

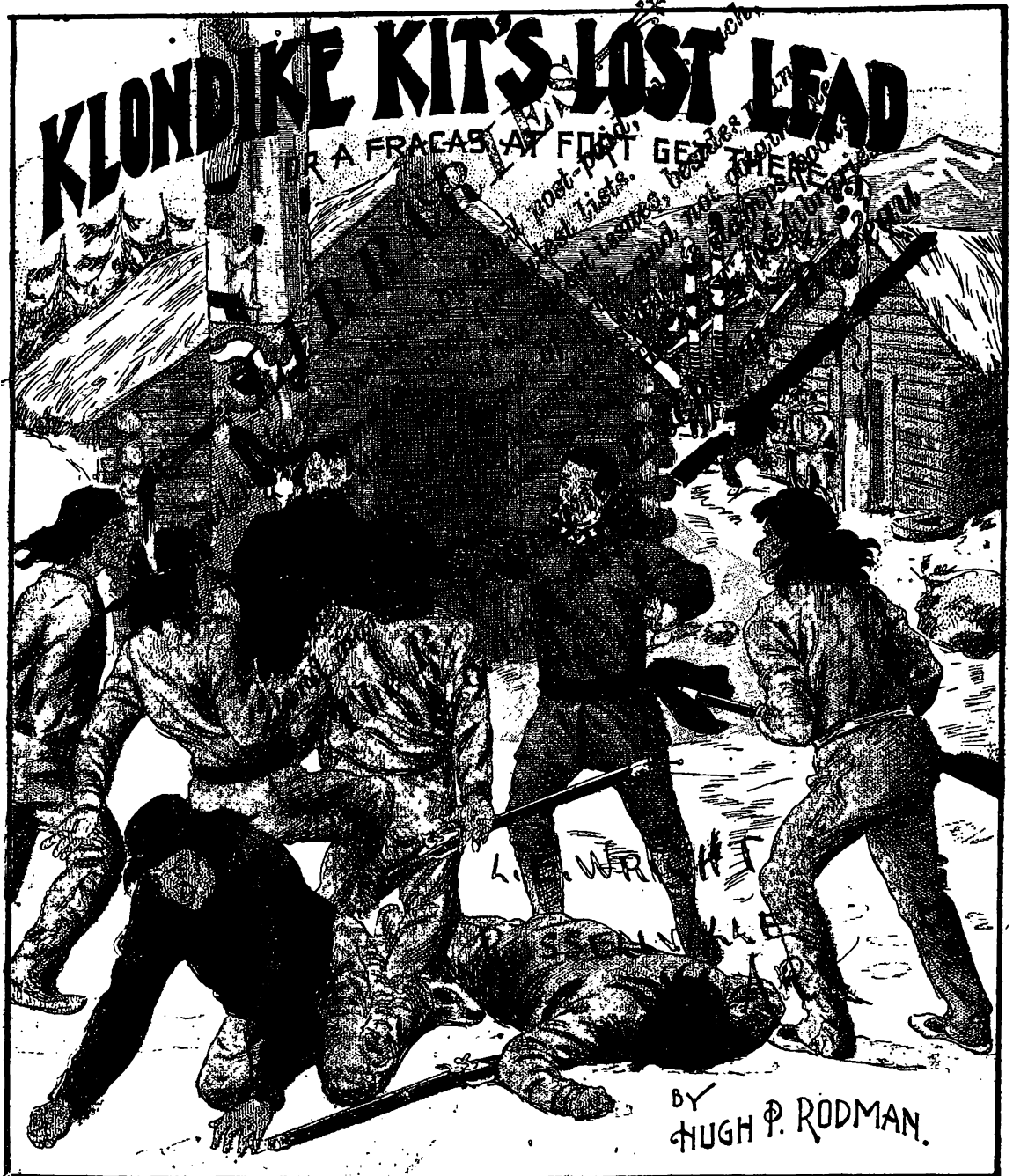
KLONDIKE KIT WEEKLY

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KIT STRUCK RIGHT AND LEFT AND A PLINGIT FELL AT EVERY BLOW.

Klondike Kit Weekly.

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No. 12

Klondike Kit Weekly.

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AT PORT GET THERE.

By the Author of "KLONDIKE KIT."
CHAPTER I. C. B. S.

A BAD STICK—TROUBLOUS TIMES—KIT TAKES THE TRAIL.

Creak, zip, c-r-e-a-k.
It was a peculiar sound, and very faint. But Bottleneck Bill heard it. Rising to a sitting posture in his bunk, he looked and listened.

It was early in the afternoon and Bill was sleeping because he had worked on the "nigh shift," the night before, and was resting up to go on with the same gang again.

Aside from himself, there was no one in the cabin.

Looking toward one of the end windows, he saw an Indian working at it from the outside.

The lifting of the sash caused the faint sound which had fallen upon Bill's ears, and he could tell, from the Indian's stealthy manner, that he was bent on a pilfering expedition.

Slipping his hand under his pillow,

Bill drew out his revolver, held it on one knee and waited.

The Indian lifted the sash until the catch at the side caught it and then thrust his head and arms through the opening preparatory to crawling in.

"Hi, there, Injun!" shouted Bill.

As the words left his mouth, he pulled the trigger.

He had no intention of hitting the Indian, but simply desired to give him a scare.

The bullet spat into a log close to the Indian's head and he pulled back with a frightened howl and made off across the open, toward the timber line.

But he did not go empty handed.

From a peg, close beside the window, a Winchester rifle had been suspended.

This weapon was a favorite of Klondike Kit's, and, as the Indian drew back, he took it with him.

He ran like a deer for the woods and

DIAMOND DICK, JR. IS ISSUED EVERY WEEK.

Bottleneck Bill leaped up, plunged out of the cabin and started in hot pursuit.

The thief would have gotten well away with his booty, in spite of Bill's long legs and phenomenal burst of speed, but for an accident that gave the affair a tragic termination.

The robber had almost reached the timber, when he stumbled against a rock and fell headlong.

In the fall, the gun was discharged and the Indian stiffened out and lay silent and still along the frozen ground.

At first, Bill thought the fall had stunned the fellow, but when he drew nearer and examined him more closely, he saw that he was dead!

The bullet from the Winchester discharged by accident, had entered the native's breast in the vicinity of the heart, proving instantaneously fatal.

"Well," exclaimed Bill, "if this don't take the prize, I'm a Chink!"

While he stood there, looking down at the prostrate form, at least a dozen Indians defiled out of the woods, at a double-quick.

These were all "Sticks," as the Plingits, or coast Indians, call those of the interior.

They were every one big fellows, and well-armed with knives, old-fashioned muskets and revolvers.

All the northwestern Indians are superstitious and fanatical, but the Sticks are especially so.

Because of this, the accidental discharge of the Winchester was destined to plunge Bill into one of the most desperate episodes of his adventurous career.

Before Bill had a chance to say a word, or recover from the surprise occasioned by the unexpected appearance of this large force of Sticks, they had surrounded him completely, each one chattering like a magpie.

Four brawny fellows posted themselves on each side and in front and behind the unfortunate William, menacing him with their primitive firearms and eyeing him in anything but a friendly way.

"What's the matter with you yahoos?" growled Bill.

Just then, the leader of the gang came forward with his little, coal-black eyes ablaze and a fierce frown on his low brow.

"Me Tahkeeneh," he remarked.

"Well, Takheenah," replied Bill, looking anxiously around to see if there was any help in sight, "I can't say that I'm tickled to death to see you. What's your racket, anyhow?"

"You kill um Stick?" asked Tahkeeneh, motioning toward the form on the ground.

"Not on your life, old Bear-face," replied Bill, emphatically; and thereupon he explained, by words and signs, just how the shooting had occurred.

When Bill had finished his explanation, the Sticks looked toward each other and nodded vigorously.

It was plain they were convinced that the shooting was accidental.

"If you've finally got the thing through your noodles," remarked Bill, stooping down and picking up Kit's rifle, "you might as well break away and give me a chance to slide out."

Instead of ordering his men to "break

GET A COLLECTION OF WAR BADGES AND BUTTONS.

away," Tahkeedah snatched the Winchester out of Bill's hand and gave a sharp command.

Quicker than it takes to tell it, Bill was pounced upon by the four stalwart Sticks, and tied with buckskin thongs.

Then, while one big fellow prevented an outcry by placing a hand over his mouth, he was picked up bodily and borne pell-mell into the timber.

Perhaps the strangest thing connected with this brief but sanguinary incident was this, it had occurred without attracting the attention of any one at work about the claim.

Down in the river, lazily breasting the tide, lay Klondike Kit's steamer, the Full Hand, with Karl Schnapps, the Dutch engineer, and Spink, the boy pilot, aboard.

Over by the gravel-dump, three of Kit's employees were washing gravel and Sing Sing, the Chinese cook, was not more than a hundred yards away, trundling up a supply of firewood for use in his kitchen stove.

Not one of these had heard the accidental discharge of Kit's Winchester nor had seen the exciting episode that had taken place at the edge of the timber.

When the Sticks fled, they had not only carried Bill, but their dead comrade, as well.

No trace of the deplorable accident was, therefore, left to tell the tale, and Bill's absence was discovered only when Sing Sing went to call him.

"Him skedaddled allee samee like one piece blue-streak," muttered the bewildered Chinaman, and hardly had the words

left his lips, when Nugget Nell, Klondike Kit's girl-pard, hurried in.

She had been over at Kit's other claim, known as "No. 6," directing the clean-up in progress there.

"What's the matter, Sing Sing?" she asked, standing her rifle in one corner of the room.

Before the Chinaman could answer, Tahkeedah stepped, unceremoniously into the room and confronted Nell.

"Well," asked Nell, who was used to the ways of the Sticks, "what do you want?"

"Injun steal um gun," grunted Tahkeedah.

At this, Nell's eyes wandered quickly around the room.

Kit was uppermost in her thoughts and, naturally, her first glance was toward the peg from which his weapon hung when not in use.

To find the rifle missing, surprised her and gave weight to the Indian's statement.

"Was the gun stolen from this house?" she asked, sternly.

"Yes," and Tahkeedah gave an awkward nod.

"By one of your men?"

The chief nodded again.

"If he does not instantly bring that rifle back," said Nell, picking up the weapon she had just set down, "I will see that he is punished for the theft."

"Him stole gun, gun belong to tribe," was the answer. "No can bring back—Injun dead."

Nell was familiar with the peculiar phases of Stick philosophy, but she be-

HURRAH FOR DIAMOND DICK, JR.!

lieved that she knew how to call the Indian's game.

Drawing a bead on him, she commanded, sternly:

"Step to the door and call out to your men to send that rifle back. Be quick about it, or I will fire!"

Nell knew that the Sticks must be close to the cabin and she thought a resolute manner would carry her purpose through with a rush.

She was a little surprised, therefore, to see Tahkeenah stand passively in front of her and never flinch as he looked into the threatening muzzle of her rifle.

"You shoot chief, chief's men kill long-necked man."

"Long-necked man?" queried Nell, musingly; then she turned suddenly to the Chinaman. "Sing Sing," she demanded, "where is Bottleneck Bill?"

"He gone, allee samee! Quick—likee that," and Sing Sing snapped his long yellow fingers.

"Gun go off, shoot Injun, and Injun carry off Gooseneck. You pay five hundred blankets, you git him back. No pay blankets, Gooseneck killed, sure."

This is the ordinary Stick idea of justice.

When a murder has been committed, they demand a life for the life taken—or an equivalent in blankets.

And nothing but blankets will answer an equivalent, as blankets are their units of value.

Nell was astounded to learn that Bill was in the hands of the Sticks and in peril of his life on so trivial a charge.

As for blankets, there were not more than a dozen, all told, about the place.

Nell was at her wit's end.

What should she do?

She might capture the chief and hold him as a hostage, but she feared that his fanatical tribe might kill their prisoner before they understood the case.

While she stood irresolutely, thinking the matter over, Tahkeenah, evidently thinking he was not to get his blankets, executed a leap through the open door and started across the claim at a run.

It so happened that Karl Schnapps attempted to come into the house just as the Stick sprang out.

The result was a collision and Karl was knocked off his feet and sent rolling and tumbling off across the frozen ground.

"Py shiminy!" he panted, as he picked himself up. "If dot feller would shtay here long enough, I'd gif him a one for dot."

"Where's Kit, Karl?" asked Nell.

"Vell, I dell you. I vas fishin' der rifer in und I caught me someding. Vat you dink? It vas a satchel, by shinks! und it had, on der inside——" The Dutchman paused, with a shiver.

"Well," queried Nell, impatiently, "what was in the satchel?"

"A man's hand, cut off py der wrist! Ach, but it gifs me der greeps!"

"A human hand!" echoed Nell.

"Dot's it, und Kit took dot satchel und started for El Dorado Creek mit it. Dot's

vat he told me to dell you, und dot's vere he is."*

"Karl," said Nell, quickly, "you must follow Kit and bring him back."

"Vy is dot?"

"Because Bottleneck Bill has been run off by the Sticks, and if something is not done to get him out of their hands soon, I fear his life will pay the forfeit."

She then explained the affair in detail as she understood it.

"Vy not get togedder all der miners up and down dergifer und make der Sticks gif Pottleneck Pill up?"

"They would kill him the moment we attacked them," replied Nell. "They are fanatics and are not given to making idle threats. Go for Kit, Karl. He is the only one who can do anything for Bill."

In a few minutes Karl had made up a small pack of provender and had started for the El Dorado.

A soon-as he was gone, Nell took her rifle and started to make a reconnoissance in the direction of Happy-Go-Lucky Creek where the Sticks were known to be encamped.

She proceeded cautiously, but had not gone more than a mile from camp when one of Tahkeenah's Indians started up in her path as if by magic.

He did not speak a word but sprang at the girl like a tiger.

Nell had no desire to take the man's life, so she caught her rifle firmly by the barrel and brought it down upon the

* The strange and thrilling story connected with the finding of that missing hand, was told in Klondike Kit Weekly No. 11, entitled "Klondike Kit's Four-Footed Pard; or, Pay Dirt at El Dorado."

Indian's head with all her strength, as he lurched toward her.

The Indian staggered and fell, and Nell would have stepped over his prostrate form and proceeded on her way had not two more natives sprang up and confronted her.

The plucky girl had unwittingly walked into an ambush, and, although she fought desperately, the odds were too strong against her and she was finally overcome and made a prisoner.

After being bound securely, she was carried for perhaps a hundred yards farther into the timber, to a small thatched hut which her captors seemed to be occupying.

Into the hut Nell was carried and laid in one corner on a pile of caribou skins.

She tried to talk with the Sticks, but they either could not, or would not answer her, merely shaking their heads mutely whenever she put a question.

Night came on and the Indians began eating a supper of dried salmon, which is the staple article of diet among the Alaska natives.

Nell's hands were released temporarily, so that she could also eat some of the fish; she was then rebound, once more, and her captors made ready to pass the night.

These Indians were evidently a detachment of Tahkeenah's tribe, but where was Tahkeenah and the rest of his people? And what had been done with Bottleneck Bill?

These questions recurred again and again to Nell as she lay helplessly in the

corner of the hut and listened to the resounding snores of the Sticks.

She could not answer the questions which she put to herself.

An idea of escape presented itself to her mind, but a moment's thought convinced her that escape was impossible.

On every side of her lay a stalwart native and, could she have freed herself of her bonds, it would have been impossible to pass over the forms of her captors and leave the hut.

Tired out and exhausted, Nell finally fell to sleep in spite of her perilous position.

She was awakened by the sound of exploding rifles and by wild yells.

Opening her eyes with a start, she found that it was broad daylight and that she was alone in the hut.

From without came a furious uproar and noises indicative of a hand-to-hand conflict—fierce shouts, despairing groans, and now and then a sound of a heavy body falling.

What could it all mean?

While Nell was listening and wondering, one of her captors rushed into the hut.

He was bleeding from a wound in the forehead.

Rushing to the girl's side, he picked her up in his strong arms and dashed out of the door again, and on into the timber.

He was suddenly intercepted by another Stick—the one who had first attacked Nell and whom she had knocked down with her clubbed rifle.

This second Indian carried a murderous looking knife.

The two Sticks had a brief but furious altercation which ended by the second native knocking down the first.

The man with the knife then dragged Nell roughly away from the Indian who had been carrying her, sank down on one knee at her side and raised his gleaming blade.

He was vengeful and was burning to even matters up for that blow on the head which Nell had so cleverly dealt him.

The Stick's fierce purpose shone in his glittering black eyes, and Nell thought that it was all up with her.

The knife quivered in the air and then began a swift descent; but before it could strike its intended mark it was struck from the sinewy hand that held it.

Another blow, rapidly delivered, stretched the Stick inert along the ground.

"On deck, Nell," sang out a cheery voice as a lithe form, clad from head to heels in a suit of marmot, bent over the girl and released her from her bonds.

"Klondike Kit!" exclaimed Nell, joyfully. "How did you happen to come here?"

"No time for explanations, now, Nell," replied Kit; "the Plingits have attacked this lay-out of Sticks, and we'll have to push for the tall timber if we don't want to get mixed up in the melee."

Catching her by the hand, Kit hurried his girl-pard off in the direction of the Discovery.

"Did Karl find you, Kit?" asked Nell.

"Yes, and that is the reason I came back post haste. We heard the noise of that

mix-up between the Indians from the trail. After sending Karl on to the claim, I came over here to investigate."

"It was a fortunate thing for me that you did," remarked Nell. "But if the Plingits and the Sticks are having a set-to, what will become of Bottleneck Bill?"

"The Plingits are not fighting with the outfit that captured Bill," replied Kit; "they're a good many miles from here, over on Happy-Go-Lucky Creek. I'll take you back to the Discovery, Nell, and then I'll set out to rescue Bill. Were you out looking for him when those Sticks captured you?"

Nell explained how she had happened to fall into the hands of the Sticks, and also gave Kit all the information she possessed regarding Bill.

"It's a bad deal," muttered Kit, gravely, "and it will take some fine work to get Bill out of the clutches of those Indians, but I believe I can do it."

"Of course you can do it," replied Nell, promptly; "but you must take several men with you."

"That's where you're mistaken, Nell," returned Kit, quietly. "I must follow this lead alone."

"Alone?" she echoed.

"Yes. Strategy and not force is going to win this game."

They soon reached the Discovery and Kit, before starting for Happy-Go-Lucky Creek, went over the work on his two placer claims, gave final directions to Nell and then prepared himself for the trail.

He changed his clothing for a suit of tough caribou hide, with boots and parkie

of the same material; then he strapped a pack of provisions to his back, lashed a rifle over his shoulder, dropped a brace of forty-fours into the holsters that swung at his hips, drew on a pair of mooseskin mittens and was off for the Happy-Go-Lucky.

A full moon broke out of the clouds as Kit left camp, and he little surmised what a night of weird and unheard-of adventure the one before him was to be.

ERJIN WRIGHT
 ROSSFELVILLE ARIZ.
 CHAPTER II
 HAS THE "GOODS"
 THE PHOSPHORENT FACE—TUSSLE WITH
 A SHAMEN—OVER THE CLIFF IN A

BLANKET.
 GET YOUR BOOKS FROM HIM.

For several miles, Kit's journey led him through dense timber along the Yukon.

The timber was of spruce and pine, through whose branches the night wind played mournfully—a fit accompaniment for the events about to happen.

Kit had placed nearly a half-dozen miles between himself and the Discovery, when a red fire blazed out of the dusk ahead.

Surprised at such a sudden and unexpected sight, Kit started hurriedly forward to investigate the crimson flame, but it was snuffed out as suddenly as it had appeared.

While Kit stood wondering what could be the meaning of the strange light, a blue flame flashed into sight near the point where the red had appeared.

Once more he hastened forward and, as before, the uncanny glare was extinguished before he had taken a dozen steps.

Then, in the same manner, a white gleam, quickly followed by one of an intense yellow color, illumined the dark recesses of the woods only to disappear as mysteriously as they had shown themselves.

Greatly puzzled, Kit dashed forward until he had reached the point where he believed the fires to have been kindled.

He could hear nothing and see no one, but a peculiar sulphuric odor was apparent.

He was on the point of beating about the brush to see what he could discover, when a dazzling glare broke out abruptly on every side of him.

For several moments he was almost blinded; and then, when he was again able to see, he found that the blue, red, yellow and white fires were blazing before, behind, and on either side.

The mingling of the brilliant, varicolored lights gave an unearthly look to the surroundings.

Kit stood irresolute among the flames, awaiting developments.

As the light began to die down, a sulphurous glow came from the midst of a clump of bushes, directly in front of Kit.

At first, it seemed like a shapeless ball of light, but it gradually took a human shape.

Beneath Kit's eyes it assumed the aspect of a huge face, many times the natural size, with dabs of crimson light for eyes and flecks of the same color about the lips and mouth.

In all of Kit's Klondike experience, he had never met anything like this.

But he was not superstitious and did not believe in ghosts.

After gazing at the leering face for a moment, he dashed into the bushes with the intention of capturing it and solving the mystery.

The face seemed to anticipate this forward movement and vanished in a twinkling—but not before Kit had detected a dark form beneath it.

The youth knew all along that he had to deal with some trickster, but who the fellow was, and what was his purpose, were points that Kit had determined to settle; so he started in pursuit of the fleeing form.

Through the brush chased pursuer and pursued, down the trail in the direction of the river and toward a small plain entirely denuded of timber.

Kit proved the better runner of the two and gained rapidly.

They were fairly out upon the moonlit space of cleared land when the youth overtook his man, caught him by the shoulder and deftly threw him from his feet.

Sinking down with one knee on the man's breast, Kit turned him over so that his face would be visible in the moonlight.

An exclamation of surprise fell from his lips as he gazed upon a countenance blackened with soot and seal-oil and a flood of understanding broke in upon him.

He had to do with a Stick "shaman," or medicineman.

The shaman lives a solitary life in the woods, confining himself to a diet of the

"REMEMBER THE MAINE!"

WEAR A "MAINE" BUTTON.

heads and tongues of frogs which, the Plingits believe, contain a potent medicine.

The shaman is as full of tricks and illusions as an egg is of meat and Kit knew well, now, who was the author of the vari-colored fires.

But there was one thing he did not know, and that was, why had he been singled out as an object for the shaman's deviltry?

Kit resolved to find this out, if possible.

Exerting a stronger pressure on the shaman's breast with his bended knee, he gripped him about the throat with one hand and hissed in his ear:

"You talk English?"

The youth then released his grip slightly to give the medicine man a chance to answer.

"Me talk English," gasped the Indian.

"What do you mean by trying to hocus pocus me in this kind of style?"

"Grand Tyhee he say do, so me do."

The Grand Tyhee was the head chief, and Kit knew that his word was law.

But the Grand Tyhee was a Plingit, and not a Stick.

Was Bottleneck Bill in the hands of the Plingits, after all, and not of the Sticks?

If so, how had he been changed from one set of captors to another?

"Are you a Plingit?" demanded Kit.

"Me Plingit shaman," and the squirming native followed his answer with a demoniacal yell that echoed weirdly through the woods.

Although Kit was not aware of it at the time, to raise a hand against a shaman

is a heinous crime among the Plingits and punishable with death in the most horrid form that can be devised.

Kit's hand closed more tightly about the Indian's windpipe, and smothered the yell upon his lips.

"None of that!" exclaimed Kit; "another break of that kind and I'll choke the life out of you."

But the evil had already been done.

Noiselessly as snakes, a half dozen swarthy, sinewy forms began writhing along the frozen ground toward Kit and the shaman.

Blackened as they all were with soot and seal oil, the creeping forms were hardly to be distinguished from the fitting shadows of the night.

Kit did not see them, and the first intimation he had of threatening danger was when a pair of dusky arms encircled his neck from behind.

Springing to his feet, he threw the Indian off.

By this time the others had started up, as if out of the very earth, and the shaman was dancing around them, shaking a rattle and chanting a song to fire the hearts of the Plingits with courage.

Upon such an occasion, with the eye of their shaman upon them, the Plingits might be expected to fight with determination—and they did.

The six warriors were big, wiry fellows, and while there was little science in the way they used their fists, yet brute force enable them to carry the day.

Kit's rifle was still lashed to his back and his revolvers were in their leather

DIAMOND DICK, JR. IS A DANDY.

sheath at his hips, but the fight was at such close quarters he had no chance to bring his weapons into play.

The Plingits threw themselves upon him, clung to him with their arms and sought in every way to hamper his movements and to throw him to the ground.

As often as he could, Kit tore himself loose from the entwining arms, and dealt one effective blow after another.

The number brought against him was too great, however.

Two of the Indians had been knocked out of the fight, but at a favorable moment the remaining four sprang upon Kit in a bunch.

Their combined weight was too great for him to stand up under, and he sank to the ground.

At this point, the shaman ceased his rattling chant long enough to unwind from his body a stout cord woven from the entrails of the walrus.

This cord he handed to one of Kit's antagonists, and the youth was securely bound with it.

A blanket was next procured, and in this the captive was closely wrapped, and so laced about with the rope that, he resembled a mummy, when the tying operation was completed.

The shaman then gave a harsh command and danced toward the steep bank of the river, shaking his rattle at the moon and singing a song to commemorate the glorious victory of six over one.

The warriors gathered up the form in the blanket, and trotted along after their shaman.

The medicine man had paused on the brink of a steep bluff that fell sheer away to the water's edge.

Underneath, in the shadow of the bluff, floated an oomiak, or boat covered over with the furless hide of the seal.

The boat contained the form of a huge

Indian, whose sharp eyes were turned upward through the shadow and fixed upon the moonlit bluff where the Plingits were darkly visible.

A moment later the form in the blanket was hurled far out into the air, and fell spinning end over end down into the water.

Then there came a howl from the warriors, a furious rattling from the shaman, and the dark forms faded from the top of the bluff.

The Plingits believed they had avenged themselves for the wrong done to their medicine man.

But there was a misfit in their calculations.

CHAPTER III.

KIT MEETS AN OLD FRIEND—SIWASH
SAM IS HUNG UP—THE BOMB HAR-
POON.

Kit felt himself tossed from the brow of the cliff, and, although enveloped in a blanket, he imagined very accurately what was taking place.

Mentally he resigned himself to his fate, and his surprise was great when, after striking the surface of the river, sinking deep down and rising again, he experienced the sensation of being pulled out of the water and into the bottom of a rocking canoe.

Then he felt some one working at the cords which bound the blanket, and finally at those which bound his arms, and at last he sat up and looked at the man who had rescued him.

"Siwash Sam!" he exclaimed.

"Klondike Kit!" was the equally astounded rejoinder.

Under these almost tragical circumstances had two old friends met.

Siwash Sam, the big, iron-muscled chief of the Chilkats, a familiar figure in the earlier issues of the series.

SHOW YOUR COLORS—GET ONE OF OUR FREE BADGES.

Kit had once saved his life, and he and the youth were firm friends.

"You beat de debbil!" cried the Chilkat, startled as well as surprised. "How you git in blanket, hey?"

"Some of your people did it."

"My people?"

"You're a Chilkat, aren't you?"

"Me Chilkat chief," and Siwash thrust out his massive breast and hammered it pompously.

"The Chilkat tribe belongs to the Plingit nation?"

"We all Plingits."

"Well, it was a Plingit shaman that had me wrapped up in that blanket and tossed over the bluff."

"Me saw shaman's totem fires from riber, so Chilkat knew somet'ing up. Then me lay off shore an' wait, an' look. What you do to shaman, Klondike Kit?"

"Threw him down and choked him a little, that's all."

Siwash Sam groaned with horror.

"Dey try to kill you for dat," he gasped. "Why you choke shaman, Kit?"

"Because an outfit of Sticks carried off Bottleneck Bill and threaten to kill him unless I pay over enough blankets for the whole tribe."

"What Bobbleneck Bill up to now?"

Kit thereupon detailed the situation to Siwash Sam.

As he talked, a strange glitter crept into the Chilkat's eye, and, when his friend had finished, he brought his hand down with a thump on Kit's knee.

"Chilkat know where Bobbleneck is!" he exclaimed.

"Where?" demanded Kit; "with the Sticks?"

"No, with Plingits, Haida Plingits. Um Haida Injuns up dere," and he waved his hand toward the top of the

bluff. "You lost lead, Kit; Siwash Sam put um straight."

"How do you know Bill is with the Haidas?"

"Listen. Me pilot big gang over Paya trail, to Dawson. Deu Chilkat borrow oomiak an' paddle up river to see Kit. So, on de way up, me sabe Kit from Haida shaman. Jes' dis side Dawson, me pass six big canoes, full Haidas. Dey say dey had fight wid Sticks an' kill many an' take away from dem a white prisoner."

"That white prisoner must have been Bill."

"Sure!"

"Where were they going?"

"Down riber to Haida village for big potlatch."

A "potlatch" is a rejoicing celebrated whenever a victory, or other event of importance, comes to the tribe.

At every potlatch, huge quantities of "hoochinoo" are imbibed.

Hoochinoo carries more fight and frenzy in every drop than any other liquor, and is distilled in old oil cans from a mash composed of yeast and molasses, mixed with flour.

Kit knew all about potlatches, and if Bottleneck Bill ever got mixed up in one of them, he feared he would never come out alive.

"What's the name of the village, Siwash?" queried Kit.

"Haida call um Ko-Klutz an' Fort Get There, like post near St. Michaels. You know?"

"Yes. How far away is the village?"

"We reach dere by mornin', wid sail."

"Is the village so close as that? I didn't know the Haidas came so far from the coast."

"Haida come to fight Stick," replied Siwash Sam, who was busily rigging a mast that lay in the bottom of the oomiak.

DIAMOND DICK, JR., IS OFTEN IN DANGER.

A square sail of sewed skins was attached to the mast, and the Chilkat set it to catch the favoring night breeze, and threw himself in the stern with a steering paddle.

"Going to help me out on this deal, Siwash?" asked Kit.

"Klondike Kit always help Siwash," replied the big Indian, steering the oomiak out into the centre of the broad, moonlit channel. "Me know Haida," he went on. "Dey lost Grand Tyhee in fight wid Sticks. Dey elect anudder Tyhee, drink hoochinoo, raise blazes. Hwah! Big potlatch—heap big!"

The bigger the potlatch the more danger to Bill, and Kit's eagerness to reach him at the earliest possible moment was redoubled.

There was a pile of warm caribou skins in the centre of the boat, and Kit dropped down among them and went to sleep.

His work over on the El Dorado had tired him out before he took the trail after Bill, and his final experience with the shaman had fagged him almost completely.

When he opened his eyes he saw that dawn was just breaking in the east.

Siwash Sam sat immovable in the stern, steering paddle in hand, and welcomed Kit's awakening with a grin that showed two long rows of gleaming teeth.

"You feel better, huh?" he asked.

"I should say," replied Kit, reaching for his bag of provender, "and I think I'll feel better yet when I get on the outside of some of the contents of this haversack."

Kit helped himself to some of the food which Nell had prepared for him, and passed the haversack on to the Chilkat.

Then, for the first time, he noticed that the oomiak was running within two or three feet of the lee bank.

This bank was precipitous and wooded,

out arose only a half a dozen feet above the deck of the boat.

So closely inshore were they running that the crossyards supporting the sail often struck against the earthy wall.

All the time he was steering and eating, Siwash Sam kept his eyes attentively fixed upon the bank.

"Why don't you keep farther out in the river, Siwash?" inquired Kit.

"Me look for somet'ing."

"What?"

"We close to village; wait—you see."

As they drew further along the bank, Siwash suddenly motioned to Kit to take the steering paddle, while he went forward and stood in the centre of the oomiak, still looking upward.

Suddenly he turned to Kit with a delighted grin.

"We all right," he began; "we ketch um an'—"

But the Chilkat got no farther.

At that precise moment a raw-hide noose descended from above, encircled the chief about the waist, and was then rapidly hauled in.

The result of this operation was to hang up the Chilkat.

Kicking, struggling and squirming, he was lifted above the boat and it passed on out from under him.

Kit was astounded, but surprises of this kind never captured his wits.

Springing forward, he lowered the sail and then whirled the oomiak quickly about with the steering paddle.

An instant later the youth was directly under the spot where the Chilkat had been so singularly suspended.

To Kit's surprise, the chief had vanished, having, no doubt, been hauled to the top of the brush-covered bank by those who had lassoed him and pulled him off the boat.

This explanation had barely flashed

GET A COLLECTION OF WAR BADGES AND BUTTONS.

through the youth's mind, when he saw a flash of steel above him, and the head of a pronged dart shot toward the oomiak.

With a muttered exclamation, Kit sprang to the rear of the boat.

The pronged dart was a harpoon.

It was of the variety known as a bomb-harpoon and contained a charge near the head so arranged as to explode the instant the prongs entered the flesh of a whale or walrus.

The harpoon struck the oomiak just back of the mast.

The concussion of the blow set off the bomb, and a fierce explosion followed.

The boat was hurled in fragments in every direction, and Kit was thrown into the air.

He felt himself being lifted upward, and was then dashed against some hard substance with a force that temporarily robbed him of his senses.

CHAPTER IV.

BLOWN ASHORE—A SPRUCE TREE TRAP— THE GRAND TYHEE OF THE HAIDAS.

When Kit got his wits back he found that a most remarkable thing had happened.

The explosion of the bomb-harpoon had blown him ashore, and he was now lying high and dry on a shelf of rocks jutting out from the bank, midway of its height.

Strange as it may seem, the explosion which had wrecked the oomiak had not injured him, but it was his contact with the stone shelf which had robbed him of his senses and bruised his limbs.

As he sat up and rubbed his arms and legs, he saw before him the smooth face of a boulder on which was painted a gaudy design in red and yellow.

The design resembled a demoniacal face, similar to the phosphorescent mask

worn by the shaman with whom he had had such a fierce struggle.

On each side of the face were two long streamers representing wings.

Kit recognized the symbol as that of Hahtla, the Thunder Bird, which is the totem of the Haida tribe.

The village of Fort Get There must be close at hand; but why had the totem been painted in that particular place?

Kit allowed his eyes to wander about the spot, and not far from the painted boulder he saw a steep path leading upward.

This path was crossed with roots and trailing vines from which the bark had been worn by the hands of those who had helped themselves up the difficult path.

The mystery of the painted totem was solved.

To a voyager on the river it marked the point of debarkation for reaching the Haida village.

Kit had now two men to look for—Bottleneck Bill and Siwash Sam.

He arose to his feet, and, although his limbs were bruised and sore, he succeeded in reaching the top of the bank in safety.

Before him, through the thick woods, stretched a narrow path.

This, undoubtedly, led toward the Indian village, and Kit struck boldly into it.

He had proceeded a dozen yards through the dense timber, when a sound of guttural voices, pitched in an excited and angry key, broke on his ear.

Who could it be?

Perhaps he had stumbled upon Siwash Sam and his captors!

Thrilled with this thought, Kit dropped down upon his knees, drew one of his revolvers and pushed stealthily forward.

A short distance ahead of him, he failed to notice a large spruce, overhanging the path.

MAKE THE ACQUAINTANCE OF DIAMOND DICK, JR.

The lower limbs had been lopped from the trunk, and the trunk itself was supported by a rope cunningly hidden among the bush.

This rope was connected with a small piece of wood that lay carelessly across the path.

The whole was an ingenious Haida trap, and Kit was entirely oblivious of it.

Reaching the piece of wood in the trail, Kit started to creep across it, but the instant it yielded to the pressure of his knee, the rope supporting the overhanging spruce gave way and the tree fell upon him, flattening him out helplessly along the ground.

It was a fortunate thing for Kit that a small boulder chanced to lie beside the path.

The tree rested upon this, and it was all that saved the youth's life.

As it was, the breath was almost crushed out of his body.

As he lay there, gasping and unable to move, two Indians rushed upon him, out of the timber.

They seemed very much surprised to find that Kit was alive, and one of them knelt down and raised a knife as though he would finish the work which the tree had failed to perform.

The other, however, caught the descending arm, and a violent altercation ensued between the two.

Fortunately for Kit, the second Indian had his way and the prisoner's hands and feet were bound while he still lay under the tree.

By means of heavy sticks, used as levers, the spruce was then pried from Kit's body, and he was picked up by the head and heels and carried off through the timber at a dog-trot.

In a short time, faint yells and shouts were borne to their ears from in front.

As they continued to advance, the hubbub grew louder and louder.

It was plain to Kit that they were rapidly nearing the village, and that the potlatch was in full swing.

He almost wished at that moment that the Indian had been allowed to finish him with the knife, for the warriors in the village, frenzied with hoochinoo, would no doubt have a worse fate in store for him.

A quarter of a mile more of traveling brought them to a small, dry ravine, bare of timber but planted with at least a dozen totem poles—one before each of the thatch-roofed log houses that made up the village.

The twelve lodges were arranged in a circle about an exceptionally large house, or council chamber.

The totem pole before the large cabin was very elaborately carved and painted to represent various faces, as grotesque as the heathen mind could conceive.

On top of the pole was the Thunder Bird.

This pole was the tribal totem.

The other poles were merely symbols of individual, or family totems.

There was not a soul to be seen in the streets of the village; but the pandemonium that reigned in the council chamber proved conclusively that hoochinoo was flowing like water, and that every one, excepting Kit's two captors, were attending upon the potlatch.

While Kit was taking in the appearance of the place, and wondering whether Bottleneck Bill was still alive, and, if so, where he was confined, the two Haidas bore him quickly to an ill-smelling hut and dumped him roughly upon the floor in one corner.

Then, before he could say a word, the Indians went away.

Kit felt that certain death was staring

IT'S EASY TO GET A WAR BADGE—SEE PAGE 32.

him in the face, and that it was his duty to take any chances that offered, even a forlorn hope, of escape.

For this reason, no sooner were his captors gone than he made a vigorous attack upon the cords that bound his wrists.

As these were made of the twisted intestines of some sea animal, they were as sharp and cutting as the big strings of a bass viol.

They defied his efforts, but he was not the one to give up, and was hard at it when his labors were interrupted by the return of one of his captors.

This Haida was the one who had prevented his companion from striking Kit with the knife.

While gone, he had evidently imbibed several fingers of hoochinoo, for his black eyes sparkled, and he appeared to be in a talkative mood.

This was something that Kit desired, and had hardly dared to hope for.

"Haida talk English?" he asked.

The answer was direct and to the point.

"Bet yer life! Blast your dead eyes, you lubber! Me mission Haida. Haida Jake my name. Shiver my timbers! What you want, hey?"

That wasn't all that Haida Jake said, by any means.

He wound up his remarks with a piratical flow of language that would have given any old whaler cards and spades.

It was evident that he had picked up his knowledge among the sea-faring men of the coast.

"Did you pull my companion out of the oomiak?"

Haida Jake shook his head.

"Why did you throw that tree down on me?"

"Him a trap," chuckled the Indian.

"I know it was a trap, but why did you do it?"

"We try to kill you."

"Did you throw that bomb-harpoon?"

"Odder Haida throw um."

"If you wanted to kill me, why did you prevent the other Haida from knifing me?"

"Me saw smoke signal from village."

"What did the smoke signal say?"

"Signal say, no kill."

Kit was surprised at this, and his curiosity considerably whetted.

"What else did signal say?" he asked.

"Him say, we elected anudder Grand Tyhee, and new Grand Tyhee say, bring prisoner to village and no kill."

Kit was beginning to feel a new measure of relief.

"What is the new Grand Tyhee going to do with me?"

"Him want sacrifice for Thunder Bird, and want to kill you in council lodge."

"Oh, that's it," muttered Kit, grimly.

"When is the affair going to come off?"

"Listen, now! You hear dat? Dey coming!"

What Kit heard was a rattling of bullets in an empty gourd, and the furious beating of a tom-tom.

The sounds grew louder, and a shaman finally reeled up to the front of the hut, beating his drum with one hand and shaking his gourd with the other.

Behind him followed three half-tipsy bucks, who caught Kit up in their unsteady hands and bore him off toward the council lodge, preceded by the medicine man.

The big lodge was packed to suffocation with squaws and warriors, all squatted on the floor and drinking their fiery liquor out of huge earthen bowls with shell cups.

In one end of the building was a kind of rude platform, built of logs.

DIAMOND DICK, JR. IS A DEAD SHOT.

From one of the low rafters, well forward toward the front of the platform, was suspended a glossy curtain made of sewed sealskins.

All eyes seemed to be rivited upon this curtain.

Two or three yards in front of the platform was a large stone with a concave centre.

As Kit was roughly thrown on the top of this stone, clamorous yells rent the air.

The Haidas were in a hurry for the grand climax of the potlatch to occur.

But where was the Grand Tyhee, on whom so much depended?

Kit had an abiding faith in his lucky star, and he was not prepared to give up even yet.

Of one thing he was positive, however, and that was that he had never been in quite so tight a place as he was at that moment.

He wondered where Siwash Sam was.

The Chilkat belonged to the Plingits, as did the Haidas, and he might have influence enough with the Indians to save his friend's life.

While Kit was turning this matter over in his mind, the shaman advanced to the front of the log platform and walked back and forth for several moments, emitting a guttural chant and tossing his arms wildly; then he dropped down on the logs and resumed business with the tom-tom and the gourd.

Kit was lying in such a position on the large stone that his view comprised the entire front of the platform.

As soon as the shaman had ceased his chant and had begun his orchestral overture, every native in the council chamber stopped his frenzied shouts and became perfectly still.

Even the squaws ceased to rattle their shell cups against the earthen jars of hoochinoo.

Every glittering eye was riveted upon the log stage for it was there that the new Grand Tyhee was to appear.

Just as the suspense was becoming almost unendurable, the sealskin curtain was yanked aside and the high chieftain of the Haidas stood revealed.

Kit was thunderstruck.

He could scarcely believe his eyes.

Howl upon howl of frenzied joy went up from the Indians, and menacing demonstrations were made in Kit's direction.

But the youth paid no attention.

He could see nothing and hear nothing except what was taking place on the stage.

For the Grand Tyhee was none other than Bottleneck Bill!

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRE STICKS—A WHALEBOAT HOW-ITZER—A CLEAR BREAK-AWAY.

Bill was dressed in a magnificent suit of seal, trimmed with otter, which did anything but fit him as it should.

Over it all he wore a narkeeta, or woven robe, especially reserved for ceremonial wear on the part of the Grand Tyhee.

On his ragged mop of hair rested an ancient and tarry sailor's hat, which might have seen ocean service in the days of Vancouver.

As the curtain was pulled aside, Bill was seen to be holding in his hands four sticks, each about a foot in length.

The two ends of each stick had been wrapped in tow, saturated in seal oil.

Fire had then been applied, and Bill was juggling with the four blazing sticks.

His juggling was really admirable, too, and the Haidas looked on in open-mouthed wonder.

Walking around and around the stage, Bill sent the sticks whirling about his

DO YOU WANT A FLAG BUTTON OR PIN?

head, now with one hand, now with the other, now with both, and he accompanied his work with a sing-song chant which Kit immediately discovered was meant for him.

"I'm onto my job, Kit, don't you forget that," sang Bill, occasionally chiming in with a whoop and a grunt for the purpose of deceiving the natives.

"I saved my scalp," he chanted, "and got to be high mucky muck by juggling these sticks and eating fire. But now they're tryin' to make me marry a dozen squaws—cross-eyed, squint-eyed, wall-eyed and beauties I don't think.

"I'm done. I'm ready to break away from this gang while they're full up with hoochinoo. I think the job will be easy, but we'll have to make a hot foot right over 'em an' through the door.

"They brought a whaleboat howitzer up from the coast to use against the Sticks. She's small, but she's deadly. They were going to tie me to the mouth and set her off when they first brought me here, but I began eatin' fire and that settled it.

"Diablo used to be my museum name in the States, and I'll bet dollars to dimes I've played the Old Nick with them.

"What I was goin' to say is, we'll have to look out for the howitzer. Its outside at the other end of this building. I think they're too drunk to use it, but it's just as well to keep our weather eye open.

"Edge over a little on your side so I can get at the ropes that bind your hands.

"Don't get scared and think I'm going to eat you—I have to throw in a few tragic frills for effect. When I say 'scoot,' you run for the door as though the fiends were after you. Knock over anybody that gets in your way.

"And now hold your breath, for here comes the climax."

Bill ceased his chant with a long—drawn-out and quivering yell.

When he stopped, he was directly at the front of the platform.

As the blazing sticks came down, for the last time, he caught them, one by one, and extinguished the fire by thrusting the ends in his mouth.

On the fourth and last stick, however, he left one end burning.

Throwing the other sticks away he caught this one in his hand and sprang from the platform to the rock where Kit was lying.

This move was greeted with yells of approval, for the Haidas thought that the prisoner's time had come.

Dropping down on all fours, Bill began creeping around the stone, snapping and snarling, to the immense edification of the heathen onlookers.

When he reached Kit's feet, he applied his blazing torch to a loop in the cord that bound his ankles, burning it in twain.

"Work your feet loose gradually," chanted Bill.

Then he crept around to Kit's hands and succeeded in burning the rope that bound his wrists, without so much as scorching the skin.

The Indians applauded vociferously the acts of their Grand Tyhee.

Besotted with liquor, as they were, they had not the power to think or to reason.

Even the shaman who, an hour before, had been Bill's bitter rival and had nearly burned himself to death while attempting to eat live coals, could now only look on and palpitate with envy.

But the time had come to undeceive the Haidas and make a dash for freedom.

"Ready, Kit?" cried Bill, springing to his feet and casting aside the markeeta, which merely encumbered his movements.

DIAMOND DICK, JR. STANDS BY HIS FRIENDS.

"All ready," replied Kit.

"Then kick yourself out of those ropes and follow me—quick!"

Before the astounded Haidas could realize what was happening, their Grand Tyhee was dashing toward the door, closely followed by their prisoner.

At last the Indians caught a glimmering idea that something was wrong, and several leaped up to bar the passage of the fleeing men.

"There's a sockdologer for you!" shouted Bill, letting fly with his right and neatly toppling over a strapping buck; "and here's a sample off the same piece for you," he added, sweeping another tipsy native out of his path. "Hard at it, Kit?"

"I'm using both my fists and my feet, Bill," replied Kit, who was doing tremendous execution.

His knuckles were like iron and they fell with the force of a pile driver.

Nothing could stand against the whirlwind fight which the two friends put up, and they finally succeeded in reaching the door and plunging through it.

Behind them came a struggling and howling mob shouting aloud for their Grand Tyhee to come back and go on with the show.

Kit and Bill, however, seemed to have jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire.

As they started to make off toward the timber, they ran plump into a small party of Haidas who were arriving a little late for the potlatch.

"Here's trouble now, for sure," cried Bill; "these fellows are not full of hoochinoo and they'll give us a rub, or I'm no hand at guessing."

"Never mind," returned Kit, "we can't back out, now. At them, Bill, shoulder to shoulder! There's a possibility that we can win out."

The Indians behind shouted an explanation of the situation to those in front and the new arrivals closed in on the white men.

An unfortunate slip laid Bill helplessly on the ground for an instant and the Haidas swooped down upon him in a twinkling.

In less time than it takes to put it in words, Bill was bound and carefully secured to the totem-pole—anything less than a totem-pole being considered beneath the dignity of the Grand Tyhee.

Kit had tried his best to make his way to Bill's side when he fell, but a phalanx of foes stood between them.

But Kit still fought undaunted, and it was the prettiest fracas Fort Get There had ever seen.

Although entirely surrounded by his foes, Kit struck out right and left and a Plingit fell at every blow.

"Bully for you, Kit," shouted Bill, from the totem-pole; "it's all up with us, I reckon, but go down with your boots on, whatever you do!"

Never before had Klondike Kit's wonderful prowess with his fists been demonstrated so perfectly.

It seemed impossible for the powerful Haidas to touch him.

Although armed the Indians, by some tacit agreement, did not make use of their weapons—probably wishing to reserve their prisoner for a sterner fate.

"Look out, Kit," suddenly sang out Bill; "they're pulling the howitzer around."

Turning his eyes toward the end of the council lodge, Kit saw two of the drunken Haidas dragging forward a small gun which was mounted on two wheels.

It was the kind of weapon which whalers carry in rowboats, and from

which they fire the harpoon that makes them fast to the whale.

It was very small, but if loaded with shrapnel, would be capable of immense destruction.

In the hands of a lot of drunken Indians there was no telling how much harm the howitzer might do.

The instant Kit's eyes fell on the gun, a plan flashed through his mind by which it might be possible to rescue both Bill and himself from their perilous situation.

The first and hardest part of his plan was to secure possession of the howitzer.

By this time, so far from being exhausted, he was only well warmed up to his work.

Springing away from the Haidas with whom he was battling, he made a feint as though he would pass around the corner of the council lodge.

The Indians started after him in full cry, but Kit dodged, charged upon the two Haidas who were dragging the howitzer and felled them both with two well-directed blows.

Then, leaping to the breech of the gun, he whirled it about until the muzzle frowned upon the group of onrushing natives.

"Stop!" shouted Kit, clutching the lanyard, and preparing to give it a vigorous pull.

Not one of the Haidas was so drunk as to be unable to realize the peril to which he was suddenly subjected.

Every man Jack of them came to an abrupt stop and their furious yells died away completely.

For a moment there was deep silence and then, with a howl of fear, they all turned and made a simultaneous dash for the interior of the council lodge.

In less than sixty seconds by the watch there was not a single Haida to be seen.

"Kit," yelled the delighted Bill,

"next to me, you're the biggest wonder in the northwest!"

"I wouldn't have given a copper cent for our chances, a minute ago," returned Kit, as he sprang to the totem-pole and cut Bill loose.

"Right you are!" cried Bill, hurrying to the howitzer the instant he was free.

Seizing the lanyard, he was on the point of giving it a furious jerk when Kit caught the string and pulled it forcibly out of his hand.

"What do you want to do?" he demanded; "kill us both?"

"Of course not, my impetuous young friend," replied Bill. "In order to get away we'll have to take to the woods, won't we?"

"Certainly."

"Well, while we're crossing that long, treeless stretch to safety, the Haidas will come out, point that howitzer at us and blaze away. They may be blamed poor shots, but there's so much scrap-iron in that gun that a piece of it couldn't fail to hit us. Now, Kit, if we fire this howitzer into the air, and then take to our heels, they won't be able to fire it after us; an, by the time they can get it loaded again, we ought to be a dozen miles from here. Do you absorb my idea?"

"Yes; but the plan won't work."

"Why not?"

"Because that old howitzer is rusted out and will burst at the first discharge."

"Jumping Maria! I never thought of that."

"I see you didn't, but it is a good deal better to think of it before the gun is fired than afterward."

"I should say so! But what shall we do, Kit?"

"Run for the timber."

"Suppose they come out and pop away at us?"

DIAMOND DICK, JR. TO THE RESCUE!

"We'll have to take chances. Are you ready?"

"You bet!"

"Then let's see if we can't make a clean break-away. Off you go!"

They turned at once and started for the woods at the top of their speed.

The Indians in the council lodge witnessed the move and immediately poured out of the door.

Half a dozen of them sprang at once to the howitzer.

"They're drawing a bead on us," panted Bill, casting a look behind him, over his shoulder.

"We're safer in front of the gun than behind it," replied Bill.

"If that gun doesn't bust, we're goners! They've grabbed the lanyard."

"Say nothing," replied Kit, "but keep moving. You spend too much time——"

Kit was interrupted by a booming crash from the howitzer.

A piece of iron went whistling through the air uncomfortably close to his head, and groans and howls of pain came from the vicinity of the council lodge.

"Take your time, Bill," said Kit, slackening his pace, "the Haidas have got too much business of their own to attend to, now, to think of following us."

"Did the gun bust?"

"I should say so! There's nothing left of that big totem-pole but a mass of splinters."

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT HAPPENED TO BILL—THE LOST TOTEM—UNDER THE ISLAND.

The havoc wrought by the bursting howitzer was terrific.

Of the gun not a piece was left.

Around it, the Indians had fallen in every direction.

The front of the lodge was demolished

and, as Kit had said, the totem-pole was reduced to a mass of splinters.

"That's pretty tough on the heathen," remarked Bill.

"They intended to make it tough for us and got a dose of their own medicine," replied Kit. "But come on, Bill. We've got troubles of our own."

Without delaying further they plunged into the woods and did not come to a halt until they were once again at the river bank.

"Now," said Kit, dropping down on a log, "I think we are entitled to a breathing-spell and can take it safely. What I would like to know is, how did you manage to drop into the Grand Tyhee's shoes?"

Bill laughed softly.

"I juggled my way into the Tyhee's muck-lugs. You know how those fool Sticks came to run me off?"

"Yes."

"Well they were for doing me after the chief, Tahkeenah, came back, and said Nell wouldn't hand over the blankets; but, before they could do the job, the Haidas came down on us like a thousand of brick, and when the mix-up was over, I found myself in a boat, bound down the river.

"When they arrived at the village we just left, they were all for blowing me from the mouth of that howitzer, just for a little excitement.

"I happened to get hold of some coals from the camp-fire, however, and began to eat them and to juggle with pieces of sticks.

"That settled the business. Every Indian dropped down and bumped his forehead on the frozen earth and swore than I was half-brother to the Thunder Bird. Then they proceeded to make me their Grand Tyhee.

"I began to think I was in clover until

YOU SHOULD GET A WAR BADGE AT ONCE.

the neathens commenced insisting that I should marry every squaw in sight. Then that tired feeling struck me in several places, all at once, and I resolved to make a break.

"About this time a runner came in and said a couple of prisoners had been captured—one a white man and the other a Plingit.

"The Plingit had been taken to the sacred island of Hahtla, and the white prisoner was about to be killed.

"At that juncture I made known my august will by signs, and told the Haidas to send up signals to the captors of the white man telling them to spare his life and bring him into camp.

"This was done. From the corner of my wickiup I saw the two Haidas carry you into the village, Kit, and to say that I was surprised wouldn't come within a mile of the true state of my feelings.

"Of course, I knew you had started out after the wonderful William, and had tumbled into their clutches. I swore then and there that I'd save you and get myself out of that muss, at one and the same time. Guess I did it, didn't I, Kit?"

"I guess you did, Bill. But you said the runner brought word that a Plingit was captured as well as myself, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"And he was taken to a place that you called the sacred island?"

"The Haidas call it that. They say the Thunder Bird makes its thunder there."

"Where is it?"

"In the Yukon, directly opposite the rock where the picture of the bird is marked."

"I remember seeing the picture," responded Kit.

"That island has been a sacred place

to the Haidas for generations. They call it the Place of the Lost Totem."

"What kind of a totem was lost there?"

"No one seems to know."

"Where do the Haidas keep their boats?"

"Under the lee of the river bank, near here. Why?"

"I want to use one of the boats to go to this island."

"It's a dangerous thing to do, Kit. If you're going to the island for the fun of the thing, I'd advise you to stay away."

"I'm going there to rescue Siwash Sam."

"Siwash Sam?" echoed Bill.

"Yes; he was the other prisoner whom the Haidas captured."

"Well, that's a knocker!" exclaimed Bill. "That's why they pulled him out of the boat before they blew you up with that bomb-harpoon."

"You know about that, then?"

"Yes; I got it from one of the Haidas who captured you, who speaks English. Now that I know who that Plingit is that was taken to the island, I am as anxious as you are, Kit, to get there."

"Then let's make a start."

"It will be just as well for us to reason together for a few moments, first. Did you pay any attention to that island at all?"

"No, I didn't even see it."

"It's of quite good size, but the banks are so precipitous it is impossible to make a landing."

"If that's the case, how did the Haidas take the Chilkat there?"

"There's a hole under the island and the river flows through it. The Haidas take kyaks and allow themselves to be drawn under the island by the force of the current."

READ "SHOW YOUR COLORS," AND SEND FOR A BADGE OR BUTTON.

Kit looked at his companion steadily to see whether he was really in earnest.

Bill met his gaze without flinching.

"That's a peculiar condition of things."

"This country is full of peculiar conditions, Kit," replied Bill. "There are more strange things to the square foot in Alaska than there are to the square mile in the States."

"I know that," replied Kit, "and I presume it's on that account that I like it so well. But about this island: When you once get under it, how do you succeed in getting on top?"

"Give it up. Perhaps the island is hollow, and you don't go on top at all."

"The only way, then, is to go it blind."

"That's about the way I size it up."

"Then let's waste no more time. Show me where there's a two hole kyak and we'll pull out."

"This way, Kit."

Bill got up and started slowly along the edge of the high bank, keeping his eyes riveted on the water below.

Finally he halted, and looked upward at a tree which, in growing, had inclined outward over the water.

"Here we are, Kit," said Bill.

"I don't see any boats," returned Kit, sweeping the surface of the water with his eyes.

"They're there, all the same, and this is how the Haidas get at them."

Walking to the trunk of the tree, Bill secured the end of the braided buckskin rope and unwound it until it hung suspended over the water.

Then, catching the rope firmly in his hands, he lowered himself down almost to the surface of the water, caught a root in the side of the bank, and drew himself out of sight.

He reappeared in a moment paddling a

two-holed kyak. "Well done!" said Kit. "Is there a scoop-out under the bank where the canoes are moored?"

"That's it exactly."

"Then hold her steady and I'll be with you in half a second."

Catching hold of the rope, Kit slid down it easily and dropped into the forward hole of the kyak.

A kyak, or kayak, it may be well to explain here, is a framework, neatly constructed of bone, covered completely—bottom, sides and deck—with skins.

It is virtually a canoe, pointed at both ends, and is practically unsinkable.

The operator sits with half his body through a hole in the deck—kyaks being constructed with either one or two holes.

When Kit dropped into the forward hole with his feet stretched out toward the front end of the canoe, Bill handed him a long, waterproof, entrail coat.

This Kit put on over his other clothing, and secured to a hoop surrounding his waist at the mouth of the hole.

Rigged in this way, not a drop of water could enter the craft, even if it were turned upside down.

Esquimaux and coast Indians have been known to throw themselves sideways into the water and then, by a dextrous use of their short paddles, to right the kyak and come up on top, on the other side.

Kit had often accomplished this submarine somersault, but he was not anxious to try it, with Bill in the same boat.

"Ready Kit?"

"Yes," answered Kit, taking firm grasp of his two-bladed paddle.

"Then off we go, straight for the island yonder."

A few quick strokes of their paddles, now on this side, and now on that, sent their frail bark like an arrow, slautwise across the stream.

DIAMOND DICK, JR. HAS HOSTS OF FRIENDS.

Straight ahead, perhaps two hundred feet, was Thunder Island, their destination.

As Bill had said, the shores were beetling and precipitous, and it would be utterly impossible for any one to effect a landing there.

The top seemed to be covered with trees, but the banks were bare and rocky, save on one side, where a heavy undergrowth drooped down to the surface of the river.

As they approached the island they heard a roaring which gradually increased in volume.

"That's where the thunder comes from," grinned Bill. "If we only had a Lightning Bird to go with the Thunder Bird, I'd quit the Klondike and go into the rain-making business. Think I could catch that bird if I sprinkled a little salt on his tail? I'd like to carry a few thunderbolts around in my pocket. They might come in handy."

"There's no time for joshing, Bill," said Kit; "this is a mighty serious business. If the current is to carry us under the island, we'll have to approach it directly from the east."

"You've got that dead to rights, Kit," replied Bill; "you take care of our course, and I'll just paddle evenly on both sides."

With the guidance of the kyak thus left to him, Kit set it due east of the island, head on and straight with the current.

Then, with anxious eyes, Kit watched and patiently awaited developments.

Bill's story was borne out by the fact that the waters did not part before the rock, and flow around, but continued straight on under it, without so much as a foaming riffle.

It was on this side that the undergrowth reached downward to the surface

of the water, and Kit hoped it cloaked a passage through which they could enter in safety.

"Cease paddling, Bill!" he shouted, for the roar rendered the hearing of an ordinary tone of voice impossible. "We'll let the current do the rest."

"Keno, Kit," was Bill's cheery response; "but hadn't we better flatten out along the deck of the kyak?"

"Yes; and hold the paddle slantwise above you. We're close in now. Down with you, Bill, down!"

They were rushing with race-horse speed, apparently at the rocky, brush-grown side of the bank.

But half a dozen canoe-lengths of clear water lay before the boat when Kit ordered Bill to bend down. The thunderous roar had increased to deafening proportions and a moment later, the two adventurous friends crashed from sight through the moss and bushes, borne on the breast of the swirling current.

For Kit and Bill it was a sudden and raking plunge from broad day into deepest night, with only the swish and thunder of waters echoing in their ears.

It was lucky indeed that Kit had thought to protect their recumbent forms with the paddles, otherwise the breath, and perhaps the life, would have been crushed out of their bodies against the low roof of the channel through which they were hurled.

"All right, Kit," shouted Bill, at the top of his voice; "no more low-bridge. Here we are, under the island. Sit up and be sociable."

At that instant, a gush of icy air fanned Kit's face, and he felt instinctively that they were approaching another low point in the channel.

"Down again, Bill, down!" cried Kit, quicky; "don't rise up until——"

Kit never finished his sentence.

BY ALL MEANS GET A FREE BUTTON OR PIN—SEE LAST PAGE.

At that moment there came a terrific jolt, followed by a sound of rending skin, plainly audible above the roar of the river.

Quickly as he could, Kit tore himself free from the snagged and rapidly filling kyak, and made a desperate effort to reach Bill; but the boat sank beneath him and he felt himself struggling in the water.

CHAPTER VII.

KIT IS RESCUED—MEETS AN OLD AC-
QUAINTANCE—SIWASH SAM.

"Bill!" shouted Kit, at the top of his voice, keeping himself afloat in the rapid current with great difficulty; "Bill!"

There was no answer.

Was it possible that Bottleneck Bill, fastened as he was to the kyak, had been dragged down to his death with the sinking boat?

The awful thought impelled Kit to make another desperate effort, and he dived down and attempted to reach the canoe.

His effort was fruitless, however, for the current whirled him along so furiously that he was obliged to use all his strength to keep his head above water.

As he rushed along with the current he continued to shout Bill's name, hoping against hope that an answer might come to him from somewhere out of the darkness.

No answer came; but Kit's voice was heard, although not by Bill.

A twinkling yellow light suddenly illumined the darkness ahead.

Kit saw it and shouted for help, for, bruised against the rocks and exhausted as he was, he felt that he must soon sink unless help came to him quickly.

No voice answered his call, but as he drew nearer the light he made out a

stalwart figure standing on a sloping shore.

An instant later his white face was seen and a rope was thrown to him.

He caught it deftly and clung to it with grim desperation while he was hauled in, hand over hand.

On reaching the bank he was so utterly fagged and bruised that he could not rise and it seemed impossible for him to move a muscle.

He merely closed his eyes and rested on the hard rocks, while the man who had rescued him knelt down with his blazing torch directly over the youth's face.

Then, with an exclamation of surprise, Kit's rescuer caught him by the collar and dragged him up the rocky shore to a place where there was a bed of dried pine cones, and threw him down.

In a little while Kit opened his eyes and saw the man who had rescued him, squatted a short distance off watching him like a hawk.

The fellow was an Indian, and wore the ceremonial black paint of the Haidas.

Kit was astounded to find that there were human beings living in the interior of the island; but as it was a sacred spot in Haida totemism, perhaps this man was only a temporary visitor at the place.

Kit observed that the Indian's light was from a bunch of four or five oulchan, or candle-fish.

This fish melts like a lump of butter, in a frying-pan, and when dried, and threaded with a spruce wick, burns like a candle.

The Haida had tied several of these fish together, and lighted them.

They gave out a very fair glow, but not sufficient for Kit to pierce the darkness beyond a very few yards.

He would have liked very much to have a survey of this strange place in

DIAMOND DICK, JR. DEFENDS THE HELPLESS.

order to figure what chances of escape Bottleneck Bill had, if any.

If the bank was sloping at the point where the accident had happened to the kyak, as it was where he had landed, Kit felt that there might be some hope for his pardner, after all.

While he was turning the matter over in his mind, Kit suddenly saw a luminous face with blood-red eyes break out of the gloom.

It was identical with the face which he had seen when he started off in his lost lead in quest of Bill!

He thought of that fierce struggle with the shaman, and tried to rise.

But he could not move a muscle.

His limbs were sore from harsh contact with the rocks and the cold water in which he had been immersed sent a racking chill to his very marrow.

The face came closer and closer, the blood-red eyes staring into his with blinding intensity.

The form that bore the hideous, phosphorescent mask skulked along toward him, now creeping on all fours and now springing, kangaroo-like, along on its haunches.

Finally, it paused at Kit's feet, threw away the glimmering face and sprang upright with a furious rattle, and a shrill, triumphant yell.

Kit was startled, although he did not show it.

For this was the identical shaman whom he had had the pleasure of choking, shortly after he had left camp.

The shaman, apparently, was in doubt whether he had to do with a flesh-and-blood subject, or a spook, for surely no one could have been tied tighter than Kit was when tossed into the Yukon.

On this account, the medicine man danced around Kit and exorcised him after the most approved style.

When the demons had all been presumably rattled out of the youth, the shaman turned and grunted a few words at his assistant.

Instantly they made off into the darkness and when they came back, they were lugging a huge flat stone.

Stopping a yard or so from Kit's feet, they began to swing the stone between them.

What was their object?

Before Kit could even divine their purpose, they let the stone fly, full at him.

By a herculean effort, and one of which Kit had not believed himself capable, he rolled to one side and the stone shivered into fragments on the precise spot where he had been lying.

The shaman had attempted to kill him in this novel and inhuman way!

"You infernal brute!" shouted Kit, "if I had my way I'd draw and quarter you."

The shaman did not understand, but laughed jeeringly, shook his rattle, and jogged off after another rock.

Kit felt that this time he would be powerless to evade the missile, and he thought of Nell, and Bill, and all his friends at the Discovery, and mentally avowed that his lost lead was about the toughest trail he had ever tackled.

Setting his teeth together, he watched the two natives plant themselves and begin swinging their second rock.

That second rock was never thrown, however.

Just as they were ready to hurl it, a towering, massive form sprang between them and cast them asunder with such force that they reeled several feet and the shaman dropped with the stone on top of him.

Kit wanted to shout, for the newcomer was none other than Siwash Sam.

Walking over to Kit, the Chilkat knelt down beside him.

"Kit," he said, with a grim smile, "you play in blame hard luck, hey?"

"This is only part of it, Siwash," was Kit's faint response.

"You hurt?"

"Jarred up a little, that's all. A little rest will put me on my feet again."

"You like cat—always come down on your feet. Let Chilkat see."

Picking up the fish-light, Siwash Sam felt Kit all over, carefully, and then looked him attentively in the eyes.

Suddenly starting up, he clapped his hands sharply together, and called the attention of the shaman's assistant.

After conversing a few moments in the Plingit tongue, the Haida started off, but was brought up short by a harsh command from the shaman who, at that moment, came limping upon the scene.

The shaman's face was distorted with pain, and his eyes, whenever they rested upon the Chilkat, gleamed vindictively.

Siwash Sam turned to the assistant with a threatening gesture, and repeated his commands.

Again he started, and again the medicine man halted him.

This was more than the Chilkat could stand, and he walked over to the shaman and felled him flat.

Then he turned to the other and gave him the command for the third time.

It was impossible for the medicine man to interfere, and his assistant went off and shortly returned with a small tin dipper.

This he gave to Siwash Sam, and the latter advanced to Kit's side.

"You like to feel good for two, maybe t'ree day, Kit?"

"I need all my strength, muscle and sense right now, Siwash. Why? What have you got there?"

"Shaman heap big fool, but him know

some t'ings. Dis hot stuff, Kit. It take away pain, make your head all clear, but in two, t'ree day, worse pain come back, head get foggy, you know?"

"Peculiar stuff, hey?"

"Shaman get um from debbil," was the sober rejoinder. "But um no kill. You take um, Kit?"

"Yes."

Siwash Sam bent down and pressed the cup to his friend's lips.

Kit drained it to the last drop, and the effect upon muscle, nerve and brain was almost magical.

Renewed vigor seemed to course through his veins.

All pain left him in an instant, and his limbs became supple, once more, and his brain abnormally active.

"That's great stuff," said Kit, getting up and slapping his chest. "It makes me feel like a new man, Siwash."

"In two, t'ree days you feel worse—heap worse."

"I can stand it to feel worse in two or three days," replied Kit, "but just now I need all the ability I can muster."

"What you do here, Kit?"

"Bottleneck Bill and I came here to find you."

"You find Bobbleneck Bill, den?"

"Yes."

"And you come in under island in boat?"

"That's the only way to get here, isn't it?"

Siwash Sam nodded his head.

"Where Bobbleneck?" he asked.

"Our kyak was wrecked and Bill went down with it into the river."

"Bill dead?"

"I hope not, Siwash. I have a lingering hope that he escaped.

"You no worry, Kit. No can kill Bobbleneck. Him too tough."

DIAMOND DICK, JR. BREAKS THE RECORD.

"As quick as I find him I lose you; and when I find you, I lose him."

"We go find Bobbleneck Bill to-gedder," returned Siwash Sam, picking up the fish-torch and starting down the bank of the stream. "Hurry, Kit. We goin' to have trouble."

"Who with?"

"With shaman. There so many Haidas on island," and he lifted his right hand four times with fingers outspread.

This signified that the medicine man had a score of Indians at his command.

"What are so many Haidas doing here?"

"Whole tribe come up from coast to fight Sticks and look for lost totem."

"What is this lost totem?"

The Chilkat pointed upward at a wall which they happened to be passing.

The wall was a section of very smooth rock, and was covered with gaudily painted hieroglyphical figures.

"That's the totem, Kit," said Siwash Sam.

"It doesn't seem to be lost," replied Kit.

"No, totem dere, all right—but what him mean?"

"You mean that the meaning of those hieroglyphs is lost, eh?"

The Chilkat nodded his head vigorously.

"Haidas heap big fools," he grinned. "Me know meaning of totem. Found um out. But come on, Kit. We lose time and must go find Bill. Me knock shaman down and you choke him. He bring his men and try to kill us both. Hurry!"

They walked along the sloping bank toward the point where the kyak had gone down.

Ahead of them was a jagged spur of rocks.

As they started to pass it, a crowd of

Haidas ran out from behind and stood confronting them.

Each Indian bore a fish-torch in one hand and carried a knife in the other.

There were about ten of them and they were headed by the shaman, whose anger seemed to have increased to a fury.

"I guess we're blockaded, Siwash," said Kit. "It will be better for us to turn around and make in the opposite direction."

As the Chilkat appeared to be of the same opinion, they whirled about, only to find themselves facing a second row of menacing forms.

They were between two fires.

"Twenty to two," muttered Kit. "The affair looks dubious, Siwash. What shall we do?"

"Fight!" gritted the Chilkat, with a snap of his massive jaws.

CHAPTER VIII.

BILL TO THE RESCUE—DEATH OF THE SHAMAN—TO THE TOP OF THE ISLAND.

Siwash Sam's suggestion of a fight tallied with Kit's feelings to a T.

The odds were hopelessly against them, but that was the kind of a battle that Kit liked.

He had left the Discovery with a rifle and a brace of revolvers.

The rifle he had dropped during his first experience with the Haida shaman and his belt and six-shooters must have been lost when the kyak had capsized, for they were now gone from about his waist.

"Are you armed, Siwash?" asked Kit.

"Yes," and the Chilkat lifted his two brawny fists.

"That's about the way I'm fixed," replied Kit. "But listen to the shaman—he's got something to say to you."

The shaman advanced toward the Chil-

BE PATRIOTIC—WEAR A BUTTON.

kat and halted within a foot of him, saying something in his native tongue.

For answer, Siwash Sam deliberately knocked him down.

"What did he want?" asked Kit, hurriedly.

"Wanted us to give up," grunted the Chilkat. Look out, Kit, here dey come."

With a whoop, the score of Haidas dashed forward, their knives glittering in the light of their torches.

Kit laid out one of the reds, and Siwash Sam polished off another.

There is no doubt that force of numbers would have told in the end and turned the tide of battle in favor of the Haidas; but before the fight could proceed farther, something happened.

A loud yell echoed weirdly through the semi-gloom, and Bottleneck Bill suddenly rushed into view and dashed among the Indians.

His impetuous onset surprised the Haidas for a moment, and Bill took advantage of their surprise to foster a belief in his diabolical power.

Snatching a fish-torch from the hands of one of the natives, Bill tore off one of the blazing fish of which it was composed and deliberately ate it.

With a cry of fear and awe, the Haidas slunk back in a group by themselves, clutching their knives with nerveless fingers and watching Bill with all their eyes.

"Where did you come from, Bill?" cried Kit.

"From the bottom of the river, last. Just got out of that scrape by the skin of my teeth. Got here in the nick of time, didn't I? Look at the shaman. He's turning green with envy."

The shaman was furious, for Bill was commanding more awe and admiration than he had ever been able to wring out of the tribe.

The fact was, Bill was euchering the medicine man out of his job for, unless he could duplicate every feat that Bill performed, he might as well throw up the sponge and take a back seat.

Maddened by this train of thought, the shaman sprang forward, caught a flaming torch out of the hands of one of the men, and gulped it down.

The tortures he endured were something terrible to witness.

After plunging back and forth through the throng, splitting the air with his frenzied yells, he dashed down the bank and sprang headforemost into the river.

As luck, or ill-luck, would have it, a rock rose upward out of the water at the point where the shaman struck, and he hit it with his head.

The blow killed him, for, a moment later, his lifeless body floated on the crest of the waves and was dragged ashore by some of the Haidas.

"Let's get out of this while our credit is good," remarked Bill, hurrying toward Kit and Siwash Sam.

"I'm agreeable, Bill," replied Kit, "but where'll we go and how'll we get there?"

"I'm no hand at guessing counndrums," answered Bill; "I merely made the suggestion, that's all. Hello, Siwash! Showed up, did you?"

"Howdy, Bobbleneck Bill," grinned the Chilkat; "you make um great shaman. How you eat um burning fish, hey?"

"Easiest thing in the world, when you know how. But here they come with the shaman. The knock-kneed gentleman in front has evidently got something on his mind. What's he talking about, Siwash?"

The Chilkat listened a moment and then answered:

"Him say two lives must be given up for life of shaman. Dey want to kill Kit

DIAMOND DICK, JR. IS A FINE FELLOW.

and me, and make Bobbleneck Bill new shaman."

"That's all right for Bill," said Kit, "but tough on us, Siwash. We might as well make another fight of it."

"No fight," replied the Chilkat; "we run."

"Where will we run to?"

"Get out on top of island. Come!"

There was now no one in their rear to bar a retreat and Siwash Sam picked up a torch and started off at a run.

Kit and Bill sprang after him and behind them came the Indians, yelping like a pack of hounds.

The Chilkat led his two friends up a steep and rocky incline, setting a pace that sufficed to distance their pursuers.

After a short climb, they emerged through a crater-like hole and stood on top of Thunder Island.

"Well," remarked Bill, "this island is only a shell, and some day it will collapse and drop out of sight under the waters of the Yukon. But there's one thing that gets me, gentlemen."

"What's that?" asked Kit.

"Haven't we made a bad matter worse by coming up here? When the Haidas come after us, we'll be between the devil and the deep sea. We won't be able to go either one way or the other, and they'll take us like rats in a trap."

Bill's words furnished Kit with food for thought.

It was night on top of the island, and a full moon was shining.

The island was small, and wooded, and it might be possible to dodge the Indians until daylight, but this was hardly possible.

"If we only had a boat," murmured Kit, "we could take chances in leaping from the bluff into the water."

"But we haven't a boat," said Bill.

"Our kyak was ripped from stem to gudgeon."

"That shaman and his outfit must have canoes, Siwash," remarked Kit, turning to the Chilkat. "Where do they keep them? Do you know?"

"Dey keep boats under island," replied Siwash.

"In the place where we just came from?"

"Yes."

"How do they get out?"

"Float out on current like dey float in."

"Scoot for timber, Kit," put in Bill, suddenly; "here comes the hull heathen outfit, tight after us."

Bill was right.

At that precise moment, the dark forms of the Haidas could be seen issuing from the crater-like opening that led upward from the interior of the island.

"Into the woods!" commanded Kit, making an immediate move toward the thickest of the timber.

The heaviest woods seemed to grow on a lip of land that ran out, point-like, from the western side of the island.

To this place Kit, Bill and Siwash made their way and lay in hiding.

"How do you feel, Kit, after the wreck?" queried Bill.

"I was pretty badly knocked out for a time, but Siwash Sam gave me a drink of something that put new life into me. If I could only get on the outside of a little food I think I would be in better shape than I ever was."

"How would you like one of my fish dinners?"

"They'd be a little too hot to suit me. How did you ever learn to eat fire?"

"I used to do it for a living."

"How did you release yourself from the kyak?"

"I didn't. The rock we struck took care of that."

FREE WAR BADGES. SEE LAST PAGE.

CHAPTER IX.

"Ah, I begin to understand how you got out, now."

Just then, Siwash Sam, who had been scouting a short distance in advance, hurried back to them.

"Dey have got us, sure!" he exclaimed, excitedly.

"How so?" asked Kit.

"Dey spread out an all come in dis direction."

From what the Chilkat said, Kit gathered that the Haidas were deployed across the narrow lip of land and were bound to have them or to sweep them into the river.

"There they are!" cried Bill, pointing to a number of torches that were darting about through the darkness like fireflies.

"It seems to me," suggested Kit, "that our best plan is to fight our way through their lines, regain the interior of the island, secure a canoe and float out from under the island on the current of the river."

"Good!" said Siwash.

"Keno!" added Bill. "A pretty fight, and shoulder to shoulder—that's the ticket."

"Whatever we do," returned Kit, "let's keep together."

"Together it is!"

And together they tried to make it, but failed.

Indian after Indian went down before their sturdy blows, but, as fast as one fell, another took his place, and the three friends were forced back, step by step, until they reached the end of the lip of land and could retreat no farther.

"What now?" panted Bill; "is it all up?"

"No! Stand them off for ten minutes longer and we'll save our scalps."

"How?"

"Listen!"

THE UP-RIVER BOAT—SAVED IN THE NICK OF TIME—CONCLUSION.

Above the roar that came from the interior of the island was heard the chough-chough-chough of a steamer in the river.

Turning their eyes off to the westward, the twinkling light of an up-river boat could be seen, en route from St. Michaels to Dawson City.

"Luck is on our side!" shouted Bill.

"In ten minutes that boat will be abreast of the island," said Kit; "hold off the Haidas till then and we're safe."

Even as he spoke, he knocked an Indian off his pins, grabbed the torch out of his hand and threw it into a pile of dried brush almost at the end of the point of land.

The brush blazed up like tinder, and made a signal which those aboard the boat could not fail to take note of.

The Haidas evidently realized that the three friends were endeavoring to carry out some plan of escape in connection with the steamer, and they pushed the fighting hotter than ever.

For ten minutes Kit and his companions had their hands a little more than full.

By that time, however, the steamer was abreast of the island, working her engines just enough to hold her stationary in the current.

On the upper deck stood a man with a lantern which he was wildly waving for the purpose of attracting the attention of those on the island.

"Ahoy there!" shouted the man with the lantern.

"Ahoy!" returned Kit.

"Are you burning that signal for us?"

"Yes."

"What do you want?"

"There are three of us beset by a score of Indians. We're going to take to the water. Lay by and give us a hand."

"Aye, aye! Heave ahead!"

Then, one after another, three dark forms leaped into the river, and swam toward the steamer, while the baffled Indians above vented their disappointment in demoniacal howls.

"Klondike Kit!" exclaimed the captain of the boat as he pulled the youth aboard; "aren't you a little off your beat?"

"Slightly."

"What have you been up to now?"

"A little mix-up with the Haidas, that's all. Nothing serious."

"Might have been serious, though, if we hadn't happened along just as we did, eh?"

"It would have been an all day job with us, cap, if it hadn't been for you."

"Drop into the engine-room there, with your two friends, and dry your clothing. I'll rout out the cook and have him make you some hot coffee. Trot along, now; your teeth are chattering like castanets."

With clothing warm and dry and with some hot food in their stomachs, the three friends were improved a hundred per cent, and they turned into some empty bunks and slept like logs for the remainder of the night.

When they got up the next morning it was broad daylight and the steamer was tied up to her wharf at Dawson City.

When Kit came on deck, he was surprised to see his own little stern-wheeler, the Full Hand, lying along the pier a short distance away.

Karl Schnapps was sweeping the deck and, when Kit called out to him, he dropped his broom and jumped backward a dozen feet.

"Kit," he cried, "vas dot you oder someding else?"

"It's all right, Karl. What are you doing here?"

"Nugget Nell sent us up to see if we could find outt vot you vos doing mit yourself. Vere is Pottleneck Pill?"

"Here, Dutchy," put in Bill, bobbing up beside Kit; how you vos?"

"I feel pedder dan I vos do-morrow. How you been yourself?"

"Fine as silk!"

It did not take the three friends long to stow themselves aboard the Full Hand, and, by noon, they had covered the thirty miles between Dawson and the mouth of the Indian River and were tied up safely at the Discovery.

Kit's return was a joyful surprise to Nell.

"Did you think he'd bring me back with him, Nell?" asked Bill.

"I knew he wouldn't come back without you, Bill," replied Nell, "and I was afraid he'd have trouble. Were you in any danger, Kit?"

"Not much, little one," he answered, "but I expect to be as sick as a bear with a sore head, in about two or three days."

"How's that?"

Kit thereupon told her about the draught which Siwash Sam had given him.

The Chilkat wasn't joking, either.

In two days Kit was down on his bunk, and for several hours was out of his head and babbling about Haidas, Sticks, totems, shamans, and dozens of other things that were all Greek to Nell.

But in a week or two Kit had entirely recovered and was his old self again.

Then it was that Siwash Sam told him all about the lost totem and succeeded in starting him upon another expedition, fully as perilous, and in some respects as novel as his adventures among the Haidas had been.

The story will be told in the next issue of this weekly, and will be entitled: "Klondike Kit Down To Bed-Rock; or, A Wonderful Find On the Happy-Go-Lucky."

[THE END.]

SPECIAL NOTICE!

Owing to the fact that some of our publications are printed considerably in advance of issue, it was impossible to begin our badge and button premium offer in all on a simultaneous date. Our readers are notified that all copies of the Tip Top Weekly, Starry Flag, True Blue, Diamond Dick, Jr., Nick Carter Weekly and Klondike Kit, dated June 25, 1898, or later, are available under this offer (see page 32), and should you have copy of any of these dated June 25 or later, and WHICH CONTAINS NO COUPON ON PAGE 32, cut out the heading and date from the front cover, and it will be accepted by us in lieu of a coupon under the conditions of the offer. Headings will not be accepted as coupons where the coupon is published on page 32 of the same number.

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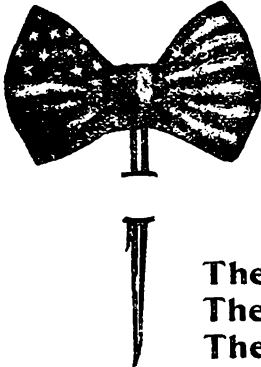
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