe.”

But he was never to return to his beloved Yukon. Shortly after, while in England, he took his second stroke.

Queen Marie invited him to come to Roumania to be cared for there, but he would not go. " ' I want you to remember me as I was,' he wrote. And when he died there was barely enough to pay his funeral expenses," continued Her Majesty. " True to my promise I placed upon his grave a cross of Roumanian stone, and beneath it my own little cross of the Regina Maria Order, which the King of Roumania had given him for service to our country. And every week I send golden flowers to his grave.

" In our lives he left an empty place which no one else will ever fill."

CHAPTER XXIX

GOOD TIMES IN BLIGHTY

IT was reunions with my own men and such visits as that of Joe Boyle which broke the loneliness and weariness of war work. At such times we Yukoners ganged together, combined our food tickets, opened the parcels from home, had sumptuous meals at my flat, after which we went to the theatre, sight-seeing, or sometimes spent a week-end in the country. Donald never did get overseas. In every letter he wrote, "When you get this, I'll probably be on my way over," but instead he was sent from one aviation camp to another as an instructor.

I remember Lyman's first leave from the front. That was worthy of recording in my journal :

"My boy has been on leave two wonderful weeks. He's grown like a weed, loves his work, and never forgets he's a soldier. He's the picture of health, but shows the strain of the war—looks twenty-nine instead of nineteen."

Because of George's Yukon Commissionership we were invited to functions which to-day are history. We were two of the fortunate thirty-five hundred who attended the service in St. Paul's Cathedral which commemorated United States' entrance into the Great War. We had good

seats, within a short distance of the royal party. It included Queen Mary, wearing a grey tailored suit, black satin sailor hat with upturned brim and usual high osprey; the Princess Mary, a pretty fair-haired serious young girl; and the then exceedingly popular Prince of Wales.

In 1917 the incoming Mayor of London, Sir Charles Hanson, a former Canadian business man, invited us to see the Lord Mayor's procession from the balcony of Mansion House and later have lunch in the Egyptian room.

The next year I saw this procession from a different vantage point—the top of a carter's wagon.

In order to get a good view I started out early in the morning, "opped a bus" to Trafalgar Square, where the patient British crowds were stolidly standing, sitting, or squatting in every possible place within sight of the procession. The base of Nelson's monument was black with men and boys, and the lions were being ridden by London gamins.

I walked over to Cheapside and made my way down that street until the bells of St. Mary-le-Bow began to ring at five minutes to twelve. I couldn't have timed it better. I thought of Dick Whittington and his cat. These were the very bells that called to him: "Turn again, Whittington, Lord Mayor of London!" But, as I listened, they said nothing prophetic to me.

At the moment a carter drove up with his van, hauled in his horse, drew out his pipe, carefully packed the tobacco, and settled himself comfortably. Watching him out of the corner of my eye for a minute, I hurried over and said, "I'll give you half a crown if you will let me sit up there beside you." He agreed, and with a pair of grimy hands gallantly helped me up. Soon the van was crowded with men and boys, but no one was allowed to sit with us.

The carter called me "Leddy," and I could easily imagine that I was of the real "quality," watching the procession from my own chariot. I caught a number of glances cast my way, but London is so big that one may do almost anything without defying the conventions too scandalously.

I had thought the previous year's show was wonderful, but this far surpassed it. Then, too, we were all so much more hopeful of victory—at last. There was a happier atmosphere about everything and everybody. The music seemed livelier, the strains of one band fading away as the next became louder and louder. As we watched, airships floated above us, observation balloons glided gently along with the air currents, and high over all buzzed great aeroplanes in perfect formation.

This year there were Allied soldiers as well as those from every part of the Empire; land girls—riding, driving, and marching; aeroplane workers putting finishing touches to 'planes; a sadly wonderful float, carrying legless men working at their new trade of diamond cutting; large and small tanks; guns fearfully and wonderfully camouflaged; guns captured from Germans, Austrians, and Turks; and two Hun 'planes with dummy men.

Once again the carriage of Chelsea pensioners wearing scarlet coats and cocked hats, their breasts covered with medals of bygone campaigns, thrilled us with England's glory.

Then followed the mounted "Beefeaters" with their bottle-green velvet costumes, embroidered with the heaviest gold galloon, flaring skirts, nipped in at the waist, and green velvet hats. They might have stepped out of a similar procession in the days of Queen Elizabeth. A man in the cart told me that each of these costumes cost two hundred and fifty pounds.

Behind these were the carriages carrying the City Fathers, followed by the imposing coach of "My Lord Bishop." These conveyances, however, could not be compared with the golden glory of the Lord Mayor's coach—a magnificent symbol of mediævalism, swung on immense leather straps, like the old Concord stages. It was enclosed with highly polished plate glass, so that His Lordship and his chaplain, and other worthies, might be seen easily by the cheering populace, and it was further set off by powdered-wigged and satin-uniformed coachmen, footmen, and out-riders.

My carter didn't want to take the half-crown, but he had been telling me about his boy "come nine," who had to stay at home and miss the fun because of "'flu," so I said, "Give it to the kid, from a Canadian, who was a Yankee."

"I knew you were from America all right," was his reply.

At the time "Spanish influenza" was steadily growing worse, some doctors calling it "swine disease," attributing it to the inferior American bacon and ham on the market. The death toll in London was alarming. It was then that I saw for the first time professional mourners—men and small boys dressed in black long-tailed coats, high hats wound with crape, the ends hanging down their backs, with black gloves, and huge black handkerchiefs which they used frequently to wipe their eyes.

We found English people magnificently hospitable. Mr. and Mrs. Walter B. Westhead, whom I had met on my flower trail of 1910 in the Canadian Rockies, entertained us and many Yukon boys at their home, "Avenue Lodge," Dyke Road, Brighton, famous for its shrubberies, rockeries, and many tropical trees. (To-day Mr. Westhead's son, "Walter B., Junior," is in the news for his outstanding

success in television in this lovely Brighton home, fifty-five miles from Alexandra Palace, London, England's television headquarters.)

We were invited to a number of week-end country house-parties, and I shall describe one—more or less typical of all. I had been warned that a maid would unpack and lay out my clothes, so I was ready with a “brand new” flannel nightie trimmed with real torchon lace, a real filet lace boudoir cap, and pink bed-socks—all run with matching pink ribbons and finished with innumerable bows. After tea, when I retired to my room, I found my dresses carefully hung up, my other clothes laid out—my well-worn taffeta petticoat with the patch up.

This was a beautiful old English home, with antique furniture and a few modern overstuffed chairs and chester-fields. There were many servants and everything moved like clockwork.

Being an early riser, usually I was the only woman down for breakfast. At first I thought this non-appearance of English women was due to laziness, but after several visits in lovely old homes I learned that this was not so; that my hostess was generally up early interviewing her housekeeper, giving orders for the day, and writing letters. I noted that English women employ three to ten servants to our one to three; that English servants are more or less specialists in their work; and that there is a decided tendency to belittle “the cook-general.”

I went down to breakfast at the sound of the gong—usually nine o'clock. The men straggled in singly, some grouchy, others cheerful, all reading their morning mail. The main table was set with teapot and cups (and being American-born how I missed my coffee), racks of toast and jars of marmalade. All stood at a side table pleasantly

anticipating the food under the copper warmers—rashers of bacon and mushrooms, ham and eggs, hash or porridge. There was never hot corn bread, nor doughnuts, nor fried potatoes, nor any favourite American dishes.

I think our women generally are better cooks than English women and we can adapt ourselves more easily to new conditions. During the food shortage I suggested baked beans and brown bread, fried cornmeal mush, corn bread, and dried fruits, which we use so much in the North, but many had never heard of them.

Luncheon and tea inspired full attendance of family and guests, and every one lingered long over the eight-o'clock dinner, which was a formal affair, with animated discussions.

I recall one live topic—"Press Censorship." In my opinion the war system was stupid, and the people were being treated like a lot of children. My letters to Canada were uncensored, but those to United States with the same information were held up. Yet I marvelled at the freedom of speech. I heard Hyde Park orators inveigh against the King and Government in such a way that if it had been done on this side of the Atlantic I am sure they would have been arrested for sedition.

George and I chuckled over our Canadian accent. One woman said to me, "I can almost understand what you say, as I am quite accustomed to Americans, having met so many on the Continent . . . and then I had an aunt from Boston."

"But you understand my husband, don't you?"

"Not always. It is so difficult to understand Canadian. A friend and I attended some Canadian sports last summer, and it was really like being in a foreign country."

I grew to think the British people the most durable on

earth, although at first, like others, I thought them muddling and queer. Unflinchingly facing the vicissitudes of life, they stand firm like the Rock of Gibraltar. Nor do I wonder at the stability of the British monarchy, nor the popularity of the Royal Family. During the war each was a shining example of courage, duty, and devotion to the Empire. No sacrifice was too great. They rejoiced and suffered with their people. They were always in and among and of them.

I have always particularly admired Her Majesty Queen Mary. While she was every inch the Queen and Empress in appearance, especially in her robes of state, with diadem or crown upon her perfectly coiffed hair, above all, she was a wife and mother. I saw her sweet smile when a young woman with a babe in arms waved the baby's hand to her. I heard many a wounded soldier speak with pride of her personal word of sympathy as she passed through hospital wards on her innumerable visits.

Although I am not British-born, to-day I am proud of my British citizenship, and as ready and willing at all times to pay my tribute to the accomplishments of this remarkable people.

CHAPTER XXX

THE ARMISTICE IS SIGNED

IN the summer of '18 we who were close to the war picture knew of the plans for the big drive—and living became more intense. George wrote :

“ . . . We're down for the big move. No bomb proof jobs this time, but the boys are anxious to get going. We all feel we have horseshoes tied to us, and intend to play our luck. It has worked well to date. All leaves cancelled . . . ”

and again :

“ . . . Troops . . . troops . . . troops . . . all for the big drive. I never knew we had so many. One bunch of artillery took an hour and a half to pass. One of our drivers was surprised to wake up from what seemed a comfortable sleep. He felt for the wheel of his car—it was forty feet away. A bomb had hit the road, thrown him one way and the car another. Neither was hurt nor damaged enough to get even an hour off. . . . ”

Then the blow fell. On 13th August I received one of those dreaded telegrams :

“ Sincerely regret to inform you Captain George Black, Infantry, officially reported admitted to Stationary

Hospital, Abbeville, 11th August—gunshot wound—thigh.”

Close upon this came a letter from George making light of his injuries, which he described as a “slam in the left leg with a chunk of shrapnel . . . and the right leg punctured with a machine-gun bullet.”

“I am lucky,” he continued, “for this is as comfortable a ‘blighty’ as one could wish—a regular hand-picked one. If the hospital in France hadn’t been so crowded they’d have patched me up over there, but by the second day of the big offensive there was standing room only, and the standing wasn’t very good.”

He then described this battle of Amiens, in which the Yukoners of the Second Machine-gun Brigade were engaged :

“It was a great show—secretly planned and sprung on the Huns like a thunderbolt. It was the first time our boys had fought in the open with no protecting trenches—had set up their guns under direct enemy fire. Our job was to keep open the Amiens–Roye road, or, as my orders said, ‘to be a link between the most advanced Canadian cavalry and the leading French infantry,’ and I tell you the old line had to stand some strain.

“Under cover of darkness, with sealed orders of the plan of action and definite objective, and a map, two motor machine-gun brigades (ours and another) made their way down the road. On the south, in front of Amiens, was the Canadian corps, with the British and Australians on the left, the French on the right.

“Promptly at 4.20 o’clock on the morning of the 8th

we opened up with our artillery barrage. It was a thundering, deafening noise—all guns going at once—big naval guns, little quick-firing guns. We completely smashed the Huns' defence and them with it.

“It seemed but an instant until the road was crammed with them. We passed them back in droves. They seemed very willing to be taken, to let us have all their equipment, and helped us carry our dead and wounded from the field.

“As the advance proceeded, fighting became stiffer and our casualties heavier. Our tanks were marvels—especially the whippets. They could go fifteen miles an hour, over everything, nose dive into shell craters, crush hidden machine-guns, then climb the opposite wall seemingly on any angle. Nothing but a direct hit seemed to stop them, and I saw some of them hit. Poor men inside—it was all over for them!

“It was a terrific battle—a horrible sight. Open warfare all over the country . . . in fields . . . along roads . . . across valleys . . . in and around villages . . . big guns booming . . . machine-guns rattling . . . groans of wounded and dying . . . everyone pressing forward . . . ground strewn with hundreds of dead bodies for miles . . . Numbers of the enemy were killed, and some of our finest fell too. Seeing them fall urged us on and on, and, wallowing in earth churned up with blood, we gained ground steadily.

“On the afternoon of the second day, some distance east of Quesnel, we encountered field- and machine-gun nests. Before we could get our guns going, our men fell thick and fast. Poor Angus McKellar and Charlie O'Brien met theirs together in an armoured car, one shell getting both.

"The Yukon boys knew their jobs. Their long training and thorough knowledge of machine-gun tactics, combined with their nerve and determination, had fitted them for this kind of fighting.

"It fairly made me weep to see our old friend, Jack Maclennan, with his half battery of four guns, calmly writing me reports with a fountain pen (he'd lost his pencil), while machine-gun bullets kicked up the dirt all around him and whizbangs just missed him.

"We reached a place on the road blocked by trees felled purposely by the Germans. In a hailstorm of bullets, Corporal Dick Armstrong led a small squad of axemen, who cleared it in double quick time.

"Not one was hurt, and I marvelled that all weren't cut to pieces.

"Then I got mine. A Hun sniper nicked me in the leg. The boys had to go on without me, and here I am with this nice little blighty. I expect very shortly to be sent to London. . . ."

One of the Company wrote me :

". . . It was almost a miracle that George was not blown to bits. When we saw him go down we closed our eyes, dreading to open them again. . . ."

In a few days an orderly brought me a message from my husband. He had arrived at the Royal Free Hospital, London, and I could see him at once. In several weeks he was sent to the Convalescent Home at Matlock Baths, Derbyshire, and by October could get around fairly well.

During this time we motored many miles through lovely landscapes, never out of sight of large picturesque old homes and cottages, rambling farmhouses and stables

with thatched roofs. I could not help but feel, after so many years of life in a new country, that there are many advantages in living in an old one, where almost every building, hill, or stream is a landmark saturated in history.

Several weeks ahead we knew the war was ending. Hourly we awaited the signing of the Armistice. I can never forget that memorable morning of November 11, 1918, in London.

Subconsciously I heard the bells of a near-by church ringing, and the distant sound of factory whistles, but it was the faint clapping of hands that finally brought me to the window.

On the sidewalk were three small boys tooting whistles—dirty little gamins, too young to realize why they were being noisy, but screaming with delight at being able to make a noise unrebuked.

Beyond were four uniformed lift girls, dancing to the jazz music of an old hand-organ.

Directly across the very narrow street, standing on the first-floor balcony, was a little grey-haired woman in black, nodding her head to the beat of the music, and smiling at the street urchins as she deftly fastened a small stand of Allied flags to the iron railing.

Beside her was a sad-faced young woman, with a wide black armlet on her V.A.D. uniform. I saw her large dark eyes distinctly—but there were no tears in them—nor was there a smile on her lips.

On the balcony above, shrilly cheering and wildly waving flags, stood a bright-faced woman, with her two small sons clinging to her skirts, while their baby sister, looking very much like a fluffy dog, with a huge bow of red-white-and-blue ribbon tied round her neck, shouted and danced with excitement.

As I turned from the window my eyes travelled to the top balcony, where, locked in the arms of her sailor husband or sweetheart, was a young woman. At the same moment they turned their happy faces to me, blew a kiss, and called " Good Luck ! "

I thought : It is good luck for me, dear unknowns across the street. My loved ones are safe now. They will return to me. The Armistice is signed !

George was now completely well and was ordered to the Rhine with the Army of Occupation. Lyman was with Colonel Muerling, O.C. Yukon Machine-gun Battery, who wrote me :

" It may interest you to know that I have given Lyman command of the armoured cars in the official entry into Mons. I thought it might be of interest to Yukon to have the youngest member take part in such an historical event."

Next spring I was sent to France by the Overseas Club to visit soldiers' cemeteries and war-stricken villages with a view to observe rehabilitation and beautification schemes. Throughout that trip we saw the complete destruction and desolation caused by the war. We walked through street after street of deserted shelled houses with gaping windows, occasionally covered with flapping canvas. We trudged miles over battlefields, stumbling over rusty strands of barbed wire and almost falling into water-filled dug-outs and trenches. We, too, marvelled at the miracle of the upstanding cross everywhere. Sometimes only a frail wire held it upright ; occasionally it had fallen against a tree trunk ; and once it had been blown through a hole in a church wall and left standing erect before a ruined altar.

I visited the grave of a friend's son near Arras. Shot and shell had torn up most of the other graves, but those of the soldiers had been spared.

And as far as the eye could see, symbolizing to me the tricolour of France, were patches of scarlet poppies and blue cornflowers against the dead white of the upturned chalk.

This spring of 1919 marked a highlight in my writing experiences, in that I was actually admitted to the British House of Commons, on a Press ticket, representing my home papers, to hear Prime Minister Lloyd George declare his attitude on his pre-election promises concerning the Peace Treaty. My seat was directly behind that of the then Prince of Wales, who was seated "just over the clock." I watched him wriggle in his seat, fuss with his sword, and stroke an imaginary moustache. The Prime Minister talked two hours—but it seemed but twenty minutes. He explained the difficulties which beset the Peace Conference—the mighty questions of boundaries, indemnities, and punishments. His speech was replete with delicate satire, stinging sarcasm, sledgehammer blows of contempt for those who dared to try to cause trouble between the Allies, "whose friendship is essential to the peace and happiness of the world." If tense listening, followed by prolonged cheers from both sides of the House, were any criterion, Lloyd George had convinced the "Mother of Parliaments" that every pledge Britain had made would be incorporated in the demands of the Allies.

CHAPTER XXXI

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

AFTER returning from the war zone, I represented Yukon at a garden party given by Their Majesties King George and Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace, to which several thousand war workers were honoured with invitations. It was a beautiful day, and the flower-bordered lawns of the palace were enchanting in their summer beauty and fragrance.

We stood on either side of a long garden path. King George, Queen Mary, very beautiful in an embroidered dress and hat of her favourite blue, with necklet of perfect pearls, and Princess Mary, smart in a V.A.D. uniform, walked between the lines. Now and again they stopped to speak to people they knew or to have others presented. When my turn came His Majesty asked several questions concerning my lecture work.

I met the Queen's dresser, Miss Sibley, and expressed a wish to see the interior of the palace. She suggested that Col. Boyle might be influential in obtaining permission. I saw Joe, and in a few days my daily help came flying to me, saying, "Oh, ma'am, a messenger from the palace!" A gorgeously dressed individual in skin-tight blue and scarlet uniform, with dispatch bag and belt, had come with an invitation for me to visit Buckingham Palace, and instructions to enter by the "Privy Purse" entrance, a small door

on the west side. On arrival I was taken to my conductors, Miss Sibley and Mrs. Clarke, the housekeeper (who told me later she was seventy-one years of age).

We began with Queen Mary's boudoir, which was hung with French blue tapestry and decorated with a profusion of flowers—Malmaison carnations on Her Majesty's writing-desk, pink sweet peas in large crystal bowls, and huge hydrangeas loaded with pink blossom in jardinières. (We had had just as beautiful in Government House in far away Yukon.)

Everywhere were photographs of royal relatives—King George's cousins—Queen Marie of Roumania, Princess Patricia (now Lady Patricia Ramsey), signed "Patsy," the Czarina of Russia (by marriage), and the former Crown Princess of Germany. A new unframed photograph of Prince Edward, the heir apparent, in naval uniform, stood on his mother's desk. Evidently he was as much of a favourite in the palace as elsewhere, as Mrs. Clarke called him "Our Fairy Prince," adding, she hoped he would not be spoiled by the attention he was receiving in Canada at the time.

Several cabinets blazed with jewels, but as I looked I realized that among the numerous priceless treasures many were kept for sentimental reasons. I was particularly interested in one cabinet, in which were many articles of personal value to Queen Mary. There was her girlhood jewellery—gold lockets of various sizes and shapes; small rings; a pair of turquoise ear-rings; a bracelet engraved with "Bonheur," which I was told had been ordered for the then "Princess May" by the Duke of Clarence and not completed until after his death; a beautiful white enamel rose with diamond centre—a gift from Queen Alexandra at the time of the duke's death; and a handsome

octagonal box presented by the Welsh people to hold the Queen's wedding ring.

There were many mementoes of Queen Mary's Empire trips when she was Duchess of York—a gold hand-mirror, inset with turquoise and pearls; another delicately embossed and edged with large perfect pearls, the gift of an Indian rajah; an exquisite enamel diamond-bordered spray of maple leaves from Canada. I noted, too, a heavy nugget bracelet and necklet, and I asked if this were from Yukon. Mrs. Clarke, opening the cabinet, handed the necklet to me to read the engraving. It was from Vancouver, Canada.

We then passed into Her Majesty's sitting-rooms—one furnished entirely with Japanese furniture, pictures, and silk hangings, and another done in Chippendale. I looked long at the water-colours—garden scenes, Hampton Court, Windsor, Kew, and other familiar places. They were so real that the flowers fairly seemed to nod and sway, while one perky little rosebud whispered as I passed, "You are the lucky Yankee-Canuck to be here," and I whispered back, "I know it."

"Did you speak?" asked Miss Sibley, but I only shook my head and nodded good-bye to the rosebud on the wall.

Beyond these were the drawing-rooms, each larger and more imposing, until we came to the magnificent throne-room, used during the Victorian régime as a semi-state and state dining and ballroom, and, during the war, for Investitures. Much of this furniture came from the Pavilion at Brighton, built by that extravagant king, George IV., who may have recklessly squandered the people's money, but who did have good taste. The canopy over the throne was that used in 1912 at the Indian Durbar, which proclaimed Their Majesties Emperor and Empress of India.

As Mrs. Clarke opened the door to the family dining-

room, which overlooked the Mall and Green Park, I saw that we had arrived at an inopportune moment, that a footman was kissing a pretty white-capped maid, and there was a general scattering. "I don't understand what you two are doing here at this time of day," said the housekeeper severely. She was followed by murmured excuses from the two culprits. The furniture was neither modern nor antique, and there was probably seating accommodation for sixteen at the two round tables.

Passing along the corridor, we came to one of the King's sitting-rooms, furnished with East Indian rugs, hangings, teak chairs, and cases of priceless jewelled daggers, swords, crowns, boxes, and belts. In one cabinet hung a jewelled belt which had been presented to Queen Victoria. It was fashioned of emeralds (I think eighteen), some engraved, others plain, each stone about an inch and a half long, surrounded by pearls and diamonds as big as peas. This has been worn by Queen Mary as a decoration—a variance from her favourite diamond, sapphire, and turquoise ornaments. There were fantastic, heavily jewelled head-dresses, massive necklets and armllets, and other rare ornaments. It was such a glare of brilliance, the whole blending into a vision of wondrous beauty and colour, that memory plays me false when I try to separate one article from another. Then, too, the time was so short—only two hours to see so much. We moved hastily through the rooms, and I can still hear the King's ticker marking the too swiftly passing hours.

The tour finished, I had tea (brown bread and butter, delicious home-made strawberry jam—a special Windsor garden product—and fruit cake) with Miss Sibley, at a round table covered with a plain white cloth, in her private sitting-room overlooking the gardens.

There, in a small pavilion, the King, with his dog nestling close to him, was having tea with his mother, Queen Alexandra, the Dowager Czarina of Russia, Princess Victoria, the Grand Duke Michael, and Sir Arthur Davison. Soon the royal tea-party broke up, and the King escorted his mother to her car, affectionately assisted her in, and pleasantly bowed the party away. As he lifted his fine panama hat, banded with a folded plaid scarf, I observed that he had a bald spot. He then returned to the pavilion, where a waiting dispatch bearer handed him a bag of papers, and he was soon immersed in their contents.

My overseas work was done. George had completed his Army of Occupation duties. The office of Commissioner or "Governor" of Yukon, which he had given up to enlist, had been merged with that of Gold Commissioner; the Yukon Council reduced to three councillors (elected from the districts of Dawson, Whitehorse, and Mayo); beautiful Government House had been closed, and to this day, except for the visit of Lord and Lady Byng, when the former was Governor-General of Canada in 1927, has not been re-opened.

There was no position awaiting us in our own country. However, we decided to return to Canada, and although past the half-century mark, tired and childless (Lyman had decided to remain in military service), to try to re-establish ourselves.

I shall always be glad that I went overseas with my men. Talking over our small part in the Great War, we have all agreed many times that we had done the right thing, that if we had to make this decision again it would be the same.

CHAPTER XXXII

IN AND OUT OF YUKON

ONCE again George took up his law profession, opening an office in Vancouver. We bought a small cottage on the picturesque north shore of Burrard Inlet. In the soft sea-level air and beautiful environment my tired nerves relaxed, and I was soon restored to normal vitality, which for me always means an urge to be up and doing. I turned at once to gardening, for one has only to put a seed, slip, or root in the fertile land about Vancouver to have it grow. I became so fascinated that often I arose at 5 a.m. on glorious summer mornings to work in my pleasure-ground, sometimes pausing to watch the graceful ships in- and out-bound on the blue Pacific. On warm days, dressed in my bathing-suit, I raked seaweed on the beach, as seaweed makes one of the finest fertilizers. Truly my garden was a "love-some thing."

I was asked to speak at many meetings—to tell my "War Experiences," describe "The Wild Flowers of British Columbia," or give illustrated Yukon talks. Whenever I feel my egotism swelling, and that people are clamouring to hear me speak, I remember the woman who, missing my meeting, said, "I did so want to hear Mrs. Black. I hear she's had her face lifted."

Speaking of demands on public women, I think some women's organizations might be more thoughtful in the

treatment of guest speakers. They should at least provide hospitality, transportation, and incidental expenses.

We had been living in Vancouver two years when the federal election of 1921 was announced. Suddenly, like that well-known bolt from the blue, members of our political party waited on George to offer him the Yukon nomination. "You're the only man who can win the seat for the party . . . your overseas services . . . your previous record!" He accepted, went north, and alone fought the hardest political battle of his life. He snowshoed up the Stewart River, one hundred and thirty miles, to Mayo. When returning he had a miraculous escape from death in a motor accident—but broke three ribs. It was conceded generally that he retrieved this seat for the Conservatives.

That winter we went to Ottawa, and from then on I have lived in Ottawa while Parliament is in session, Dawson in summer, and the remaining time *en route* between the two cities.

I recall one glorious winter trip out, in answer to a telegram, "Vitaly important you be in Ottawa December tenth." This meant hurriedly closing our house and making a four thousand miles journey by stage, boat, and rail to Ottawa. The boat was due to leave Skagway in eight days.

At eleven o'clock next night a jolly crowd of friends saw us off. We headed south in a Model "T" open touring car, to overtake at Hollenback's Roadhouse (twenty miles beyond) the horse-drawn stage which had left that morning. It was a clear, cold aurora night, with gorgeous prism-coloured northern lights flaming and dancing across the heavens. We sped along in the bracing air, arriving at our destination at 3 a.m., whence, after a few hours' rest, we left on the stage next morning at seven.

On we went for miles, over a trail slashed out the fall before, the sleigh lurching and twisting on the rough road, stopping only to eat and to change horses. We were tired, sleepy, and low in spirits when we reached the large one-roomed log roadhouse where we were to spend the night. But dinner was ready, and such a dinner! Creamy barley soup, tender delicious moose steak and roast wild ducks, native cranberry jelly, celery, and head lettuce (grown in the garden and stored in the cellar), biscuits and cheese. Over coffee and cigarettes we discussed the news in month-old papers, and then retired to the comfortable, immaculately clean bed in a partitioned corner. As we left my host gave me a parcel—a ruffed grouse, plucked and stuffed, ready for the oven at the next roadhouse, where, as we rested, it was cooked and eaten.

Leaving here we drove over a poplar-covered flat, where each branch and tiny twig of the young and sparsely set trees was thickly covered with frost, while, caught in and among the branches, like the most delicate silver lace, inset with many jewels, were thousands of frost-laden cobwebs sparkling in the sun. It was so entrancing that it compelled us to stop, to absorb its beauty, and we endeavoured to capture some of its transient loveliness in many snapshots. We opened a tightly rolled leaf, suspended by myriads of silken threads, and found several oblong eggs carefully wrapped in the heart of it. We lingered long, with the cheerful connivance of our driver, who was “hurrying” us on to catch our special train at Whitehorse.

Arriving at Stewart Flats, we met our old friend Joe Goulet, who was to drive us to Pelly Crossing. The Stewart River was not yet safe for a stage load, so we walked across, going the last thirty feet of that thin ice on duck boards. The horses were led singly, and the mail,

our bags, express, were toted on hand-sleds—our crossing punctuated by occasional alarming cracks.

We arrived at the comparatively palatial two-storey log roadhouse at Stewart, and we fell to our evening meal with great gusto, the *pièce de résistance* being caribou stew with dumplings.

The remainder of the journey was uneventful. We caught the *Princess Louise* at Skagway, and at Vancouver boarded the Canadian Pacific for Ottawa.

Telling of my trips in and out reminds me what airplanes have meant to the North, for none but a Northerner can appreciate their saving of time to travellers. To-day I can come by 'plane from Dawson to Skagway in four hours, as compared with five days by boat and train, or five or six weeks when we mushed over the trail of '98. Every summer I do much visiting to constituents by 'plane.

But even more important is their significance in prospecting. Both Yukon and Alaska are vitally interested in each new mineral discovery, which, like the circle of a stone thrown into a pool, ever widens until the final ripple encompasses the whole, affects the livelihood of every man, woman, and child there.

To the foresight of Herbert Wheeler, pioneer railway man and general manager of the White Pass route, and Livingston Wernecke, manager of the Treadwell Yukon Company, in a large measure should go the credit of the introduction of the airplane in Yukon. Other names who have made air history are Everett Wasson, the first pilot, capable and courageous, and Joe Walsh, veteran prospector.

Herbert Wheeler has been our friend for years. He began his career in Yukon when the White Pass railway was in its infancy. Trains and steamers were his first loves.

These were superseded by Paige motor cars, and there is no more delightful way of going over the White Pass. Now our good friend is almost entirely air-minded, and has added 'plane after 'plane to the company's property. He thinks nothing of taking an early morning spin over the jagged peaks of the Coast range, and is never quite so happy as when he is thousands of feet above the earth, walking around in his 'plane and drawing the attention of his guests, through glasses, to points of beauty and interest below.

It is not surprising that Livingston Wernecke, when establishing aerial prospecting, should choose Joe Walsh, who had been successfully prospecting on the rim of the Arctic Circle for twenty years, a sure shot, good trapper, and most companionable.

It was my good fortune to be at the Wernecke camp, on the shores of Mayo lake, one perfect summer day, when the 'plane *Claire* took off on the first prospecting trip. An Indian had come in with the usual tale of a rich find. Mr. Wernecke decided it was worth investigating. He, Wasson, Walsh, and the Indian formed the first party. I well remember the men loading the supplies, which were taken to the 'plane by canoe. Walsh thought flour, bacon, tea, sugar, beans, salt, and dried fruits enough, but several luxuries were added. (To-day, even for an hour's trip, compulsory supplies are bacon, hardtack, tea, matches, a gun, ammunition, and an axe.)

Finally all was in readiness. The 'plane taxied down the lake—one mile, two miles, five miles, then out of sight. In a short time it returned, as, after several futile attempts, it was found impossible to lift the heavy load. The canoe went out and some of the unessentials were unloaded. Again the 'plane took off. It sped down the lake, then arose

gracefully from the water, circled over the hills in the distance, turned, and disappeared through the blue empyrean in search of the hoped-for El Dorado.

Wasson and Walsh were picked by Wernecke for that epic flight in search of the lost Burke party, who, prospecting for gold, had gone by 'plane too far into the hinterlands. Walsh, the old experienced prospector, and Wasson, the young efficient aviator, made a combination hard to beat. Each was willing to take the necessary chances, each fearless and tireless, each fully aware of the perils of the wilderness over which they flew, and each realizing that strength and supplies must be conserved to meet any emergency.

They will speak of that flight (if they mention it at all) quite casually; that their search lasted three weeks; that they located the Burke camp, only to lose it again; that they finally walked fifteen miles before they found it; that there were two survivors and one dead; that they helped the survivors to their 'plane, practically carrying them the last two miles.

This is the way with the men of the North—no heroics. So many have ploughed their weary ways through snow-drifts waist-high; climbed mountains; fought scurvy; carried sick comrades through miles of wilderness to help in far-flung settlements. So many have counted no task too difficult, but have met each day with the same fortitude which has inspired pioneers and pathfinders from time immemorial. Some one has said, "We have so many uncommon men in the North that they become common, just as in heaven angels are nobodies."

CHAPTER XXXIII

WIFE OF THE FIRST COMMONER

MY husband won four successive federal elections—1921, 1925, 1926, and 1930. At the earliest possible date after his first election he proposed and was successful in carrying through the Canadian House of Commons an amendment to the Yukon Act, which gave Yukoners the same rights to jury trial and in civil actions as people in other parts of Canada. He also drafted and sponsored the Yukon Quartz Mining Act, which placed lode and placer mining on the same basis. (The silver camp at Mayo had just been established.) This Act made titles to mining properties secure and no longer subject to change by Orders-in-Council at Ottawa. In the following years he advised the Liberal Government of the day on a system of fair taxation on lode mining profits, and prepared a schedule whereby they returned substantial Government revenue without injury to the mining industry.

Bench by bench he was moved forward, and in 1930 was elected Speaker of the House of Commons, which made him "First Commoner," a position steeped in tradition. Not only does the Speaker preside over parliamentary sessions, but he is also official host of the House of Commons. When his name was proposed, the Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, then leader of the Opposition, said he had no objection to the appointment, and wished to join

the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett, in an expression of appreciation of George's qualifications, but he counselled him to leave partisanship behind—that, above all, the position needed the quality of impartiality—and then wished him well.

From my seat on the floor of the Senate Chamber I watched the opening of this seventeenth parliament of Canada since Confederation. I heard the boom of the guns which heralded the arrival of His Excellency the Governor-General Lord Willingdon, and Her Excellency Lady Willingdon, with their party and cavalry escort. We stood as the vice-regal party entered the Red Chamber, and His Majesty's representative took his seat on the dais under the red canopy. Following him, Her Excellency, looking very queenly, wearing a coronet of diamonds and a handsome black gown, with court train, silver-embroidered in Greek-key pattern, borne by two pages, took her seat to the left. I see again the Prime Minister, Mr. Bennett, to the right, in Windsor uniform of gold-braided coat, white satin breeches, buckled shoes, and long stockings; the brilliantly coloured uniforms of military officers; the red woolsack, on which sat the Chief Justice and Supreme Court Judges in their scarlet and ermine robes and cocked hats; the Sergeant-at-Arms carrying the mace, the massive gold staff surmounted by the crown; the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, and His Excellency, bowing in formal procedure; the diplomatic corps, representing many nations; the galaxy of beautiful women in gorgeous gowns contrasting with the formal black and white of the senators and unders.

The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod was dispatched to the House of Commons with the message that His Majesty's Representative would receive his loyal Com-

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George Peck

moners to hear the speech from the throne. They came noisily to the bar of the Senate Chamber. Later I remarked to my husband how very rude it was that these members kept up a chattering during the reading of this speech. "You forget that we are the Commons, and this is in accordance with a tradition affirming our importance," he explained. He also told me that to assert further their importance, when they trooped back to their chamber, before dealing with the speech from the throne, a private member always brought in an innocuous resolution, which was never considered again during the session.

Usually, after the opening ceremonies, the House rises, but this was an emergency session, called immediately after the election to consider the unemployment problem, as it was the beginning of the depression. The House of Commons sat at once to deal with the speech from the throne.

That evening we entertained at a large dinner-party at the Chateau Laurier, and I remember the predominating colour of the women's gowns was "Tory blue."

Of all state functions, the opening of parliament, the two Speaker's receptions, and the drawing-room are the most spectacular. I have attended many drawing-rooms, but I must confess I am still nervous when making my curtsy to Their Excellencies. Lady Bessborough told me that she was always "a bit nervous" whenever she curtsied to her husband, prior to taking her place beside him. I saw one girl faint through sheer nervousness. It is not uncommon for those presented to make one curtsy to His Excellency and walk by Her Excellency, instead of curtsying and backing from each in proper form. Her Royal Highness, Princess Louise, told me that when her mother, Queen Victoria, held court, Her Majesty expected

all the princesses to return the low curtsies of greeting, and they were utterly exhausted at the end of the court.

Making a curtsy at the drawing-room is no easy matter for the average woman. She usually has to walk the entire length of the Senate Chamber, the cynosure of a thousand eyes, and nervous lest her escort might step on her train. These ceremonies are more graceful and dignified when women wear long dresses. I have often thought that the aides and others must have been highly amused at the exhibition of skinny or fat bow-legs when the tight-fitting short skirts were in vogue.‡

The usual court dress is an evening gown of any colour, a long train from the shoulders, tulle veil and white feathers, and long white kid gloves. Veil and feathers are not compulsory at a vice-regal court, but are generally worn in Canada. Occasionally some women have worn feathers to match their gowns. One year I had a black sequin dress, and decided to wear black feathers and veil, against the advice of my friends, who said I would look too funereal, but I carried an enormous cherry-coloured fan to counteract any effect of mourning.

When Parliament was in session I attended the sittings regularly, and always found the debates interesting and instructive. I still think the members speak too long, although I realize that they are speaking to their constituents through Hansard.

As wife of the First Commoner I was official hostess at a reception in the Speaker's Chambers immediately after the opening of parliament. In addition to receiving, my duty was to choose refreshments and decorations. In this I owe a debt of gratitude to Ruggles (that is his real name) and Lavesque, who know so well how to manage

state affairs. Ruggles had been brought to Canada by the Willingdons, whom he had served twenty-five years. When they left he wished to remain, and Lord Willingdon asked the Speaker to keep him on. Lavesque has been in the parliamentary restaurant for years. It was always a pleasure to plan these functions, which were usually attended by eight to twelve hundred. There was every facility to carry them out—the finest of linens, the most beautiful china, silver, and cut glass, quantities of exquisite flowers, and perfect service.

The three most memorable affairs at which I was hostess during my husband's term as Speaker were the dinner which Their Excellencies Lord and Lady Bessborough honoured us by attending ; a men's luncheon to honour Lord Byng ; and a dinner complimenting Miss Mildred Bennett, sister of the Prime Minister, and Major W. D. Herridge, K.C., D.S.O., prior to their marriage.

I recall the radiant beauty of Lady Bessborough—a picture in silver and blue satin mistral, the night Their Excellencies honoured us. Covers were laid for forty at two tables decorated in a colour scheme of blue, carried out with blue linen and forget-me-nots combined with talisman roses. I chose for the occasion a model gown of pale blue crêpe banded with mink. His Excellency, who took me in to dinner, took the head of one table, and George, with Her Excellency as a dinner partner, the other. We were pleased to have our old Yukon friends, Mrs. Livingston Wernecke and her débutante daughter Claire as guests on this occasion.

I always had a great admiration for Lady Bessborough, who was as gracious and considerate of others as she was beautiful. When the Bessboroughs' term was finished and they returned to England, 1935, Yukon women gave Lady

Bessborough a special gift—a dozen sterling silver soup spoons, the bowls dipped in gold and engraved with an earl's coronet and an old English "B," and the handles mounted with small gold nuggets.

I asked the Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King to propose the toast to the bride-elect at my Bennett-Herridge dinner, and it was the most gracious expression of that felicity that I have ever heard. Mr. King is noted for his courtesy, and I have saved his letter of thanks in his own handwriting.

"LAURIER HOUSE,

"April 12, 1931.

"MY DEAR MRS. BLACK—

"May I again express to Mr. Black and yourself my very warm appreciation of your kindness in inviting me to be among the number present at the dinner given by you in the Speaker's Chambers in honour of Miss Bennett last night, and for according me the honour of being the one to propose the health of the bride-elect. As you would have gathered from our conversation, it was not without many misgivings that I essayed the pleasant task. I was nevertheless most grateful (and much touched by your kindness and that of the Speaker) for so great a mark of confidence.

"The occasion was an altogether delightful and a most memorable one. It has, too, a little bit of Canadian history, which will always hold a special charm for those who were so fortunate as to be present and to enjoy the gracious hospitality of His Honour and yourself. I really cannot thank you too warmly for the personal happiness which I experienced in being permitted to share in this intimate way in a gathering which will

also have, in a very special way, its associations with our parliament and its political parties.

“Yours very sincerely,

“W. L. MACKENZIE KING.”

Lord and Lady Byng were general favourites in Canada. We knew them more intimately because of their visit to Yukon in 1927, when Lord Byng was Governor-General. They won all hearts during their ten days' visit. “Byng of Vimy” was anxious and willing to exchange reminiscences of India and Africa with “old soldiers of the Queen.” He dedicated Dawson's war memorial, erected in the park surrounding the Administration Buildings. Her Excellency was interested in wild flowers, and we spent as much time as possible looking for rare specimens on the hills around.

George accompanied His Excellency and party to the Wernecke camp on the top of Keno Hill, and with his aide occupied a camp cot in the same cabin. The task of bringing His Excellency's morning cup of tea and hot water was allotted to an old Sourdough—an erstwhile Cockney. Apologizing for his awkwardness, he said, “You know, Your Lordship, I'm a domned sight better 'ostler than a va-let.”

At a ball given in their honour Lord Byng expressed the opinion to George that he found Dawson the most democratic place in the world. “You have no poor. You live well. You are like a big family. Your wife tells me that her dancing partner, prior to me, is your butcher . . . and I am sure she enjoyed her dance with him more than the one with me . . .”

When Lord and Lady Byng returned to Canada in May 1932 George invited a number of prominent men—mostly His Lordship's former friends—to lunch in the

Speaker's Chambers. In accepting the invitation Lord Byng wrote :

" DEAR MR. SPEAKER,

" My warmest thanks for your kind letter about my wife and myself. It is impossible to put into words our overflowing happiness at being once again in the midst of our beloved friends, who did so much to endear themselves to us.

" I most gratefully accept your invitation, and can only regret that autocratic doctors forbid me saying even a few words of recognition for the welcome which has been accorded me.

" Yours truly,

" BYNG OF VIMY.

" *May 13, 1932.*"

I was exceedingly anxious that my table decorations be especially attractive. I arranged maidenhair fern and pink roses in silver baskets, and at each place put a boutonnière of trailing arbutus which we had gathered the previous week at Norway Bay, where we spent the week-end with the Sergeant-at-Arms, Col. Harry Coghill, and his wife, with whom we had so many happy times. Again I shall take the liberty of having the Rt. Hon. Mr. King describe this affair in a note he sent my husband :

" DEAR MR. SPEAKER,

" I should like to thank you again for giving me the pleasure and privilege of being one of your guests at your luncheon yesterday in honour of Lord Byng. The occasion was a memorable one as well as a delightful one in many ways, and I shall always gratefully remem-

ber your kindness. I hope you didn't fail to tell Mrs. Black that I noticed some of her thoughtful touches—the table decorations. There was a note of joyousness, of spring, and of the renewal of life, as well as of old associations and friendships in the gathering itself, and in your own remarks, which I hope may prove to be prophetic as well.

“With warm thanks, believe me,

“Yours sincerely,

“W. L. MACKENZIE KING.”

Other functions of national importance come to me : a reception in honour of Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Takamatsu of Japan, at which the Speaker of the Senate and Madame Blondin, and the Speaker of the House of Commons and I received on behalf of the Government of Canada. George presented Her Royal Highness with a magnificent bouquet of scarlet carnations and calla-lilies—chosen because they were of the Japanese royal colours. As the Prince and Princess left Parliament Hill they commented on the size, splendour, and magnificence of the buildings and the lovely view from the Peace Tower.

Sometimes we were called upon suddenly to arrange official social affairs for diplomatic and other prominent visitors. One night, after the House of Commons had adjourned (11 p.m.), George telephoned that the Prime Minister had asked him if I would arrange a luncheon in honour of the Spanish Ambassador to the United States, Signor Carderas, and his wife, who were accompanying Mrs. Herridge (now the wife of the Canadian Minister at Washington) to the Capital next day. We worked on the guest list until 2 a.m., and the invitations were delivered

by messenger before noon next day. A note in my diary says that all went smoothly and the luncheon was a success.

Another occasion was the visit of Col. and Mrs. Charles Lindberg and Miss Morrow, who, with Col. MacNider (United States Minister to Canada) and Mrs. MacNider, occupied seats in the Speaker's Gallery in the House of Commons at one of the sessions. Later the party had tea with us in the Speaker's Chambers. We both enjoyed meeting the famous flier and his wife, whom we found pleasant and unassuming young people.

Living in the Capital, I soon learned that Ottawa society was divided into several sets—the Government set, changing with every election; the permanent Government staffs; and the representatives of foreign countries, whose duty it is to attend all formal state functions and “more or less” put in an appearance at informal affairs. Wealth is not the first nor the most important requisite for social prominence in Ottawa. To be invited to the homes of many fine old Ottawa families is in itself an honour.

To me the most outstanding society woman in Ottawa—and I use the word “society” in the widest sense of its meaning—is Lady Borden, wife of Sir Robert Borden. She is active in church and philanthropic work as well as being a social leader. She is exceedingly kind and courteous to new-comers, and helpful to those who go to her for advice—plain-spoken but sincere.

Hon. Cairine Wilson, the first woman to be appointed to the Canadian Senate, takes by right of birth, wealth, and political position, a first rank in Ottawa society. Her home, “Manor House,” is the centre of Liberal and other social activities, and there is no Conservative woman in the Capital who holds an equivalent position.



Mrs. George Black, Wife of the First Commoner, 1933.

Mrs. George Graham, wife of Senator Graham of Brockville, is a generous and popular hostess. She and her husband annually entertain the delegates to the convention of the Victorian Order of Nurses at a delightful luncheon. This has become almost an institution, and has been attended by as many as two hundred and fifty.

I have always thought that the Liberals owe a special debt of gratitude to Mrs. King, wife of Senator J. H. King of British Columbia, for entertaining at so many charming affairs during the session. She has the flair of the perfect hostess for making everyone feel at home, and invitations to her parties are always coveted honours.

Lady Perley has retained her reputation as a hostess, which she established in London as wife of Sir George Perley, High Commissioner for Canada, during the war.

Despite the fact that he is a bachelor, no one at the Capital has ever entertained more lavishly than the Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett. Mr. Bennett is an epicure and personally selects the menus for his guests. At state affairs he uses many magnificent pieces of old gold and silver plate from his luxurious suite in the Chateau Laurier, where his social affairs are generally held. Mr. Vincent Astor, who was a guest at Mr. Bennett's reception dinner and dance in honour of Madame Roosevelt, mother of the President of United States, told me it was one of the most splendid affairs he had ever attended.

We were not in Ottawa the summer of 1932 when the Imperial Conference was held in Canada, but Premier Stanley Baldwin occupied the Speaker's Chambers. Mr. Baldwin wrote to my husband :

“ DEAR MR. SPEAKER,

“ For just over a month I have enjoyed the

privilege of occupying your beautiful rooms in the Parliament Buildings.

"Perhaps the best compliment I can pay you is to tell you that I felt at home the moment I entered your room, and I leave with real regret.

"The memory of the exquisite view of the hills from your writing-desk will be a permanent possession.

"I am,

"Yours very faithfully,

"STANLEY BALDWIN."

Many people think Ottawa a notoriously gossipy place, but it is not any more so than other capital cities. Much has been said of the "playboys of Ottawa," and several books have been written stressing the foibles of politicians and Members of Parliament. Generally speaking, elected representatives of the people work hard and are sincere in their desire to serve their country. They certainly do not run for the monetary recompense. They often leave remunerative businesses, and sometimes election costs alone sweep away in advance the whole amount of sessional indemnities. (It has been generally accepted as a fact that one Montreal M.P.'s election cost eighty thousand dollars.) The only reward is the joy of service and the honour and glory of being in the public eye. True there are temptations. Heads have been turned and some have succumbed to flattery, especially to that of the opposite sex, who gather about the great and near-great like moths around the bright lights.

Members of the two old-line parties come and go, usually with no delusions of being able to carry through personal ideas of saving the country. I have watched the arrival of the Progressives, the Canadian Commonwealth

Federationists and now the Social Credit members, all enthused with their socialistic ideas to pass legislation that would place all the people on an equal basis of living, or make the State guarantee a monthly income. I have seen their zeal for reform rise and fall, and my observation is that the old saying, "Rome was not built in a day," still holds. However, I do think we have speeded up the pace of reform legislation, and are more alive to the people's needs of rapidly changing times. Laws made to-day are revolutionary as compared with those of fifty years ago.

After the Imperial Conference George and I sailed for Europe on a holiday. He was hailed everywhere as "Member for the North Pole" as well as Speaker of the Canadian House of Commons. We were entertained widely—tea at No. 10 Downing Street with Premier and Mrs. Stanley Baldwin; dinner at which the Hon. Howard Ferguson, High Commissioner for Canada, and his attractive wife, Mrs. Ferguson, were host and hostess; and were honoured by an invitation to have high tea with Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise. She knew Service well and asked if there really had been such persons as Dangerous Dan McGrew or Sam McGee. . . .

I was received by Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York (now Queen Elizabeth), who looked charmingly pretty in a simple rose-red frock, with no ornaments save a string of pearls. She asked many questions of distant Yukon. She said she was sorry that the Princess Elizabeth was not at home, that she had gone for a skating lesson, and she herself had promised to go later and see what progress she was making, but would I like to see Princess Margaret Rose? Of course I would, and the bright-eyed, fair-haired little girl, about three years old, came tittuping into the room. Her mother introduced me. "How do you do,

Mrs. Black ? ” and “ Good-bye, Mrs. Black, ” were the only words she said to me. Then she was off to play in the garden, but she didn't want to put on her rubbers. . . . Her mother said she must put on her rubbers. . . .

Her Royal Highness told me of an occasion when her husband, now King George VI., “ kept an eye on ” Princess Margaret Rose for an hour. It so happened that her Nanny asked permission to be away for this period to do some simple errand. She herself had an engagement, and Margaret Rose's father offered to watch his three-year-old until teatime.

Like many fathers on similar occasions, he was soon deeply engrossed in a magazine. In the meantime the butler laid the tea-table. Somehow the deep silence of the room caused him to raise his eyes from his magazine, and there was little Margaret Rose with two small fists into the middle of a chocolate cake which was smeared all over her face.

At this moment Nanny came in.

Seizing the little Princess, but careful to keep her at arm's length, her father said, “ Take this child to her nursery at once ! ”

“ With two such charming children, whom every one admires and wants to spoil, isn't it sometimes difficult ? ” I asked. The Duchess smiled and said, “ No . . . you see, they have so many cousins to keep them in their places. ”

Our trip concluded with a week in Paris, the world's gayest city, where we spent New Year's Eve, and where, through the kindness of the Hon. Philippe Roy, Canadian Ambassador to France, and his Western Canadian wife, we met many interesting people and had the distinction of occupying the box of the President of the Republic of France at the opera.

CHAPTER XXXIV

MY "CAREER" BEGINS AT SEVENTY!

IN January 1935, the year of the final session of Canada's seventeenth Parliament, because of serious illness George resigned as Speaker of the House of Commons. The Conservative Government, which had been swept into office in 1930, had administered the affairs of the country through one of the most difficult periods in Canadian as well as world history—the great depression. The Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett would have to face a hostile electorate who apparently had expected his Government to perform economic miracles. The rumblings of the discontented voters were heard well in advance. It was a critical time. However, as usual, George and I went North—my first concern being to help hasten the restoration of his health.

Parliament prorogued. The Dominion election was announced. Quite evidently George was not well enough to face the rigours of a Yukon election campaign. It was decided that I should run in his place—as an Independent Conservative. The frequently stated, half-jocular claim that in Yukon there are but two political parties—the Liberals and the Blacks—was now to be put to a test. I was to be the political "pinch-hitter" for George Black!

My campaign was different from any other in Canada.

There were only eighteen hundred and five registered voters in a territory of over two hundred thousand square miles—the largest constituency in Canada in area and the smallest in population. There were no radio broadcasting stations. I held only seven public meetings. To reach voters I had to travel by 'plane, row and motor boat, steamer, two-horse team, and the old reliable "shank's mare." I once walked several miles to visit three voters, one of whom had declared himself "agin" me. But it was worth it, for those voters had to walk eight miles to vote. (I am told I got all three votes.) Another time my car got mired in two feet of mud, and I had to tramp miles to get assistance. In my river travels sometimes the engine of my small boat would go dead in midstream. This meant forced landings on uninhabited shores, where frequently we came upon herds of caribou, flocks of ptarmigan, or the odd bear cub, to which I could at least rehearse my campaign speeches without being heckled.

I had other troubles too. There were the younger women, who said, "What can this damned old woman do for us at Ottawa?" That was hard to take, yet I hurled back, "You'll be lucky when you reach my age if you have my sturdy legs, my good stomach, my strong heart, and what I like to call my headpiece."

But often, in the rugged beauty and quiet of that wonderful country, I forgot all about politics and searched for wild flowers.

It is still such recent history that it is scarcely necessary to record here that the Conservative party was defeated overwhelmingly. However, I was successful in winning—by one hundred and thirty-four majority, which was considered "pretty good for a woman," especially a Conservative woman, in face of the Liberal landslide. I owe

my success to the love and loyalty of our old friends, to personal canvassing, and to a split in the Liberal party !

On hearing of my election a feminine supporter of my opponent remarked bitterly, " She ran nothing but a sob-sister campaign anyway." Well, what if I did. And I would have sobbed louder if necessary.

In Winnipeg, *en route* to Ottawa, I visited Lyman and his wife. A group of friends had gathered in their home on election night to hear the results over the radio.

" We listened until it was announced there would be no more returns that night," said Lyman's wife, " and we had no news from Yukon."

" Well, I guess poor old mother is another ' also ran,' " remarked Lyman.

In the morning Lyman called up the *Winnipeg Free Press*, asking, " Who got in in Yukon ? " A voice passed the question on to someone else, who replied :

" Oh, that other dame ! "

Canada's eighteenth Parliament opened February 6, 1936. It was not only a momentous day in my life, but one of unusual historic significance. It was the first Canadian Parliament in the reign of the new monarch, King Edward VIII. There was a new Governor-General, Lord Tweedsmuir, who had been appointed as plain John Buchan, of world-wide literary fame. The Liberal party had been returned to power with the largest majority in the history of the country. But all hearts were deeply saddened by the Empire's loss of its beloved sovereign, King George V.

Guns, which twice within the previous fortnight had been hauled to the top of Parliament Hill, first to thunder a salute to the new King, later to fire seventy minute-guns the day of the late King's funeral, signalled the arrival of

His Excellency Lord Tweedsmuir to open Parliament in the name of His Majesty King Edward VIII.

The Commons are assembled in their chamber to elect a Speaker. Sitting there, I am haunted by memories of other openings—before the war, during the régime of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught . . . during the war, after the fire of 1917, when Parliament met in the old museum, and the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire represented Their Majesties . . . Byng of Vimy and his clever, thoughtful wife . . . the Willingdons of India, those aristocrats of blood and commerce . . . the Bessboroughs, charming and delightful, the Countess so remarkably beautiful . . . and now, the first Baron and Baroness Tweedsmuir, both literary, he a former member of the British House of Commons.

How thrilled I had been in 1921 to see George actually take his seat in the Parliament of Canada. Other openings—1925, 1926—came to my mind, each making him more politically important. As a silent partner, as an onlooker, I was never happier than at the time of the 1930 opening, when he was elected Speaker. I enjoyed all the attendant personal honours, as wife of the First Commoner.

I look at the Speaker's empty chair and my eyes fill with tears. If only he were in my seat! How the picture has changed for me! Now, at the age of seventy, I am here alone.

I try to comfort myself by recalling life's many compensations. I call forth my old fighting spirit. I berate myself as a coward, unworthy to be trusted with the responsibility of my Yukon's representation. I think of the battle cry of the North, "Mush on!" "Mush on!" Service's lines come to me :

" This is the law of the Yukon,
And ever she makes it plain,

Send not your feeble nor foolish,
 Send me your strong and your sane—
 Strong for the red rage of battle,
 Sane, for I harry them sore,
 Men who are girt for the combat,
 Men who are grit to the core."

Now they are electing the Speaker—the Hon. P. F. Casgrain of Quebec, a well-known Frenchman. I know his wife, and the fight she is making for women's suffrage, still denied the women of that old French province.

The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, Major Drew Thompson, has come to summon us to hear the speech from the throne. Led by him, the Sergeant-at-Arms—the intrepid Major Gregg, V.C.—the Speaker, his page, the Clerk of the Commons—Dr. Arthur Beaudesne—the assistant clerk—the well-beloved Tom Fraser—and the members troop noisily to the bar of the Senate Chamber. His Excellency Lord Tweedsmuir reads the speech from the throne in English and French, Her Excellency, seated beside him, following it with radiant intelligence.

Although some of the customary colour and glitter of the opening is dimmed by court mourning—the black gowns and gloves of the women, the weepers of the Judges of the Supreme Court, the black armbands on the blue and red uniforms of the military, naval, and air force officers—we look upon a brilliant scene.

The next day the Commons assembled to pass resolutions of sympathy to His Majesty King Edward VIII. and the Queen Mother. Both the Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister, and the Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett, Leader of the Opposition, spoke eloquently and sincerely. The Hon. Ernest Lapointe, French gentleman of Quebec,

emotional to his fingertips, expressed poignantly, in his beautiful mother-tongue, the grief of his confrères. J. H. Blackmore, leader of the new Social Credit party, and J. S. Woodsworth, of the Canadian Commonwealth Federation, voiced the sorrow of their groups.

As I listen I mourn, not so much for the new King who has lost his father, as for the Queen Mother who has lost her husband . . . her loneliness at this dark hour. I feel that the heart of every woman in Canada has gone out to her in deepest sympathy ; that the women of Canada would wish her to know this ; that perhaps I should express it for them. I hesitate, then write a note to Col. A. C. Casselman, Conservative party whip, asking, "Should I not say a word of sympathy on behalf of the women of Canada ?"

"I think not," was his reply.

As the moments passed the urge to speak became greater. I could resist it no longer. My heart was too full. I arose. The silence of the room closed about me. I was afraid my voice would fail me. I prayed for courage to face that appalling hush. From my heart I said :

"Mr. Speaker, it seems to me I should be derelict in my duty to the women of my beloved constituency in the North, and to the women of Canada generally, if I did not join my voice to the voices of the Rt. Hon. the Prime Minister and my Rt. Hon. Leader of the Opposition. Her Majesty the Queen has set the women of Canada an example of devotion to family, devotion to business that comes up every day—an example by which we must all profit. On behalf of the women of Canada I should like to be allowed to

join in this tribute of regret and sympathy to that beautiful woman."

It was my first speech—my maiden speech—in the Parliament of Canada.

Two weeks later I celebrated my seventieth birthday.

EPILOGUE

COLLABORATING with Mrs. Black in compiling the memories of her seventy eventful years has been a privilege and pleasure such as is rarely the good fortune of a journalist. Few women have lived so full a life as Mrs. Black. Her zest for living, for doing things, has kept her young, and she is just as keen to-day as when she trudged over the Chilkoot Pass on the trail of '98. Adversities and hardships never have discouraged her; rather they have acted as incentives for still greater achievements. Her philosophy of living, her knowledge of human nature, her infinite kindness to others, her capacity for making friends and never forgetting them, her love of nature, especially of wild flowers, her eternally youthful outlook have been an inspiration to me, especially during the past two years while I have been almost her "*alter ego*."

The deaths of her youngest son Lyman, and her eldest, Warren, and her brother George—the three within a period of six months—have been a terrible shock to her; but bravely she has faced the loss, and instead of brooding over the cruelty of fate, emphasizes her happiness in the knowledge of the complete return to good health of her husband, for whom, as she explains, she just has been "pinch-hitting at Ottawa."

Even as this book goes to press Mrs. Black is planning still another great adventure—a trip around the world. I have been with her as she enthusiastically talked of what

she would do in the various ports-o'-call on the all-red route.

But how she will be able to stay away from her beloved Yukon for so long a space of time I confess I do not know!

ELIZABETH BAILEY PRICE.

THE END

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