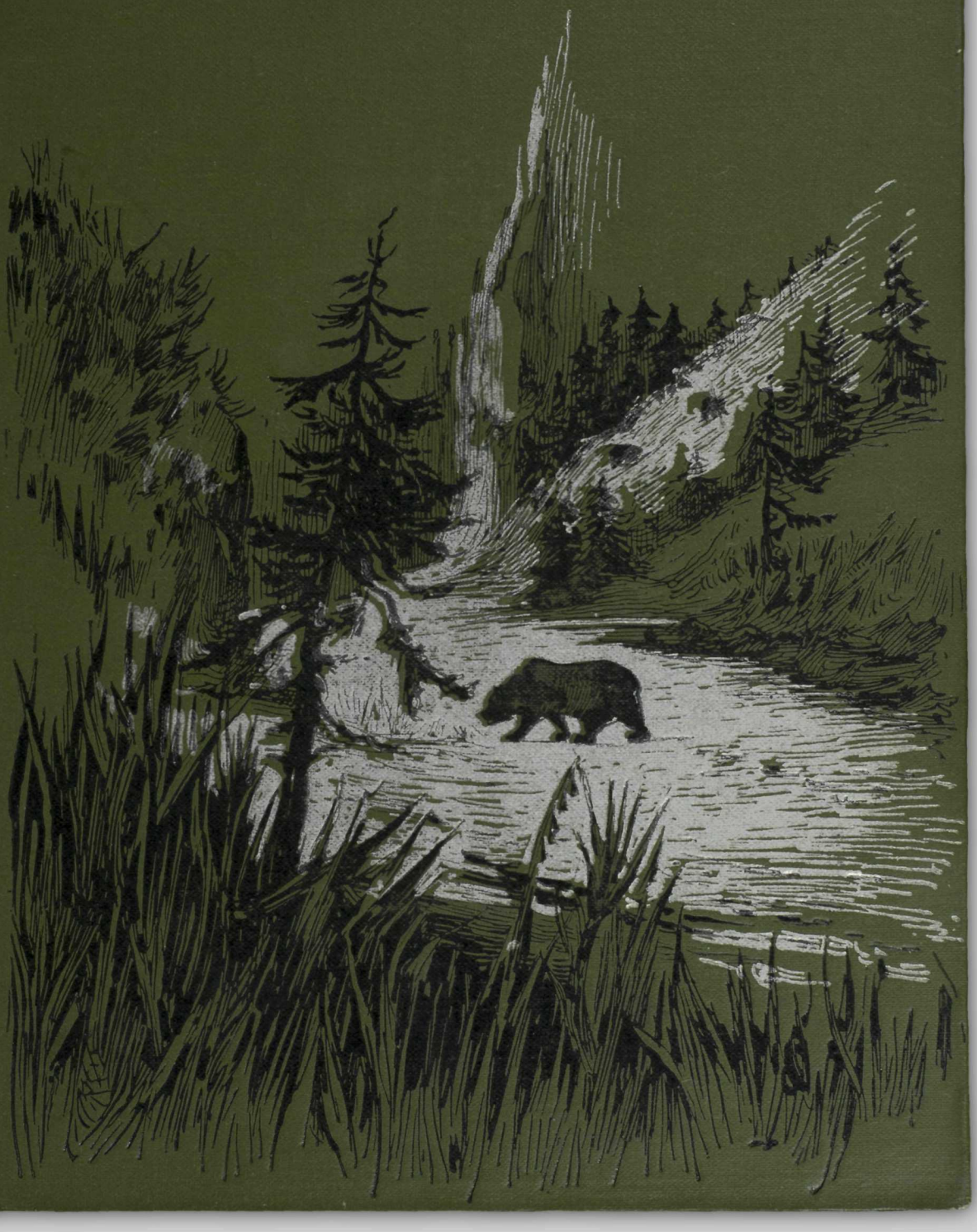

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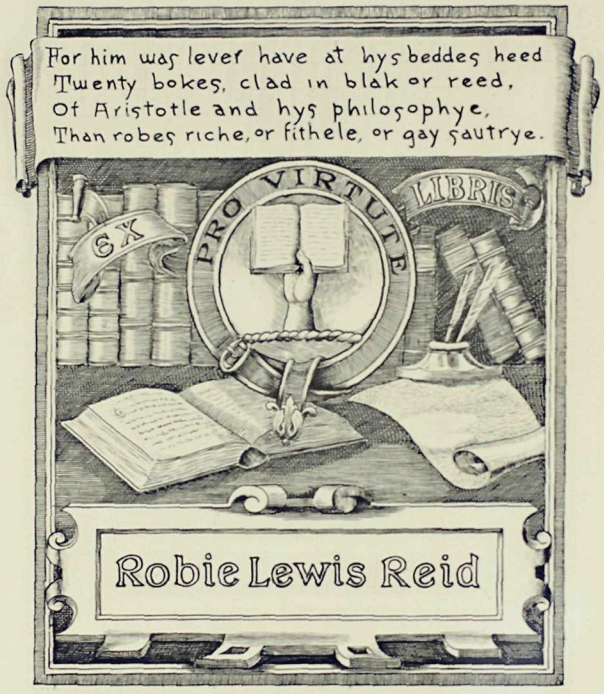

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Weekly Times - Jan. 20, 1938

Captain H. W. Seton-Karr, explorer, collector, and big-game hunter, who has died at the age of 78. He was fond of water-colour drawing.

BEAR-HUNTING IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS.

ONE OF SIX BEARS IN VIEW AT THE SAME TIME.

(*See Letter viii*)

BEAR-HUNTING

IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS

OR

Alaska and British Columbia Revisited.

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BY PERMISSION OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

BY

H. W. SETON-KARR, F.R.G.S., ETC.,

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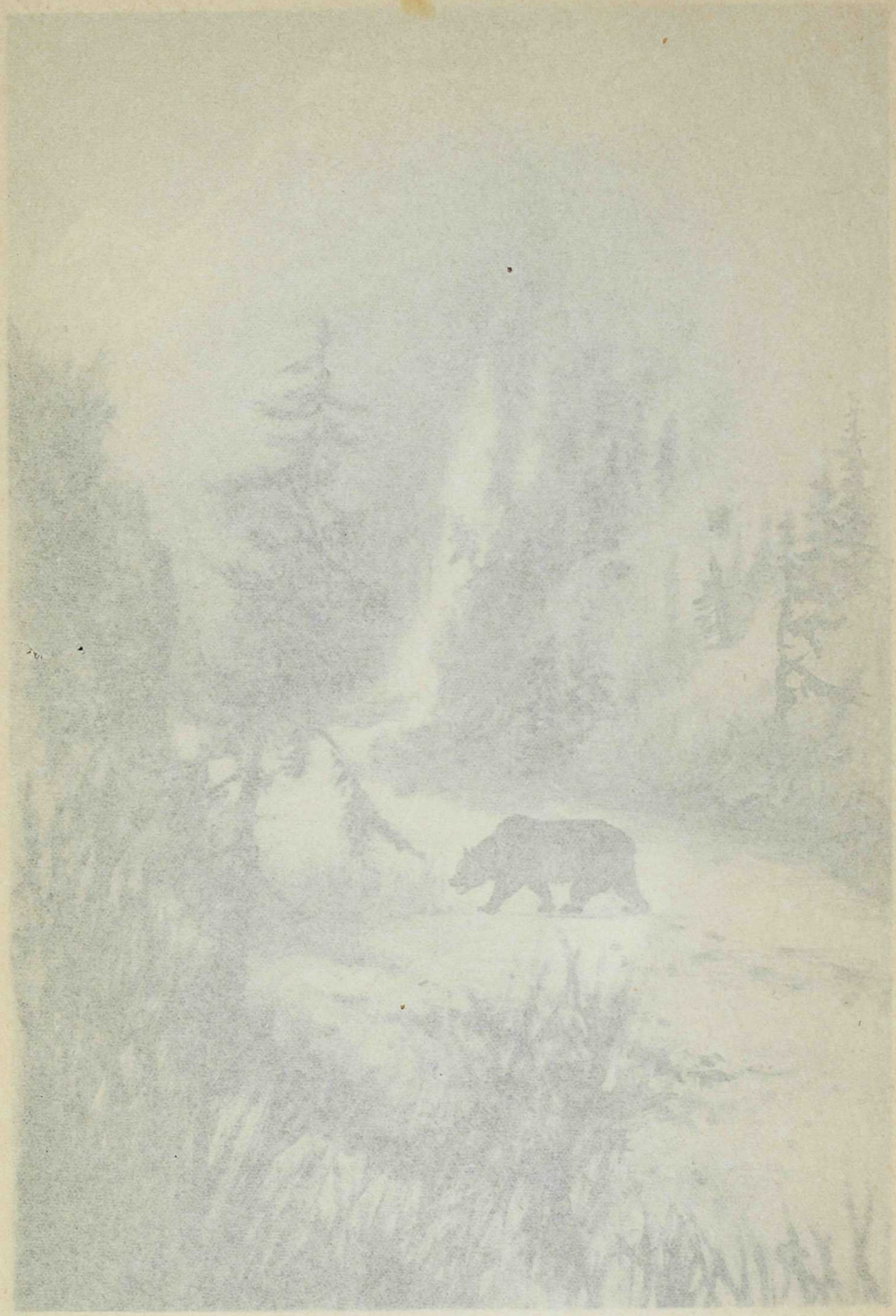

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MAP OF THE CHILCAT.

BEAR-HUNTING

IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS.

LETTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE remains at least one mysterious corner of North America which promises to prove comparatively accessible. This is the entirely unknown and hitherto unvisited country forming the south-west corner of British North-West Territory, bounded on the north by Copper River, on the east by the British portion of the great Yukon, on the west by the coast-strip of Southern Alaska, and on the south by the upper portion of the Inland Passage.

Some years ago Dr. Krause, a German, ascended to the summit of the Chilcat Pass (4,000 ft.), and made an accurate map of the small extent

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of country he visited, comprising a district within fifty miles of the coast. Beyond this nothing was known. In addition to my own party, which consisted only of four whites, an American exploring party had the same intentions as myself. In San Francisco they engaged one of the men we had with us in 1886.* But the leader of this rival party of explorers came up with me on the Alaska mail-steamer *Elder* to Chilcat.

It had been an exceedingly severe and late winter, and snow was reported as lying to an abnormal depth on the mountains. Whether this would prove advantageous to us, or otherwise, remained to be seen. If the snow is firm, one is enabled to transport provisions and baggage by dragging them upon a sled, more expeditiously than they can be portaged on men's shoulders.

The American expedition had given out that their objective point was Mount Wrangell, the active volcano on Copper River. I was not so ambitious as that.

The absence of any important tributaries on the left bank of the Yukon for many hundreds of miles above the junction of the White River and the

* See "Ten Years' Travel and Sport in Foreign Lands" (Chapman & Hall).

Yukon seems to show, says Dr. Dawson (who has just returned from an expedition down the Pelly and up the Yukon), that the basin of the upper portion of the White River must lie comparatively low, and, situated as it is within the St. Elias Alps, this country must possess most remarkable features, both geographically and from a climatic point of view, and well deserves exploration.

The Chilcat Pass was formerly employed by the Indians for reaching the Yukon, instead of going over the Chilcoot Pass, which was in the hands of the other branch of the tribe. They used, however, in this case to descend the Takheena River, turning east from the summit, and are said to have occupied twelve days in packing before being able to use a boat, in place of three days by the Chilcoot. The driest country is found in a belt bordering the lee side of the coast ranges, and the enormous height of the St. Elias range, under whose lee this unknown land lies, should make it a very dry one.

The White River is noted among the Indians as a moose and beaver region, but at present it is doubtful to which branch this refers. The Indians also report the existence of a burning mountain near the head waters of the White River, but it

is uncertain whether this refers to Mount Wrangell or not.

A wide-spread and modern layer of volcanic ash of great extent was observed by my friend Dr. Dawson, in 1887, as he poled his way up the Yukon, and also by my fellow-explorer Fred Schwatka, deposited over a large area of the upper Yukon basin. Its position seems to indicate that it came from the west. In some places drift-logs were observed below it quite sound and undecayed. This seems to show that there is at least one great volcano in this undiscovered country, recently active.

Mr. Ogilvie's Report lately appeared ("Annual Report of the Department of the Interior," part 8, Ottawa, 1890), in which he relates his story of the winter spent on the Yukon at the boundary line, in order to determine the approximate position of the frontier. He endeavoured to ascend the White River, but was unable, after several hours' exertion, to advance more than half a mile, owing to the swift and shallow current and numerous sand-bars. This river is very rapid and shoal, and the water, coming as it does from glaciers on the St. Elias Alps, is exceedingly muddy, and discolours the Yukon completely below their junction. He found the Takheena River also muddy, but not from glaciers.

This river, by Indian report, is easy to descend, and heads in a large lake.

The most valuable furs procured in the district are the silver-gray and black fox; the red fox is also very common. Game is not so abundant in the vicinity of the Yukon as it was before mining began; and it is now difficult to get any in the immediate neighbourhood of the river anywhere along the whole length of the Yukon. On the uplands large herds of cariboo still wander, and when the Indians encounter a herd, having now firearms, they allow very few to escape, even though they do not require the meat; in fact, they frequently kill animals just for the love of slaughter. Moose are not now often seen along the course of the Yukon, but must be sought at some distance back from it. A boom in mining soon exterminates the game in any district. There are two species of cariboo in the country—one, the ordinary kind, found in most parts of the north-west; the other, called the wood cariboo, much the larger and finer animal, but with antlers smaller than those of the former kind. The ordinary cariboo runs in herds, and when fired at becomes panic-stricken, bounding just as probably towards the hunter as away from him. When the Indians find a herd they take advantage of this, and

surround it, whereupon the animals are slaughtered wholesale.

There are four species of bear, the grizzly, cinnamon or black, brown, and silvertip, the latter being said to attack a man on sight without being wounded. In places the Arctic rabbit is numerous; in others it is altogether absent, and in some places is said to appear and disappear in different years. The mountain sheep, or bighorn, and mountain goat exist everywhere. Near the coast there is a smaller kind of sheep, with straighter horns than the ordinary bighorn. Ptarmigan and grouse are abundant in places.

I took the coasting steamer from Vancouver's Island up the Inland Passage—that wonderful archipelago which has its counterpart on the coast of Norway and the west coast of South America.

We reached Pyramid Harbour Cannery at the end of April. Like all other Indians of the coast, these Chilcats are loth to accept employment, but I at length, with Colonel Ripinski's assistance, persuaded an old man and a boy, out of the three families that chanced at that time to be at the station, to take my whole party in one canoe as far up the Chilcat River as Klokwan, the last Indian camp. A man might write a volume on the

superstitions, wars, and murders of this same Chilcat tribe, though I found them commonplace to the last degree. They are not cursed by the fatal gift of beauty. They were frequently drunk, and I am sorry to say that the whisky is supplied to them by white men who are to be found within a thousand miles of the Chilcat-Chilcoot peninsula.

This state of things is deplored by the managers of all three of the canneries at the head of Lynn Canal. It is slowly exterminating the Indians, who are absolutely essential as pack-carriers and guides to explorers.

Without Indians white men would be helpless on great rapid rivers like the Upper Chilcat, which can only be ascended in smooth-bottomed canoes. An Indian has so few needs that he can load himself with the white man's baggage instead of his own usual trading material, and, trained to do so from infancy, can carry far, far heavier packs than the ordinary white man for long distances. After four hours' tramping, a light pack (thirty pounds) seems to weigh a hundred pounds, and the pressure of the straps and bands becomes intolerable. Exterminate the aboriginal Indian for present gain, as is now being done at Chilcat, and I say that the interior will become a desert as far as human life is con-

cerned, accessible only in winter by hardy men with sledges, for in this way only can white men unaided carry sufficient food with them. Similarly an explorer can traverse more easily those parts of Africa where natives live. I speak thus boldly of the iniquities of Chilcat rum-sellers because I have no ties in Alaska to prevent my doing so; and as a tourist I have seen the poor Indians drunk and dying beside their homes upon the upper river, whither they transport the whisky, to consume it not in moderation but in ignorance. Wherever there are no roads (and where are there roads or paths in Alaska ?) I say the Indian is a necessity, all humane and Christian consideration laid aside, and taking the simply practical view. This Government will be cursed by future generations if they do not stamp out this deliberate killing off of the Indians with alcohol.

Alaska will become, so far as the interior parts of the country are concerned, "a wilderness again, peopled with wolves, its old inhabitants." The only excuse is that testimony must be had to convict, and that this is hard to obtain.

I am fond of the Indians, and I like having them about me, yet on this occasion I was unable to employ them, owing to lack of funds.

For three days we wrestled and fought with the current, there being no breeze to help us so that we might hoist a sail, and at length camped at Klokwan, which consists of forty large houses, besides many now in ruins; the few Indians present afforded an illustration of the effects of the flourishing and hellish trade in ardent spirits which is enriching a few bold and undeserving publicans on the coast, and of the dastardly apathy of the United States Government compared with British methods of dealing with the aborigines and the liquor traffic.

The Indians asked such long prices for their services as "packers" that I was unable to employ any of them to accompany me, but with a sufficient number of these aborigines in the party, white men can traverse almost any part of the country without much difficulty. These high prices were partly the result of the whisky trade at Chilcat reducing the number of Indians, partly of the prices charged at stores for goods, and partly of the general cheapness of money in the Union. It makes it hard for needy miners to pay these rates, yet Indians, as I said before, are a necessity to explorers.

I pass over a long period of hard travelling by canoe, poling, rowing, paddling, hauling, towing,

wading, besides packing and dragging our effects over the remaining snow-slopes and snow-patches on the river flats on rough sledges. For four days we hunted bear upon the hills overlooking what I named the Marble Glacier, killing four bears, two being black, one cinnamon, and one a huge brown bear whose hide measured by a pocket tape-measure (not by eye, which is usually in error) about sixty square feet. On one afternoon I saw at the same instant feeding on different parts of the same hillside, half a mile apart, no less than six bears. On the next afternoon I observed five simultaneously. There is no doubt in my mind that the Upper Klaheena River drains one of the greatest bear-countries in British Territory or in Alaska.

We made a canoe in approved Indian fashion, besides the one I already possessed, and some weeks later commenced the descent. The most dangerous portion of the wholly dangerous Klaheena (which I waded nearly fifty times in the shallower portions) is opposite the boundary (which we marked by a hewn board bearing the letters "B. C." on one side, and on the other "U. S.") A fearful collection of stumps and snags renders navigation dangerous. The thundering waters roll impetuously towards a steep bank and turn over on themselves, the upper current

descending when it strikes the opposing wall of earth, and sucking under whatever floats upon its surface.

Here Thomas Johnson met his death. My canoe, steered by a Kwagiulth Indian, dashed past foaming towers of water, through the branches of fallen trees, escaping destruction by a miracle. My smaller canoe was instantly capsized, turning end over and nearly killing its occupant. Just as this occurred we managed to hitch on to a snag, and armed with long poles leaped ashore and pursued the wreck downstream until it grounded on a shallow.

Having gained all the information I required about the Pass, the expedition returned to Chilcat after a total absence of two months.

LETTER II.

THE COAST OF VANCOUVER ISLAND.

S.S. *Elder*, Departure Bay, Vancouver Island, B.C.
April 25th, 1890.

HAVING crossed the Atlantic in the *Teutonic*—the best boat I was ever aboard of—and the continent by way of Niagara Falls, Chicago, and the Canadian-Pacific Railway, I have reached the Pacific.

I spent only two days in Victoria, having on my way across Canada collected my camp outfit, which Mr. Thomson, the Hudson Bay Company's officer at Calgary, had kindly warehoused for me since 1887. I had previously arranged a shortened code with Messrs. Chapman and Hall, by which, in case tents or other things had suffered from damp or moth, others might be sent out to me from London without delay, knowing that the ones suitable for my proposed expedition could only be procured in England;

but I found everything in even better order than when I had left them.

The winter on this coast and in the interior has been as severe as that on the east coast has been mild, and I hear that, correspondingly, in Japan the season has also been an exceptionally mild one. The snow is now still lying thickly on the mainland a few hundred feet above sea-level, and on all the elevated ground on Vancouver, Queen Charlotte, and the other islands of the coast. Sealing schooners have been for long periods unable to launch their boats, and throughout the winter the trans-Pacific steamers to Japan have had rough passages, and frequently suffered damage.

After these two days at Victoria I started north by a little coasting steamer called *Boscowitz*, intending to spend nearly two weeks at Fort Simpson, Metlakatla, and at the mouth of Skeena River, but the snowstorms with which we were greeted on the first part of the voyage, and the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Hall, induced me to stop instead at the C.M.S. Mission, at Alert Bay, at the north end of Vancouver Island. It was lucky I did so, as I there secured two promising men to accompany me on my expedition. I also found that, should I go on to Fort Simpson, the delay which the

steamers had experienced owing to thick weather would, perhaps, cause me to miss the American mail steamer which I had intended to catch by taking an Indian canoe with Indians to paddle and sail from Fort Simpson to Tongass across the water-frontier. I also learned that the Alaska mail did not now (since it is no longer the seat of the Custom House) stop at Fort Tongass every trip. I therefore returned to Victoria, to the discomfiture of the newspapers, who had heralded my departure for the north thusly: "Exploring strange lands. — One of the passengers for Fort Simpson, by the *Boscowitz*, will be the adventurous young Briton who two years ago made a tour of exploration up the rocky side of Mount St. Elias, etc. The lieutenant is a typical Englishman, his broad shoulders, etc., pronounce him a man of strength and endurance, and his blue eye conveys the impression that he would not be easily deterred from accomplishing anything that he had undertaken." But after this came: "Changed his plans.—The English explorer who started a couple of weeks ago to visit the unknown regions of the north, returned by the steamer *Louise*. His friends repudiate the statement that he has abandoned his intention, etc."

I had opportunities of conversing with various classes of people. On board the *Boscowitz* was the manager of a salmon cannery at Port Essington, near the mouth of the Skeena River, going to his post for the summer. At these canneries the salmon are netted from different rivers within a circle of many miles radius. Few canneries confine themselves to one river only, but one of these few is that at Alert Bay, which has the exclusive right of fishing the Nimpkish River, and from that one river obtains all the salmon it requires. The labour is partly white, Indian, half-breed, and Chinese. The fish are first laid on a slatted board, gutted, the heads, tails, and fins cut off, and passed on to be brushed and cleaned in a tank of fresh water, and afterwards dipped into brine. They are then cut into lengths by machine to fit the cans, into which they are packed by hand. The cans are then soldered down, and boiled in fresh—not salt—water, taken out in a swollen condition, pricked, and soldered up instantaneously, and, lastly, steamed for a given time in a retort, which completes the process.

The total catch of salmon last year, both in British Columbia and Alaska, was in excess of the requirements; and, in fact, the sale has been in-

juriously affected by some canners putting up white-fleshed salmon for lack of a sufficient number of the red-fleshed. At San Francisco so many more tins were received from Cook's Inlet than could be disposed of that hundreds of thousands of cans still remain over in the dealers' hands, which will lead to a mutual understanding among cannery managers to reduce this year's total. In British Columbia some of the rivers have been over-netted, and the catch, in consequence, in these rivers will be much smaller than formerly.

Dogfish oil making is also an industry all along this coast, and can be obtained by boiling the whole fish, as well as from their livers. Most of the settlers along the seaboard make their own oil. It sells for about half-a-dollar a gallon in Victoria, and is cheaper than other oils of the kind, I was told.

There was also on board the *Boscowitz* a Scotch fisherman, with his two boys, going to the north for a summer's work in a salmon cannery, while in winter he fishes with long lines off Victoria Harbour. Another passenger was a trader at the ports of the Skeena River, and was, as he said, "running" a store there to "buck" the Hudson Bay Company's store at the same place. The Skeena

River generally becomes free from ice and "opens" about the first week in April, and he was going to make the ascent as soon as possible, before the current became too swollen and rapid, as it does soon after the disappearance of the ice, with a convoy of twelve canoes, to carry 12,000 dollars' worth of trading material—a twelve-day journey of slow towing and poling. During winter the route often followed to the Skeena forks is by the Naas River, and thence overland, because certain rapid portions of the Skeena do not completely freeze over, and cannot consequently be traversed on foot. He showed me a photograph of himself as he had made the journey, in wolf-skin cap, ordinary overcoat, snow shoes, and revolver very (and I thought unnecessarily) prominently buckled round his waist. This Skeena River breaks through the mountain ranges which run parallel to the coast, as the Stikeen River also does farther north, in a direction at right angles to the general run of the valleys. From the Skeena forks a pack-trail suitable for horses leads inland, and the country is flatter and drier than the mountainous coast.

This man was a fair specimen of the pushing trader. He had once made the journey from Victoria to the Skeena in a sloop, and, what with

calms, tidal currents, and baffling winds, he was not desirous of repeating the experience. He had also no charts of this intricate coast farther north than about lat. 52 deg., and consequently took a "blind" passage, or channel, instead of the correct one, which was much more insignificant looking, and he did not discover his error until, after several days' sailing with a fair wind, he came to the termination of the inlet. When I asked him whether he thought the good old Indians were dying off, he answered:

"Yes, beautifully; they're good Indians when they're dead—not before."

The Columbia River is said to have been named by Captain Gray, in the year 1792, after his ship the *Columbia*, when he sailed into its estuary across the bar. But it was in the same year that Captain George Vancouver, who had served under Captain Cook, discovered and named the largest island on the west coast, Vancouver Island. The country remained almost without inhabitants until 1858, when gold was discovered on the Fraser River, in which year it was created a Crown colony. Even now the international boundary from the sixtieth parallel southwards along the west coast is as ill-defined and imaginary in its position on the very

meagre maps of this colony which we possess, as any boundary line that can be thought of between the territories of the great nations of the world. The approximate frontier, according to the treaty between Great Britain and Russia, formulated and signed in the year 1825, is to follow a line eastwards of the one hundred and forty-first meridian as far as the mouth of Naas River at the head of Portland Canal, which shall in no part be at a greater distance than thirty miles from the sea at the heads of inlets, and it is to follow the watershed summit wherever the latter comes within that zone. The area of this colony is, roughly, 342,000 square miles without Vancouver Island, or 358,000 with it, being more than three square miles per head for the inhabitants if it were equally divided amongst them.

There are still many blanks on our maps of this continent, but the one I previously alluded to is larger, and yet more accessible and withal more interesting and mysterious than the other dark blanks, not to use the word dark in its physical or moral sense, but as implying a want of knowledge of its geography.

Some bold cartographers, differing from one another in their opinions, have drawn serpentine

lines to indicate the course of the White, Copper, Takheena and other rivers, as their fancy may have led them, or according to supposed Indian report, laying down in rounded symmetrical wavy patterns the arbitrary courses of their fairy rivers.

This vessel has experienced an exceedingly fine passage so far, though one must not shout before one is out of the wood. My usual experience of this coast has been intermittent glimpses of fine weather and blue skies, broken by long spells of wet and occasionally a few fogs, especially towards the mouths and estuaries of cold, glacier-fed rivers like the Stikeen and Skeena; but under the conditions of fine weather and cloudless skies, as I stated previously, I only know one place, and that is Yakutat, which I can compare to the south-east coast of Vancouver's Island. I am still as uncertain whether to call this Vancouver Island or Vancouver's Island as I am as to whether it should be Hudson Bay or Hudson's Bay. While we have been coaling at Nanaimo some of the passengers have been trying to catch some fish—rock cod or bass, which can be seen swimming about beneath the wharf—but so far without success. People have not noticed so many ducks of different kinds before as are to be observed this year, particularly in that part of the Strait of

Georgia which lies opposite to Nanaimo and Comox, including an incredible number of that absurd bird which the miners call a "road-maker," which can only flop along the surface of the sea, and frequently turns somersaults in its haste, and then disappears. But yesterday was so calm that standing in the bow of the steamer one could clearly distinguish these birds after they dived, about four or five feet below the surface, flapping slowly along, using their wings while in the water as though they were actually flying in the air. There were also numerous porpoises about, which sometimes followed and overtook the ship, mistaking us for a whale, and causing much astonishment to those passengers who had never seen them before. Owing to the entire absence of ripples on the surface, the details and forms of these beautiful fish could be distinctly made out from the stern-rail as they followed the ship, as clearly as the diving birds could be seen flying below the surface of the ocean as one stood upon the bows, the latter seeming unable to get away fast enough, while the former appeared to be in an equally great hurry to attack and devour us.

LETTER III.

THE INLAND PASSAGE.

Chilcat, Alaska, *May* 1*st*, 1890.

After taking in half a thousand and one hundred and fifty tons of coal respectively, the United States survey steamer *C. P. Patterson*, carrying the American explorers, and the *Elder*, with my own party, sailed from Departure Bay almost simultaneously at about sundown on April 25th, with the expeditions on board, so as to make Seymour Narrows during the half-hour of slack water at high tide the following morning. Most of the passengers had spent the day in reposing on the verdant slopes facing the bay, others walked into Nanaimo. I went to Wellington in a coal-truck, and descended one of the four mines there. As we steamed up the Straits of Georgia, every glittering snow-peak round the circle of the horizon was distinctly visible by the light of the half-moon, including Mount Hood and the highest points of the Cascade

range. There was absolutely no visible vapour in the sky.

We made the aforesaid narrows at daylight. A week previously I had passed them in the small coasting steamer, the captain of which is a morose old salt, but sometimes affable, and is said to be a cautious navigator, and never yet to have bumped his vessel on a rock amongst the somewhat difficult channels of the Inland Passage, like most of the other skippers, who are "piled up half their time," as some one remarked to me. The night was cloudy, with snow showers, and we drove on through the darkness on that occasion, after landing some men at a logging camp near the village of Cape Mudge. The Indians came out for them in canoes immediately in reply to our whistle. A landsman could hardly have distinguished the wooded sides of the channel.

Cape Mudge (so named by Vancouver after one of his officers) guards the entrance of the formidable Seymour Narrows, which, together with the narrow channel which leads to them, is bounded on the east by some large islands and by a promontory of the mainland of British Columbia which is thrust out into close proximity to Vancouver Island. The narrows commence at the head of the fine reach called the Straits of Georgia, into which open Bute

Inlet, Jervis Inlet, and other of those magnificent fiords winding like rivers far into the mainland itself, bordered and walled in by precipitous granite peaks rising to a height of nine and ten thousand feet.*

Seymour Narrows lies at about the centre of Vancouver Island, near the point at which the two tides rounding each extremity of the island meet, but a little to the north of it. I have seen an excellent tidal almanack published by the United States Government. Though we have done the most towards charting this coast, we do not appear to have done much as regards tabulating the tides, which, in some of our inlets, are quite extraordinary, and even apparently inexplicable in their changefulness and "infinite variety." In some inlets there is but one tide a day for some months in the year, in other inlets and other months they are abnormal altogether. Sometimes in the same inlet there are three tides a day, sometimes none at all. During the voyage I learned what a useful thing a cedar raft is, and what an enormous bulk and weight of stuff it will bear in comparison with rafts made of other woods without capsizing. We landed a logging party on a tract of timber lands leased by

* I hunted the wild white goat in Bute Inlet in 1888, seeing plenty, but killing one only.

an Englishman opposite Cracroft Island; everything was piled upon one huge cedar raft (which had evidently done long service, for her bottom was thickly covered with sea growths), including some tons of supplies, besides hay for oxen, who were used in hauling the logs; on the top of all were seated the overseer and the men, and yet the structure seemed almost as high out of the water as before it was loaded with this bulky cargo.

I understand that at present there are only four steamers making regular trips as far as Port Simpson, two of which quite recently ran upon rocks, one being saved by her strong build, and the fact that there was a quantity of cement on her stem just where the contact with the rock occurred; while the other was able to run into a shallow sandy bay without delay, where the receding tide left her dry, while there also chanced to be two skilled ship carpenters among her passengers.

We continued for some hours to skirt the northern portion of Vancouver Island, beyond which lies a brief stretch of open sea named Queen Charlotte Sound, many miles to the eastward of which, quite out of sight, lie the rainy, thickly-wooded Queen Charlotte Islands, inhabited by the finest tribe of Indians of any of those upon this coast.

At noon we steamed past Alert Bay without stopping, where, as previously mentioned, I had engaged two of the men who accompanied me, situated on Cormorant Island, which might as well have been named Racoon Island on account of the number of racoons upon it, and in passing I could distinguish with a Ross telescope Mr. Hall standing upon the wharf, who is in charge of the C.M.S. school, store, and saw-mill at this place, with whom I had remained some days. There is also a salmon cannery, which has the sole right of fishing the Nimpkish River opposite. From this point northward, most of the coast line is taken up by persons who hope that these so-called coal lands may be developed some day, and there is just now a rush for sites on Quatsino Arm, on the other side of Vancouver Island, in expectation of a railway being made thither some day, and of its becoming a port for ocean steamers, from which the voyage to Japan would be shorter by some half-day or more than at present from Vancouver. I also met at Alert Bay a youthful schoolmaster sent out from England to instruct the depraved Nahwitti and Kwagiutl Indians at Fort Rupert, at the extreme north-east corner of Vancouver Island, who was doubtless glad enough to leave that desolate spot for a few days—

where the only other white man is an old employé of the Hudson's Bay Company, to whom the Company have sold their post at that place—and to exchange for a comfortable house his lonely log hut, where at times the only visitor he could expect was the horrid Amatze or scapegoat Indian, who is sent out naked and without food beyond what roots he can pick up, into the forest until such times as he shall have become possessed by the spirit of some animal, upon which he returns, and is escorted by a body-guard of young men, and has to bite pieces out of people. These rites still take place, and the Indians are proud of showing the scars where Amatze has enjoyed a mouthful. Of course, he never ventures to bite white people, because they don't taste nice; but they "tried it on" with the schoolmaster in many other ways. Notwithstanding that these Kwagiutls have been acquainted with the ways of white people for many years, the children evince an extraordinary fear of white strangers, which fear I attribute to the habit Indian mothers have of frightening their children with a story of a white man coming to eat them, like a kind of bogy akin to our own nursery fictions, which frequently make white children such cowards in the dark.

Though it was the end of April, 1890, snow was lying deep upon the mountains a few hundred feet over sea-level. At Alert Bay there is a moderate-sized Indian "camp" built of axe-split boards, though latterly they have been made of sawn planks owing to the erection of the saw-mill, and white-washed externally, which I never saw before as regards Indian houses. The interiors of the houses, about ten in number, consist of one large smoke-blackened apartment, dark, dirty, draughty, with smoke-holes in the roof; the floor of soil and gravel; and round the walls are some small cubicles or sleeping rooms, raised a couple of feet above the level of the earth floor. In the centre there is always a fire burning, and round it are strewn a medley of dogs, clothes, women, children, and a multitude of utensils. Most of the tribe were absent, part fishing oolachan or candle-fish at the extreme head of that extraordinarily long arm, Knight's Inlet, and the remainder holding a potlatch on Cracroft Island in the vicinity: one of those unlawful orgies which the law has not yet been enforced to prevent; the natives are making the most of their immunity from interference, so that "drinkee for drunk," not "for drink," is probably the rule whenever they chance to have any spirituous liquor. A day or two

previously the old chief had died, and, as we passed, the red and white flags newly suspended could be discerned flying from long poles near his grave. An Indian of inferior social standing (for there are grades in society even among Kwagiutls) may become chief, if he has in any degree the gift of verbosity; and if he combines with this the possession of more riches in the shape of blankets, and greater capacity to plot and scheme than his fellows, and some generosity and ostentation in the givings of feasts (tea and crackers mostly), his success is certain. Even in the lifetime of the old chief he may step into his shoes, being assisted in so doing by the fact that an Indian pays but scant regard or respect to old age. In front of the chief's grave had also been erected a large structure of boards, covered with cotton sheeting, nailed to which were three T-shaped instruments, known as "coppers," and on the tops of trees round the bay were fastened old-time boxes enclosing the cremated remains of other Indians, "exposed in forests to the casing snow."

I have mentioned that racoon are very numerous on Cormorant Island (Alert Bay); in fact, the boys caught one or more regularly every morning while I was there. I also went out twice in a canoe and bagged eight duck, including the painted duck, the

long-tail, the butterball, and the mallard. From Fort Rupert it is twelve miles on foot across to Quatsino Arm. This end of Vancouver Island is reported by the Indians to be a favourite haunt of the native Vancouver elk or wapiti. I never heard of any white man who has hunted them systematically, or done more than kill one occasionally almost by haphazard. I listened to an address in Kwagiutl from Mr. Hall; the sound of the language is musical, though interspersed by frequent thick, raucous, undignified gurgles or clicks produced by half closing the throat. "How much will you give us," say the Indians at Fort Rupert, "if we come to school to be taught, as we know you receive so much for each one who comes?" It is difficult to convince them that this is not the case.

We crossed Queen Charlotte Sound in magnificent weather, with a slow, majestic sort of ground-swell rolling in from the open sea. The whole day was a panorama of peaks and islands, looking all the more imposing from their covering of snow, in some cases so thick that massive cornices were noticeable along the crests where the wind had caught the loose snow and blown it over to the leeward side. The *Patterson* calls at Port Simpson for her launch. The Skeena, as I write, is still closed to navigation.

At Wrangell we found the Stikeen still frozen over and two foot of snow on the ice. Here the *Elder* landed a great many tons of machinery, together with two separate parties of engineers and workmen, who are going to initiate hydraulic mining for the first time on the river; one above, the other four miles below Telegraph Creek, which is the head of navigation upon the Stikeen. Some of us tried fishing at Wrangell, but it was not a success; but halibut are frequently fished for with success a few hundred yards from the wharf in deep water, and a couple of solitary Indians were trolling in a couple of dug-out canoes for salmon.

The Russians established a trading post at Fort Wrangell to gather in the pelts brought down the Stikeen River, and after the United States acquired the territory a military garrison was maintained for some years. The mining excitement of fifteen years ago, when the discoveries in the Cassiar district brought prospectors and fortune-seekers from all the older camps of the coast, gave Fort Wrangell its best days commercially. The place had its boom; tents were crowded in with the long row of houses bordering the beach; traders made amazing profits; ocean steamers, river boats, and fleets of canoes, made the water-front a busy scene, and all went well until the

Cassiar placers were about exhausted. The miners left, the Indian village fell off, and by a slow descending scale Fort Wrangell has reached its present stage of quiet retrospect. Even the mission industrial school for Indian boys and girls has been given up, and there is now only the Government public school to instruct the rising generation.

We got through Wrangell Narrows before dark. This is an intricate piece of navigation, but the channel now appears to be well buoyed and marked out. At Douglass City time was given for all the tourists to walk up to the great mill of the Treadwell Mine, where 240 stamps keep up their thunderous din day and night, and send out streams of muddy water.

No one knows with exactness the output of this remarkable gold-mine, but 50,000 dollars have often been shipped below month after month. The ore is low grade, but the vein cropping out on the very surface of the mountain allows it to be mined or quarried so cheaply that there is abundant profit in working away at a solid mountain of quartz. Other claims on the same ledge have been prospected sufficiently to show that the same vein runs the length of the island, and the one mill, which is the largest of

its kind in the world, is destined to have many successors.

The chief topic of conversation was the Bear's Nest mine, being worked by a German company. It was reported that gold-bearing quartz from the Treadwell mine had been substituted for quartz from their own shafts, and that the deceived experts made a favourable report in consequence, whereas the reef had not yet been "struck."

With over 1,500 inhabitants Juneau is quite a town in itself, and considers, as tributary to it, Douglass City, across the channel, and the mining camps of Silver Bow and Dix Bow basins, a few miles back in the mountains. At Juneau the first promising gold discoveries were made. I laid in a supply of stores at Juneau, and I think the leader of the American party, who is on board, did the same. The snow is reported to be very deep upon the mountains; whether this will be advantageous to us or the contrary we have yet to learn, but I have it in mind to make a sled and thus transport our effects to the necessary altitude of 4,000 feet, which is the height of the Chilcat Pass.

LETTER IV.

PYRAMID HARBOUR.

Camp 3, *May 8th*, 1890.

THE Chilcats at Pyramid Harbour were averse to packing, even for good wages, and did not want white men to use their pass into the interior. "Salmon soon be here," said they, "and then we make big money."

It was learned by inquiry of the cannery superintendent, Mr. J. G. Laws, that natives last summer individually earned from eight to ten dollars per day, when at all industrious, by spearing salmon at ten cents apiece for the three rival cannery concerns in the harbour. To this comfortable income they added the extortions secured from steamboat tourists for Chilcat blankets and trinkets, and were amply able, financially as well as physically, to keep in a half-drunken condition for the remainder of the year.

VIEW OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS FROM THE CHILCAT INLET, WITH ISLANDS, GLACIERS AND ICEBERGS.

At Pyramid Harbour Salmon Cannery, Chilcat, I remained two nights, being hospitably entertained by the manager, who had come up with us on the steamer. As my expedition was then in trim and ready to start, I determined to delay no longer than was absolutely necessary, especially as the U.S.S. *Patterson* was expected in a week, and accommodation would be somewhat short for those who had to land here, but to set out as soon as an Indian and a canoe large enough to contain everything could be procured. These were only to be had in the shape of a lame Indian named Charlie, a small boy, and a canoe rather more restricted in size than I had anticipated, which was to take us to the chief Indian village up the river for the sum of twelve dollars. This is how prices run in Chilcat.

There was once a missionary and his wife who remained for a season on the peninsula between the two inlets in a nice house they built. I saw it standing empty, for the Indians made themselves so unpleasant, more particularly one arrogant old medicine man who demanded tobacco from me and astounded me by his fantastic tricks, that they went back to Juneau, where they have remained ever since.

I found that even Colonel Ripinski, who once was a school-teacher for these Chilcats, but is now storekeeper at Pyramid Harbour, stood in awe of this same old humbug.

Taking John Hammond with me I set out along the beach, giving instructions that the canoe was to wait for us at the mouth of the river. At low tide, and when there is no snow upon the cliffs (and there is still about four feet upon the level on the north sides of the mountains even as low as the beach in spots sheltered from the sun's rays, but no snow whatever up to a height of 1,000 feet upon the south-facing slopes), this walk of five miles from Pyramid Harbour to Chilcat River presents no difficulty. But now it was otherwise, and if we had known the task we had set ourselves we should certainly have crowded our additional bulks into the already overladen canoe, notwithstanding the breeze that was sweeping westward up the inlet. We had four severe climbs up around bluffs that descended too perpendicularly into the sea to allow us to clamber along their bases. The moss and cliffs were damp and rotten, but generally a friendly branch of young spruce or alder offered a solid hand-hold across the roughest and most abrupt rock faces. Having at last surmounted all these

obstacles we emerged on to the partly snow-covered mud-flats of the Chilcat River. Small oolachans, or a small oily sprat-like fish resembling them, lay in scattered heaps along the shore, but of canoe or human being on the wide expanse of the Chilcat delta there was no trace or sight. However, we had shot a grouse, and that during the most difficult bit of climbing we had to accomplish, so that there was no risk of starvation. We were tired with frequently sinking waist-deep into the soft and slushy snow amongst the forest trees, while the photographic camera (smallest size Kodak, weighing about two pounds) suffered some severe concussions without apparent damage. Then we got into an exasperating thicket of long pliant elastic stems that interlaced, and that, as we tried to pass, reached out and wrapped themselves round our legs, and tied themselves into hard knots, and threw us down and covered us with leaves and dirt.

I was vowing the most retributive punishment to the occupants of the canoe unless they gave a satisfactory account of their failing to wait to pick us up at the mouth of the river; but it turned out that the actual position of the mouth was hard to define, as the river had more than one channel, and that they had determined to take up a position

well up the river for fear of our passing them. At last with glasses I found a small tent upon the opposite shore of the wide river bed. The structure resembled one of those we had, and we commenced to make our way towards the thin column of smoke that showed a camp fire, across trembling quicksands that quaked and quivered. After advancing a mile in the required direction I clearly discerned a woman. I had no such article in my outfit. It was an Indian camp after all, and we were as much lost as ever—but no, the canoe was lost, not we. Then at last far up the river, across the gravel-flats, the lost ones were seen. An hour later we floated down the stream to where the Indians had camped—as it was the best spot for the purpose, for a rivulet ran down from the mountain above, and the ground was flat in places, and covered with a convenient growth of rushes to keep off the wind and serve for a soft and yielding bed. There were numerous sour but palatable red berries still hanging pendant in small bunches from the bushes on which they had ripened in the early winter, and with a kind of scoop net the Indian women of the camping party had caught more than one pailful of small fish like sticklebacks, consisting mostly of spines, of which (I mean the fish, not the spines) they gave us as

many as we wanted. Two orange-coloured spines were firmly fixed crosswise on the front part of the belly, and there were three spines, elevable at will, upon the back. Altogether it was an awkward fish to masticate. There were also a few young salmon about four inches in length captured with them.

The next day two of my party went up the mountain-side behind and shot two blue grouse, while I floated out to sea in the canoe, descending the river about five miles, and endeavoured unsuccessfully to catch a salmon with spinning bait. We never, however, fairly got out of the turbid, brackish water of the estuary before a smart breeze came on, which compelled me to turn, and swept the canoe rapidly up-stream against the swift current under sail. In the afternoon we reached Camp 2, partly sailing, partly rowing, towing, and poling. On the evening of May 4th we reached Klokwan, and camped a fourth of a mile below the village itself; but were quickly surrounded by a crowd of the natives, who were made aware of our arrival by the fact that I had walked through the village and back to find an eligible camping-ground at some distance from it. During our voyage up-stream the avalanches—which kept thundering down the gullies every ten minutes or so, with a noise like distant artillery—were superb,

each one overlapping the one preceding, and going a little further towards the valley below. The sound of these continually falling bodies of snow resembled unending successions of peals of thunder, the sky meanwhile being perfectly cloudless. We were able to supply the larder with two more grouse, both with their heads shot off by a rifle-bullet within twelve paces. I ascended a thousand feet above the village of Klokwan, on the side of the mountain above, to a bold outstanding rock, from the summit of which I made some photographs and sketches, and took the bearings of some of the principal peaks around, which I had previously seen from the 1st and 2nd camps. One peak resembled the summit of Mount Fairweather, according to my recollection of it as seen from the deck of the U.S.S. *Pinta* from the coast; but this is uncertain until the bearings are worked out. High up as the rock was to which I had climbed, yet at the base I found a cave containing the remains of carved coffins and images, much gnawed and soiled by some species of rodent, whose dung was littered about the ground. Skulls and thigh-bones predominated, but I found nothing worth keeping. I put up a snipe lower down the hillside, and outside the cavern mouth red, edible, but rather tasteless, berries were growing.

In the afternoon the redoubtable chief of the Chilcats, Kin-tagh-Koosh, took me to his house—a fine building compared to the others in the village, with glass in the windows and two old Russian cannon in front. The interior was filled with water from the melted snow, which his family were baling out, the floor being below the level of the ground, they having just returned from the sea. I deposited in his charge a quantity of stores and luggage on the dry platform round the floor in the centre. Four totems, grotesquely carved and painted, adorned the corners inside his house —hideously ugly. Kin-tagh-Koosh himself is a mild-mannered, pleasant, and somewhat stoutish Indian, who shook me frankly by the hand, and seemed not surprised to see us. I had heard numerous unpromising reports about the Chilcats, and they certainly ask exorbitant prices for their services, as I found. Very few of them are at home. Out of the some four hundred inhabitants of the village, half seemed to be away in the interior, trading with the Stick Indians, and the remainder, except about fifty, including women and children, on the coast or elsewhere. In fact, most of the houses were locked and barred. I counted some forty houses, and a dozen grave-houses of doctors,

extending for half a mile along the left bank of the Chilcat River, just opposite where the stream comes in from the Chilcat Lake, which is still frozen and covered with a layer of snow. In this respect the maps are wrong, marking this river too far down below the village. I passed through the village and camped beyond it next day, suffering no opposition.

On account of the vicinity of the Indian village, the jackal-like dogs prowl about the camp; but, on the other hand, there are no dead salmon putrefying upon the banks and tainting the air, as elsewhere; they have all been eaten up by these same dogs.

The Indian women object to being photographed, and it is even hard to take them with the insignificant-looking Kodak. Some loving couples are "carrying on" their love affairs on the river-bank with the utmost unconcern. I find sugar-candy a great assistance in making friends with the Chilcats. A peep through a field-glass also greatly surprised them. Many have their faces smeared with powdered black rock and oil, to preserve their complexions.

Next day, with a small boy and canoe, we advanced some way up-stream against a rapid current,

ourselves towing and poling, and we ascended the valley of the river which is used by the Indians in reaching the Altsehk country on their trading expeditions. This river I at once named the Wellesley, in honour at the same time of Lord Wellesley and of Mr. Wells and the Leslie party, who are following us.

Packing our things upon two snow-sleds, we ascended upon the ice or compact snow for five and a half miles, fording the river twice, which was at a temperature of 37 degrees—cold enough! To-day I have explored it for a further distance of five miles, as it will evidently have to be conquered mile by mile; the current rapid and turbid, rising in the afternoon, but falling in the early morning. At times it encroaches so much upon the banks that we are compelled to take to the bush, which is exceedingly dense with devil's-club and thorns.

To-morrow I return to the village for more supplies and to send off this letter, while my men will attempt to cut a trail for about a mile to a point which offers an inviting camping-ground for a base camp pending further explorations.

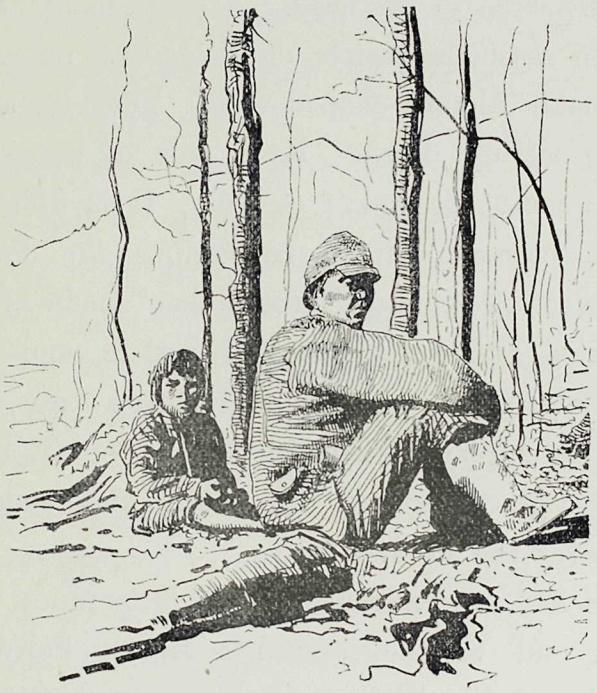
LETTER V.

THE CHILCATS.

Camp 6, Chilcat Country, on the Columbian-Alaskan frontier,
May 11*th*, 1890.

I MENTIONED in my last letter that I was compelled, for want of Indians, to leave a certain amount of material with the redoubtable Chilcat Chief, Kintagh-Koosh or Kitnagh-koosh—a stout Indian with long black hair, awkward gait, and smiling but rather sly countenance. These he stowed away in his so-called treasure-house, a more civilised dwelling than the rough shanties of the other Indians, which are built of hewn split logs not sawn or smoothed, and begrimed with smoke both inside and out. The treasure-house, indeed, boasts of glass in the windows, and within, at the four corners of the raised platform which surrounds the square earth floor in the centre, rise imposing but atrociously hideous totemic emblems or massive figures carved

in *alto-relievo,* and painted with glaring colours, the huge and protuberant features of the central figure showing the native characteristics, and shaded by a mass of artificial hair made out of dyed roots.



TWO CHILCATS.

The platform before alluded to was piled with large trunks, saratogas, hide cases, blunderbusses and antique firearms like cannons, some with six barrels, and with bales of blankets.

The Klinket tribe are, as a rule, of short, thick-

set stature. They dress after the fashion of the white man by wearing shirts and pants, but they still prefer the native-made moccasins to our boots and shoes. They are of dark, swarthy complexion, with black, straight hair, which is worn, as a rule, cut fairly close to the head. A great many of them seem to resemble people of Mongolian descent by their small, almond-shaped eyes. They do a great deal of sitting down. Each pair of pants bears patches most suggestive of this. It is difficult to pass a correct opinion concerning the form or features of their fair (?) sex; their mode of facial decoration and general slovenly attire renders this impossible. They wear an old cotton dress, which article is supplemented by the universal blanket drawn tightly around the neck and sometimes worn over the head.

We had now advanced some forty miles up the valley, and to the east lay Mount Fairweather and Mount St. Elias, and other great mountains bordering the coast, which were now hidden from us by intervening ranges.

Before quitting Victoria some weeks since, I was told a story of the St. Elias expedition of 1888, which repeated our expedition of 1886. It seems that some members of that party were inspecting

the Hudson Bay Company's premises, and, seeing a large pile of my luggage in a corner, which was evidently intended for camp use, inquired to whom it might belong.

"That," said the assistant commissioner, "belongs to a gentleman who started two years ago for the same place you are going to, to hunt polar bears, and was never heard of again."

There was snow upon the Klaheena-Altsehk divide, and we also found sufficient to enable us to drag our sledges as far as Camp 5, from which my last letter was written; but I now found that, owing to the rapidly-increasing temperature and the lengthening days, the snow had left bare gaps so large that a canoe was unavoidably necessary, and I therefore returned in person to Klokwan to secure one, accompanied by one of my men. We had made our way to the farthest point so far partly by means of a canoe hired temporarily, which I had sent back, thinking we should be able to get on without one, for the river was shallow, rapid, and very difficult to navigate. We had also used our sledges; but it was now necessary to return to the village, finding the way by the direct route through the scrub, and during my absence I ordered the remainder of the party to cut a trail through the

brush to a bare promontory which projected into the bed of the Wellesley River, as the latter appeared too deep to ford, and encroached so much upon its banks as to drive us altogether away from its bed, while the brush itself was so matted together as to render it quite a work of art for a man to make his way through it at all. This trail subsequently proved useful in a way I did not anticipate. At this portion of the valley the notorious devil's-clubs flourished with astounding vigour, their long elastic stems growing upwards in all directions, covered with millions of needle-like thorns which become detached on the slightest contact, penetrating and rankling in the flesh, while when trodden on they spring back and strike one with their club-like heads on the chest or arm with devilish malignity, though mercifully the thickness of one's clothing saves one from the shower of their venomous darts. I found that a pair of Chilcat buckskin gloves, cut and sewed in a very creditable manner by the natives, saved my hands and wrists from this infliction, for which I paid the sum of one quarter,* though it must not be supposed that prices always rule so low here, for I had afterwards to pay the sum of fifteen dollars for a small and dreadfully

* A shilling.

cracked, cranky, and dilapidated canoe (the only one for sale), and the sum of seven dollars for a pair of second-hand gum-boots that developed a hole on the third or fourth day of use.

However, notwithstanding devil's-clubs, deep streams, and thick brush, we continued on our way on foot to Klokwan in quest of the necessary canoe, steering our course through the forest by the sun, or by the compass, or the mountain-tops whenever they were visible.

There had been ten days of fine weather, with absolutely no cloud in the sky, which was like a dome of brass, day after day.

This had caused a steady increase of temperature, both in air and water, up to the date of writing, namely, May 11th, and a steady rise in the volume of water in the rivers as well as in their temperature, together with a marked decrease in the amount of snow—for instance, the temperature at sunset on the 2nd was 40 degrees Fahrenheit, while a week later at the same hour the thermometer marked 50.

We made our way for some time down the bed of the Wellesley, or Klaheena, until we were forced to betake ourselves, packs and all, to the labyrinthine and partly wooded expanse of flat marsh land, for such I found it was, which is enclosed between the

Klaheena and Chilcat rivers on the right bank of the former. Deep sluggish streams of clear water drain these marshes into the Chilcat River. The first one we managed to cross by means of a fallen tree, which bent under one's weight till it was two feet below the surface. But the next one was too wide for any tree to bridge, and it was a case of wading sans clothes. Just as I was about to enter the exceedingly chilly current, hoping that the sand and mud would prove firm, a couple of ducks flew by overhead; I brought both down by a right-and-left, one falling upon the opposite bank and one in midstream, which I waded out in time to intercept, as it drifted past upon the current. I fervently trusted we should have no more deep wading to do, for easy as it sounds to wade a stream, we were already wet in those parts of one's clothing we had not thought it incumbent on us to remove, and there is no doubt that water below forty degrees in temperature, as no doubt this was, does lower the vitality when one has to endure prolonged immersion in it. This was perhaps the reason that my men always objected so much to wading, though they were repeatedly obliged to, but one of their reasons was that it shortened the lives of their boots, and owing to the extra weight in packing spare pairs of boots no one possessed more than one extra pair,

while they became stiff and hard notwithstanding applications of real bear's grease.* There proved indeed to be "one more river to cross" or negotiate, but it was a comparatively shallow glacial stream, and we were soon opposite the Indian camp on the hither side of which flowed the swift and stately Chilcat. I hullooed lustily for a canoe, and should not have been in the least surprised if they had attempted to blackmail us before Charoning us over, in which case I should have been contented to make the passage with the help of an air-cushion, which I had brought for this purpose, for I was wet enough already to make a little more water in my clothing immaterial, either to lessen or increase my personal comfort. I was astounded, then, to observe with what alacrity a black-faced Siwash responded to my summons by quickly poling his canoe up-stream upon the opposite side to allow for the drift of the current, and coming rapidly over to fetch us without a word.

I soon found that the American party had arrived the day before, and were located in their only tent near our old camp beyond the bend. The first

* Notwithstanding the sharp stones and the fact of the river being waist-deep, Hammond generally took his boots off before wading.

intimation I had of this was finding one of them sketching the totems in the chief's house; and I was very pleased to meet them all again, after pitching my spare tent near theirs. Owing to their having the greater bulk of their 2,000 pounds of baggage in one large canoe, they had found three days of hard and continuous labour necessary for the ascent thus far up the Chilcat River, varied, as our experience had likewise been, by frequent groundings on shallows, poling, rowing, paddling, sailing, wading in water over the tops of their rubber "gum-boots," pushing the canoe and general vexation. One of the hired men was arrayed in naval garb, while all had naval peaked caps supplied to them by the *Patterson*, as anything of the description of uniform, naval or military, has a good effect upon these Indians, though I doubt whether this is the case to the full extent people think, because I was thus arrayed in 1886 in order to terrorise the inhabitants of Kaiak Island (off the mouth of Copper River) on arrival in a trading schooner at that desolate spot, but without visibly greatly impressing them. It seems that they found a long golden woman's hair in their canoe—some mysterious white prisoner, doubtless, held captive by the Indians.

I must close this letter after adding a few other items of interest about the outfit of the American party, because the Indian who has agreed to convey this "to the salt water" by canoe is impatient to set out, and my subsequent communications will probably refer exclusively to our own struggles up the Klaheena or Wellesley River, as here our routes bifurcate—the American party exploring the head-waters of the Takheena River (which they will descend), while we explore the head-waters of the one before-mentioned, whence I hope to find a pass which leads to the Altsehk River, which is said to rise in the unknown country behind Mount St. Elias and to flow into the sea at Dry Bay. My own party are already camped far up the Klaheena, and by to-night will have completed the trail as far as the bare promontory, which I have named Point Christopher, but the other party keep on up the Chilcat River for yet another day and a half by canoe.

For packing each hundred pounds weight of material the Indians ask forty dollars. It will therefore cost them six hundred dollars to have 1,500 pounds weight conveyed to the lake-source of the Takheena. One large tent accommodates the entire party, which consists of five white men and

one old Indian, who has permanently attached himself to them, and will prove of much use from his previous knowledge of the country—all the other Indians being only willing to work temporarily and within the bounds of their own district. This old Indian who has expressed his intention of staying with the white men all through, is one who had already made the voyage down the Yukon with my friend Lieutenant Schwatka. Meantime almost the whole Chilcat tribe—and I believe it numbers fewer souls than has been represented—are ready to set off at an hour's notice on their own account to trade in the "Stick-Indian country," as they think we have come to take their means of livelihood from them, and it will require a great amount of proof, persuasion, and inspection of what the packs contain to convince them that we are not rival traders. Another thing the Americans have is a flat bottomed, collapsible folding canvas boat weighing, complete with duplicate fixings, about eighty pounds, and not unlike the Berthon boats. The packs are being weighed by a small portable weighing-machine, and some are as much as 120 pounds, bringing in the lusty packer forty-eight dollars by agreement. I doubt if any white man could be induced for hire to pack such a weight as that, even

for one day, whereas it will take at least eight days (and more, if bad weather should come on) to reach the source of the Takheena. Yet Indians have packed as much as 200 pounds over the Chilcoot Pass. I find a white man can comfortably carry a pack of a certain weight according to his strength, and that as every horse has its pace, beyond which, when making long journeys, he should not be pressed, so a pound or two added to that weight causes great discomfort. Thirty pounds is as much as I can comfortably manage, even with the most approved and broadest shoulder straps, with a broad band across the forehead to equalise the pressure. However, these Chilcats have carried packs, one might almost say, from infancy upwards, as I have seen small boys staggering for miles under a bundle almost as heavy and much more bulky than themselves; and they have done so for generations, because hitherto the Sticks have not been suffered to approach the ocean, and therefore the Chilcats have themselves portaged their trading material to the Sticks, bringing back in exchange bales of furs, chiefly fox skins.

LETTER VI.

FIGHTING THE STREAM.

Upper Chilcat, Camp 7, *May* 12*th*, 1890.

HAVING at last found an Indian who was willing to part with his canoe for fifteen dollars (a very old one, which I had to patch up with lard and resin boiled together, and with pieces of tin), and bidden farewell to the Americans, I set out to pole, paddle, or tow the said canoe, with the assistance of a white man who was not familiar with punting or poling, against the exceedingly swift current of the Chilcat, and subsequently of the Klaheena River, in order to overtake the remainder of my party, who were, I thought, now safely camped upon the treeless summit of Point Christopher, having cut a trail thither with axes from Camp 6.

I found on first setting off that the canoe was not perfectly level in the water, the oil sacks containing the additional supplies of food not having

been properly disposed upon its bottom. This having been set right so that she rode upon a perfectly level keel, I next found that she refused to tow properly. The Indians standing by, who observed this, soon corrected it by slightly altering the position of the tow-rope, which should have been attached to the canoe at a distance from the bows of one-third her total length, after which, by sitting in the stern, the steerer directs her course with a paddle without any exertion; but occasionally I had to exchange the paddle for the pole where the current was so swift that, even with a full strain upon the tow-rope, we could barely make headway against it.

Most of the Chilcat canoes, except the larger ones which come from British territory, are made of cottonwood, which is exceedingly tough and makes good strong craft, but they are liable to split longitudinally from stem to stern. This particular canoe had been repaired by tacking strips of tin across the cracks, besides which I had filled them in with waterproof compound, thus entirely preventing leakage.

Progress was slow, but continuous, except where the too great depth of water for poling, combined with the impossibility of continuing to tow on one

bank, owing to scrub and timber, and a swiftness too great for the paddle to contend with, obliged us to cross the river. Then it was heart-breaking to see how much ground we lost in so doing, swept downward by the nine-knot current. In some places the depth, or rather the shallowness, was such that, if the stern had been perceptibly deeper sunk than the bows, it would have grounded, while the forward part of the canoe would have been whirled round by the force of water; nor, on reaching the other side, whenever it was necessary to cross, was it easy to gather up the tow-rope and leap out upon a shelving bank of loose pebbles, past which the canoe was being carried with arrow-like rapidity, and then recovering one's equilibrium, to stop her, and commence the tedious work of towing her in the teeth of the rapids, with a foothold upon the yielding sand. Any bungling under these circumstances was sure to be followed by unpleasant consequences, such as a total but temporary disappearance under the milk-white flood, which was now of a temperature of thirty-eight, owing to the amount of ice upon the banks.

Towards the afternoon the temperature of the Klaheena rose five or six degrees, according to the heat of the sun, and also, as is usual with all

WE COMMENCE TO USE THE SLEDS.

streams of glacial origin, it was subject to a daily rise and fall which was independent of the steady daily rise of the river owing to the increasing heat of May. Thus the distance of its sources caused the water to increase in volume and swiftness from noon to midnight, after which it commenced to decrease from midnight to noon, the daily rise measuring from six to ten inches according to the heat of the weather, the diurnal fall in volume measuring from five to eight inches during the time the fine weather lasted. After a few days of cloudy, rainy weather, I found the river falling from day to day at about the same ratio as that at which it had risen during the fine weather.

Another danger to which we were exposed all day, was that of contact with large blocks of ice which were floating down the current and were difficult to see, especially round bends of the river, or in the foam of rapids with the sun in one's eyes. The man towing had also to walk upon the ice bordering the stream on either side like white walls, which the water had completely undermined in certain places, where it frequently fell into the current with an appalling noise, and, had he been standing upon it at the time, must have thrown him into the river, to say nothing of its falling upon the canoe,

which frequently had to pass below such overhanging masses. Then again a light person might have been carried off his legs wading, or a heavy one might easily capsize a Chilcat canoe by jumping into it too heedlessly.

It is worthy of remark that during fine weather I invariably found the wind during the day-time in the Chilcat valley blowing up from the sea, commencing in the forenoon with a gentle breeze which gradually increased to a smart gale that died quite away by sunset, while during the night there was either no wind, or else it blew in the contrary direction. This regular movement of the atmosphere no doubt is an important factor in producing the regular daily rise and fall of the river. It is also of great assistance to the Chilcats, who can thus count upon a breeze to assist them up against the current by means of a sail, rendering poling unnecessary except in certain places; while by starting either early or late in the day when descending the river they can avoid it altogether, since it is difficult to steer canoes with accuracy when being carried down-stream against the wind, the tendency being, as in Norwegian boats and others built high at both ends, to slew sideways, and in many parts of the Chilcat River very nice calculation is essential to avoid snags,

rocks, shallows, and especially fallen trees in the narrow channels, where the current runs as high as nine miles an hour. But here the river was far too dangerous and rapid to make sailing desirable.

The salmon-trout had arrived in the river, as I was made aware by observing an old man trying to impale some of them with a large gaff by striking upwards towards the surface with a long elastic pole on the chance of one being within range, the muddiness of the water preventing their either seeing or being seen. That he was successful I knew, because he offered me ten previous to my departure, at the Chilcat price of a dollar each, like early strawberries.

It was two hours before midnight when we reached the new camp, thankful to haul the canoe out of a river which it takes at least ten times as long to ascend as to descend. But the tents had been pitched in a conspicuous manner, and the British ensign tied on a sapling was waving over my tent, while an enormous fire, ready to dry our clothes by, had been distinctly visible to us for several hours previously, and formed a cheering spectacle as we gradually fought our way upwards towards it, mile by mile, against the cold and rushing torrent. The weather remained as it had been for the last twelve days, a cloudless sky and a gentle breeze probably from the

westward in the higher regions of the atmosphere. I found that along the coast, at Yakutat, the Copper River, Prince William Sound, and the Alaskan peninsula, wet cloudy weather was invariably accompanied by an easterly wind, while a westerly one was without exception synchronous with dry and usually clear weather, but as there have been no clouds or even vapour of any kind upon the mountains it has been difficult to decide what the direction of the wind was, though on making a partial ascent of a mountain I named Mount Glave, the wind was found to be from the westward at an elevation of 5,000 feet above the river.

We passed Sunday quietly in camp. A small party of Chilcat Indians came down the valley. We sighted them first at a distance of some miles on the wide expanse of the Klaheena River bed, though the number of snags, trunks, and roots of trees with which it is strewn makes it difficult to distinguish moving objects. They chiefly waded in preference to forcing their way through the bush, and, as the river has not yet risen to its full spring height, it can be waded in many places where it becomes subdivided into branches, and assumes a broad and rapid character. In choosing a place to wade a river it must be borne in mind that where it is swiftest

and broadest, there it is also shallowest. I observed these Indians for some time with the field-glass, and noted both the places they selected for crossing and the manner in which they effected it. The party consisted of a man, two women, and a boy, and they negotiated the deeper streams in line, shoulder to shoulder, all of them holding on to the same pole or limb of a tree held horizontally, of which there were plenty lying about, the man grasping the up-stream end, and his legs breaking the force of the current for those below; upon the top of his pack was perched a small child. It is better to carry a heavy weight in wading a swift stream than to carry none whatever, as it renders one's legs less liable to be swept from under one by the force of the water, though having once lost one's foothold, no doubt a heavy pack strapped to one's back would make it diffi cult to recover. On this question we shall probably have more experience in the immediate future. These Indians had evidently come from the divide, and had either been hunting or trading (probably the former), as the presence of the women and child made it unlikely that they had come any great distance. Moreover, after giving them tea and crackers, I discovered that their packs contained but a few furs of the commonest kind. We had bridged a small clear stream, sluggish

but deep, on the west of our camp, by felling a tall cottonwood, and floating one end across. It formed a footway so narrow and slippery, and the water was so profound on either side, that I hesitated to cross it, and only did so once, and that in fear and trembling, preferring to wade. But these Chilcats walked across (except one woman, and the man informed us she was a Yakutat) without so much as thinking twice about it, turning their toes inwards after the manner of an ape, though Schwatka informed me that he has observed the Chilcoots balancing themselves across a log bridge by stepping sideways all the time, the feet being planted so that both pointed to the same side.

On May 12th, with Michael Kalamo, my Kwagiutl half-breed, I made a tedious ascent of Mount Glave. We had to run a race with the river. I was anxious to recross it before noon, as subsequent to that hour it rises so rapidly that I feared it might be almost unfordable, particularly as we found it hard enough to stagger across in the early morning, when it was almost at its lowest. I therefore roused every one at four, and we had breakfast—porridge with condensed milk stirred in undiluted, hard tack or captain's biscuits toasted, with butter, canned roast beef, cheese, and cold boiled beans. It was im-

portant also to know if there was much game in the country to depend upon for food; if possible to get a glimpse towards the St. Elias district in case any superlatively high peaks should be visible in that direction, and to obtain a general view of the immediate district.

We tried to cross at several points before succeeding, using long poles as a support, but in returning we imitated the Indians by forming line (of two), and then, like the hundred pipers, "Shoulder to shoulder the brave men stood," and instead of dancing ourselves dry to the pibroch's sound, we climbed ourselves dry to the drumming of numerous grouse, the sighing of the breeze, and the crackling of dry sticks as we forced our way upwards through the interplaited stems of thickest brushwood, scaring, possibly, a bear whose tracks were fresh upon the slopes. We presently reached a tall spruce on which a grouse was sitting, uttering its peculiar booming sound which can be heard at least a mile away on a still day. It required, as usual, a careful scrutiny of several minutes before the plump form of the bird could be distinguished, though one could almost locate the precise spot by the sound it continued to give forth, until a

well-directed shot brought our lunch fluttering to my feet. The bush was found to be thickest at the bottom, and immediately below the snow-line; while in the centre, being a zone ranging from 1,000 to 3,000 feet in height, it was not so tedious to penetrate, excepting on account of fallen trees and devil's-clubs. At an altitude of 4,000 feet we made our way over snow-patches alternating with thin brush, the snow being soft in places and allowing one to sink waist-deep, while on the surface were traces of ptarmigan, fox and hare. The ground was frequently pitted with extensive burrows of the mouse. The view from such an altitude and in such a place was of the superbest character, and unapproachable except, I think, in the Caucasus, in its qualities of mingled width of verdure and highest snow-capped desolation. Mount Fairweather and a galaxy of peaks in the south formed a distant cluster of glittering pinnacles fringing the sky.

> Before me rose and fell
> White cursed hills, like outer skirts of hell
> Seen where men's eyes look through the day to night,
> Like a jagged shell's lips harsh, untunable,
> Blown in upon by devils' wrangling breath.

Below, the river wound serpentinely in glittering,

wrinkled channels, and the upper Chilcat valley lay mapped out; the lake (frozen) and the forest flecked with marshes and shining pools and streams, and snow-patches.

On the east was the main valley, with a less turbulent and more subdivided stream and more wooded bottom, and, opening from it, a gorge with steep cliffs and snow-peaks beyond. On the west stretched out some of the St. Elias Alps, the peaks just discernible over the shoulders and gaps of the range, probably bordering the Altsehk River, and far away a high square mountain, that seemed of colossal proportions, without any rock appearing to relieve the smoothness of its snow slopes.

We hurried down, and once within the timber found it less fatiguing to descend than to ascend; frequently making use of some fallen monarch of the forest as a kind of bridge across other prostrate trees, but with some risk, as a slip might have impaled one like a cockroach on some of the sharp spikes of dead branches of trees below, that radiated like *chevaux-de-frises*.

THE SNOW-COVERED VALLEY OF THE LOWER CHILCAT,
FROM A HEIGHT OF TWO THOUSAND FEET.

LETTER VII.

EXCELSIOR.

Chilcat Country, Camp 9, *May* 21*st*, 1890.

One easily perceives how necessary it is to have Indians in a country like this, where long distances have to be traversed over the roughest description of trail, but generally without any trail at all. Although it frequently happens that parties of Chilcats enter the Altsehk valley by this route, they leave but little track behind them with their bare feet, only occasionally giving a stroke with the axe upon some offending limb, but generally they are content to find a way through the thicket without leaving it any easier for the next comer. A party of Indians can take provisions with them in addition to trading material or furs, calculated to last them a far greater length of time than a party of white men, who, on the contrary, have probably not taken anything but what they consider personal necessaries. During

a long journey the white man, in short, eats more than he himself can carry; the Indian can carry more than sufficient for his own consumption.

On the 13th of May we struggled all day against the stream, first towing with one rope and keeping the canoe away from the bank with a pole; then I tried a plan new to us all, which I had only heard of by repute, by attaching one long tow-rope to an auger hole through the stern, another through one in the bow. A pull on the stern rope would send the canoe out into the midstream, while a slacking of it brought her in again, and in this way it was unnecessary for any one to be in the canoe, and she consequently drew so little water that we were able to avoid running aground so much, nor was it necessary to wade so frequently in order to push and shove her past some obstruction. Some remarkably large cottonwoods were observed at this portion of the Klaheena, the largest I measured with a tape girthing thirteen feet.

The shallower portions of the river were full of young salmon about an inch in length; terns and gulls were preying upon them as they sported amongst the rotting carcases of their parents, but so many of these latter had been eaten by wild animals that the stench was not so unbearable as it is earlier

in the winter. One of the men shot an eagle, but it fell dead in the timber and could not be found. The locality we chose for the eighth camp had been used previously, but long since, by the Indians for that purpose. In front through the opening in which the tents were pitched could be seen the swift gray-green river, beyond it a narrow strip of light green young cottonwoods, then the steep, dark green, spruce-clad slopes, and above them the domes and peaks of snow-mountains, dyed orange by the declining sun.

Across the river a large eagle's eyrie was discovered near the top of a lofty cottonwood; and there was visible over the top of the nest the white head of one of the parent birds, sitting on the eggs, without paying any regard to us, although some of the smoke of our fire had drifted across in a most peculiar fashion, and had formed a white cloud below the tree, as though there were a separate fire there. We left her undisturbed, though these eagles probably devour many young salmon. Next morning I "cached" some food before starting, in order to lighten the loads. One of the men, through a moment's inattention, got pulled into the current by the tow-ropes, undergoing total immersion; but this was not a great inconvenience, as the thermo-

meter in the sun marked ninety-five. At noon I had reached a large mountain torrent on the left bank of the river, being ahead of the others who were bringing up the canoe, where I found a small party of Indians camped, engaged in trapping and snaring bears. Two women were seated by the river with blackened faces; in the thicket hard by I found a cottonwood canoe in process of manufacture, shaped, but not yet hollowed out, while spruce-boughs were piled upon it to prevent the sun's rays from hardening the wood. Another woman seemed much alarmed at my sudden appearance, and walked away—at first slowly and with dignity, then broke into a run and screamed with suppressed fear. By this time the canoe had arrived, and I decided to camp here. Presently an old man came in from hunting, accompanied by a small boy with a large spring bear-trap, and made the most complicated signs about something which I failed to elucidate, as he had no knowledge of Chinook, but spoke only the language of his tribe. On following him I discovered their camp, composed of three tents and some shelters of boughs and logs, the inhabitants consisting of two men, three women, two boys, and two children. They commenced a meal of dry salmon, which I tasted, but felt un-

certain as to whether it was smoked and salted, or might consist of choice pickings from the dog salmon of last season whose remains strewed the banks.

To ascertain the velocity of the current, I measured one hundred yards with the tape, and by noting the number of seconds a log took to float past, found it to be nine and a half miles per hour. The Indians indicated by signs that it was impossible to take the canoe any higher up the river. It therefore became necessary to "pack." I found that the Indian dogs are made to carry packs. The old man showed me a pair of dog saddle-bags of mountain goat skin, each bag being eighteen inches square when empty, and signified that they were worn by a powerful animal which was kept tied to a tree, a stick serving as a chain. In the evening, with an Indian boy, I crossed the torrent by means of a bridge of felled saplings, and found a slender trail leading upwards, which, taken together with the increased rapidity of the current, pointed to the fact that this might be considered as the head of canoe navigation upon the Klaheena or Wellesley River. At nightfall was seen the first cloud that had appeared in the sky for ten days, moving rapidly from east to west, and consequently

foreboding rainy weather, which, sure enough, came on during the night. The next day, the weather still continuing wet and cloudy, a shelter was constructed, the foundation being of logs and the upper portion of spruce-boughs laid horizontally and supported by cross-pieces. While I was seated writing under this rough but effective cover at four in the afternoon, there came a slight shock of earthquake, and the structure descended gracefully and harmlessly upon me, completely shutting me in; while from underneath the ruins I observed a little Indian boy who had been hanging about the camp in order to pick up any little unconsidered trifles we might have thrown away—such as scraps of paper, empty cartridges and cans—furtively, under cover of the calling away of one's attention produced by this predicament, fill his mouth with a portion of the contents of one of our cooking-pots before assisting me to release myself. I felt greatly diverted at the idea of a child so calmly profiting by a terrestrial convulsion. But then he was desperately hungry, and I have never yet found a full-grown Indian who deigned to steal.

This day we also commenced to hew a second canoe, to be used in returning. For this purpose a cottonwood was selected and felled, girthing nine

feet. Many of the best trees had already been marked by the Indians. Some were not straight, others had knots, and on some fungi were growing, showing that they were probably rotten at the core. Finally, after two hours' work, our tree fell with a crash and became slightly split along the upper part, which when the old Indian saw, he seemed greatly amused. Some one constantly worked at it with an axe, shaping or hollowing it out, while one of the party was hunting for grouse or whatever else he could find in the shape of meat, to spare the supplies as much as possible, which, I calculated, were sufficient to last about four weeks.

Though low moisture-laden clouds were driving rapidly overhead, yet the amount of rain that fell was very slight, thus confirming what the character of the vegetation already partly indicated, that we had reached the climatically dry zone that lies behind, and sheltered by, the coast ranges. We were already under the lee of the St. Elias Alps, and it was doubtless raining heavily upon the coast. Fresh snow, however, had fallen upon the mountains at altitudes over 3,000 feet, but the coolness had caused a daily fall in the level of the river of four inches.

The next evening Michael returned with a brace of

blue grouse or willow grouse, having shot their heads off with his Winchester rifle, and reported having seen a cinnamon bear with a cub high up the mountain, where the slope was bare of brush. She seemed the reverse of frightened, and had even followed him a short distance, but having used up all his cartridges but one, firing at grouse, he had thought it advisable to let the animal alone for the present. I allowed others of the party, the following day, the chance of killing the bears, having overstrained a wrist by too liberal use of the axe; the bearess, if the word might be coined, and her cub were found in identically the same place as on the previous afternoon. My Canadian boy, John L. Hammond, fired at her at a distance of over one hundred yards and wounded her, whereupon she crept into a small bush. When she emerged Michael fired somewhat hastily, and caused both mother and cub to make off as fast as possible downhill into the timber without giving another chance, and though traced for some considerable distance by drops of blood, neither of them could again be sighted. This mountain I named Mount Shanz. On the 20th, one of the Indians killed a large dark-coloured wolf. Accompanied by Hammond, on the same day I ascended Mount Glave again from

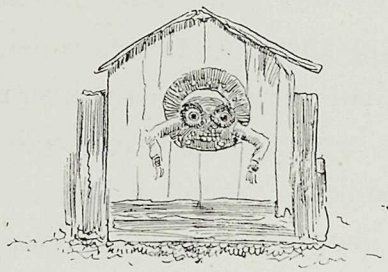
this side to a height of 5,000 feet. The lower slopes were clothed with birch, maple, and other trees, higher up with patches of willow, while the ground itself was almost entirely under snow.

We killed a grouse, and found a place where a bear had recently made itself a kind of shelter under a tree by pawing out a hollow, and had thrust aside and broken a branch measuring three inches in diameter. Towards the summit the range was bare and rocky, partly covered with grass and lichens with a few clumps of birch, so far as could be seen on the patches bare of snow.

High overhead glimmered the topmost crags of the mountain through the mist, and on account of snow commencing to fall I deemed it advisable to take the bearings of the line of descent with a pocket compass. Presently we came across three broad deep tracks, ploughed up through the snow by three bears that had recently descended valleywards; deep lanes across the whiteness of the snow-fields in zigzag, while snowballs and miniature avalanches that had become piled up on either side during their struggles through the yielding element, had fallen, rolled, and slid away like foam beneath the bows of a ship. These must have been ponderous as bullocks, for though it was afternoon we stepped gingerly and

lightly upon the same snow and it held us up without allowing us to sink more than a couple of inches, being without snow-shoes, whereas the broad paws of the bears had not prevented them from sinking deep; while lower down, where I came across their trail again on the bare earth, still descending, the impressions of their paws had sunk several inches even into the soil itself. In the remoter distance, south-east, could be seen the Chilcat Lake, over the low range of timbered hills below, but though a few days previously it had appeared as a sheet of pure snow, it now showed nothing but blue-green water, wrinkled by wind-storms sweeping across it. Along the base of Mount Glave we found bear-paths pitted with deep foot-holes regular as a chess-board, for Bruin or ancient Ephraim is the chief road-maker of Alaska. In the evening the vapours lifting disclosed the semicircle of snow-peaks at the head of the valley, the lower slopes streaked with snow in innumerable ravines resembling the design on a zebra skin, fading away into the westerly-drifting cloud. The vivid green cottonwoods faced the Klaheena like a line of sentinels, while the valley-bottom was strewn with trees partially buried by the gravel amongst the glittering channels of the river, which, seen from the mountain, had appeared capable of being stepped across

dryshod, but when one stood by the margin of its chief branches, the fierce rush and frigidity of the water made it seem an uncomfortable stream to have anything to do with, yet teeming throughout the summer with countless myriads of salmon.



THE LAST RESTING-PLACE OF A CHILCAT DOCTOR.

LETTER VIII.

THE GREAT BEAR-HUNT.

Chilcat Country, Camp 12, *June 1st*, 1890.

On the 22nd of May, I ascended the Klaheena on an exploratory trip ahead of the expedition, taking my half-breed Indian with me. By exercising care we were able to keep to the faint trail that existed on the left bank for some distance. When I had travelled for about four miles beyond the frontier into British ground, I found that the valley twisted abruptly to the right, heading exactly due north. I wish to confine myself now to a summary of the great bear-hunt we indulged in while waiting for the clouds to roll by. Where the valley turns northward a line of low hills projects, which I named Frontier Point. In order to pass this obstacle we had repeatedly to wade the river, and frequently to take to the exasperating and almost impenetrable

brush as an alternative. On the mountain behind, a wide face of granite is exposed, resembling a huge quarry, and a brief distance higher up the stream some immense blocks of almost pure white marble, rounded by the action of water, and evidently brought down to their present position by some prehistoric glacier, lay alongside the bank and measured about forty feet in diameter. I had mistaken them in the distance for blocks of snow.

But to return to the bears. We were having lunch, or rather I was, as my half-breed companion was rather fond of displaying his capacity for abstemiousness while undergoing these exhausting marches, when, with a field-glass, I sighted what resembled a round black ball moving across a snow-slide in a valley facing us on the left bank of a large glacier, which latter was completely covered by moraines. On the upper part of it the ice was visible in places, and, further off still, another wide glacier joined it; all round the mountains rose steep and high, and still white with the winter's snow, a land without one sign of human life. The animal was, of course, a black bear having yet his thick winter coat, and was distant from us at least a mile and a half. This was the first intimation that I had that black bears, as well as brown, might be

as numerous as we found them to be hereabouts. Though it was nearly sunset we started off at once hoping to intercept the animal, because the nights were already so light that it was possible to travel when necessary throughout the twenty-four hours. I was carried over a portion of the river on my companion's back, but the water came over the tops of his high gum-boots, and he staggered so fearfully that considering the stony bottom and the swiftness of the current, I decided not to risk total immersion on another occasion, but to trust to my own legs. Having once found the bear with the aid of glasses, it was easy to keep it in sight with the unaided eye, as it was evidently making for the river with the intention of crossing just where the ice-cold stream issued with a rush and a roar from a cavern in the ice at the foot of the glacier. As we had only one rifle, which I carried myself, I left the half-breed at this point, but high up out of the way of the animal in case he might give it the alarm before I had a chance of shooting. With all the speed I could summon I commenced to climb the moraine, or mountainous heaps of loose stones brought down by the ice, intending to make a circuit to a point which commanded an unimpeded view of the ravine. I had not gone far before hearing footsteps amongst the

unstable blocks of rock behind me, and found that Michael had decided to follow.

I found him a bold fellow in difficulties, but with regard to bears he was a curious mixture of bravery and timidity, full of queer Indian superstitions.*

HEAD OF BLACK BEAR.

I had never before observed so many and variegated blocks and chips of marble as on this moraine, not worn or blunted, but like the stones of which all moraines consist, freshly chipped and broken with

* For instance, he believed that a bear would hold out its paw towards a man at a distance and feel whether he was *skookum*—brave.

sharp edges, just as they had fallen from the cliffs, heaped up in ridges, with the blue ice occasionally showing itself below, and ready to slide down in noisy avalanches upon the slightest pressure of the foot. The ice below seemed to be about two hundred feet in thickness, and I gave it the name of Marble Glacier, covered as it was with green, white, purple, orange, black, mauve, and gray marble, granite, sandstone, and slate. We presently reached the farther or northern edge of the glacier, where I expected to find the bear below me not more than fifteen yards away. The ravine immediately at our feet, as we peered cautiously over the edge of the ice-cliff, was partially filled up with snow, and on the opposite side was a clump of firs, and behind those rose the mountain slopes covered thickly with willow scrub, but this was so backward compared to the Chilcat valley below, that it was still bare of leaves. I had been in such a hurry to arrive at this point before the bear got there, and so much occupied in selecting a route across the moraine, that I had not bestowed a glance at the mountain overhead. No black bear was visible as we peered carefully into the ravine below, but on the bare patches between the willow clumps upon the declivities above were

no less than five black bears in different places, half a mile apart; three about one thousand feet above us, and two others lower down, all of them busily employed in feeding upon the bright green herbage, which had just commenced to show itself above the surface, where it was bare of snow. While I was observing this curious spectacle, a cinnamon bear slowly passed an open glade between the spruces across the gully, and I quickly dropped into position for a shot, but some movement or noise we had made had given the alarm, and the animal passed again into the thicket. Keeping out of sight, I ran on in a parallel direction, hoping to be able to command with my rifle an open spot across which the bear must necessarily pass. The wind was blowing towards us from below, but if we had remained at the foot of the gully, it would have given Bruin the alarm. In place of keeping out of sight, my companion remained upon the ridge, and the first notification I had of this fact was his exclaiming that after standing upon its hind legs it had galloped off as hard as it could go. It was too late and too dark to think of attacking any of the five bears above us, whilst it would take until the small hours of the morning to reach Camp 9 again by setting

out immediately. On re-descending into the valley we found that the bear, on coming to our tracks, had bounded away without crossing them, and had done so somewhat hurriedly, as could be seen by the heavy traces of his backward spring. We had a hard march back to camp, nor does repetition reconcile a person to wading deep, swift glacier streams. At one point we followed a bear-track at the base of a steep earth-cliff, which threatened to bury us, and which the river was gradually undermining.

The following day we commenced packing a few necessaries, together with as much food as could conveniently be carried. If the weather should not allow us to proceed across the pass, I determined to devote a day or more to reducing the number of these bears, which we were enabled to do, as circumstances turned out. A cold rain continued to fall all day, and at sunset we were able to pitch Camp 11 about a mile from the glacier in a thick patch of timber. Though in a land of running streams, water was unfortunately three hundred yards from camp, which caused some inconvenience until the idea was conceived of carrying it to camp in an oil-bag, as those useful oil-skin sacks are named in which miners often carry their flour.

In the evening I climbed to the identical spot on the moraine whence I had previously seen the six bears, and observed three now feeding on the same slope. One bear seemed to offer a chance for a nearer approach without being seen, and accompanied by Hammond, I made a lengthy and fatiguing scramble, creeping and insinuating oneself upwards through the matted stems of the brush, until I supposed that we were in the vicinity. But now the wind played us false, and conveyed warning of our approach, for Bruin was nowhere to be seen. We descended by a different route, seeing only a large porcupine which allowed us to approach it within a distance of a couple of yards without showing any inclination to stir from the bush to which it was clinging. Twenty-four hours later I was once more upon my old post at the edge of the great moraine. High up on the mountain-side above me were a couple of black bears disporting themselves, but my attention was concentrated on a huge brown bear, whose skin, skull, and paws are before me as I write (together with the skins of three others), pegged out to its full capacity. This bear was fully eight times as heavy, to all appearance, as any of the black bears, and I had an opportunity of comparing them at

that very moment, since one of the latter was feeding not more than a stone-throw away. The tape measurements of the skin give it an area of sixty-five square feet, including head and paws; across the narrowest portion it measures six feet, and in length nine without the head, the claws of the fore paws measure four inches round the curve, and in fur, size, and texture the hide strongly resembles that of a buffalo. But meanwhile one of the black bears scented danger, scampered upwards, and passing across the face of an apparently inaccessible precipice, disappeared from view. The brown bear continued feeding, sometimes standing still to gaze down upon the moraine and valley below, or sitting up to reach some of the sour red berries which yet lingered, or pawing up the stones.

For several hours I watched the animal's movements, hoping it might take a fancy to descend, but it continued mounting, mounting upwards, the angle of the slopes being about two in one, or twenty-five degrees from the perpendicular. So colossal was it that I took the black bear at the first glance to be its cub, the second bear continuing to feed, without shifting ground, in an open glade between some rocks. About dusk it

disappeared from view into the thicket. To be able during an entire afternoon to observe wild bears in their native haunts, under such favourable circumstances, would be considered by many sportsmen a great privilege. But while I had passed the day alone upon the glacier, John Hammond had been more successful in a narrow ravine upon the opposite side of the valley. After climbing sufficiently high to obtain a good view, he sighted one black bear below him and another upon the opposite side of the gulch. Climbing down to find the former, he encountered a cinnamon bear upon the same ridge and promptly fired, upon which it leaped aside, and vanished in the brushwood with a tremendous crashing of twigs and branches. Not supposing it wounded, he abandoned further pursuit temporarily in order to recover his hat, which had rolled some 500 feet towards the watercourse below, showing the extreme abruptness of the declivity, but on reascending the bear was discovered stone dead, having received a bullet through the spine. The black bear on the opposite face had remained in the same locality as when first seen. After a severe climb he arrived at a spot about twenty yards to leeward of it, and discovered the animal lying down; upon the first

shot striking its shoulder it seemed as though it might succeed in escaping, but a second gave it the quietus, after which the successful Nimrod returned triumphantly to camp, as proud and happy a man as I have ever seen in my life, or expect to see.

These were the first bears he had ever killed, and few men would have ventured on to more dangerous declivities than he. The character of these mountains is entirely different from the Alps; the smooth and slippery twigs and blades of grass, and the steepness of the mountain-sides, make the foothold perilous in the extreme.

These two bears were in poor condition, but their fur was astonishingly thick and fine. The following morning I ascended to the spot where the big brown bear had last entered the brush on the previous evening, and waited for several hours impatiently hoping for its appearance. The view was considerably impeded by the vegetation and the unevenness of the ground, while the wind blowing in treacherous gusts from different directions may have given it the alarm; above me there stretched a long wall of cliffs, and as it was impossible to see more than a very circumscribed portion of the ground, I found that I should have done better had I waited

patiently below. The climb accorded more with my idea of chamois or wild-goat hunting than that of bears, and every footstep had to be well considered. It requires some time to elapse for a man to become accustomed to the extreme loneliness of these portions of British Columbia, especially in such situations as these, when he feels that in no eventuality can he hope for assistance from any human being but himself.

Before quitting Camp 11, I ascended the mountain on which I had seen so many specimens of the bear, as far as snow-level, seeing in different places two more bears, but not in such a position as to render it possible to approach them.

This block of snow-peaks is enclosed between the Klaheena and Marble rivers, and is included in the White Mountains, which name was originally given to the range between the Chilcat country and Glacier Bay.

The same day on which I left Camp 11 the big brown bear and a fine black bear met their death at the hand of Michael. His inclination led him to select the same spot upon the Marble moraine whence I had watched the big grizzly for so long, and waited in vain for him to descend from his almost inaccessible retreat. Diana smiled upon him, and the

monster descended the slope lower than it had ever done before, and actually came to within one hundred and seventy yards of where he was lying in wait. This proximity was becoming uncomfortable, and Michael fired at the brute hoping that it would retire, because a much pleasanter adversary in the shape of a harmless black bear was feeding near at hand. The big bear did retire—mortally wounded, but it was not discovered until next morning that the bullet had entered the neck, and after traversing the chest had lodged somewhere in the neighbourhood of the heart. Whether Michael really wanted to frighten the grizzly rather than wound it, no man will ever know; but so Hammond declared in chaff, and many a true word is spoken in jest. But it turned out no joke for the grizzly. After routing the brute Michael next attacked the black bear, and killed it in two shots at a distance of about fifty yards, and leaving further operations till next day, returned to camp.

LETTER IX.

SHOOTING THE RAPIDS.

Chilcat Country, Camp 15, *June 15th*, 1890.

How we killed four bears in the White Mountains was described in my last letter while we were camped at the junction of the Klaheena River and that which issues from what I named the Marble Glacier. From this point I found little or no defined Indian trail in the direction of the pass which leads over to Dry Bay and Yakutat, although parties of Indians had frequently been met by us passing to and fro; the reason being that they keep as much as possible to the dry portions of the river beds and avoid the brush, preferring to wade. But wherever we came across it we have left the Indian trail three or four times easier than we found it by a liberal use of the axe.

In its upper reaches the Klaheena entirely changes its character, and becomes a mere mountain torrent confined in a narrow rocky channel. The trail disappears, but the timber is moderately "clean." A wide valley is next crossed in which flows a tributary of the Chilcat, after which two canyons have to be passed, and then bare open ground above timber-line with temporary fields of snow; in the latter portion of the pass the ground is broken up into steep ridges along which it is difficult to find the way. One evening I was greatly astonished at the sudden appearance of a white man in camp, whose clothes were all in rags. I found that he was a "prospector" who had become separated from his two companions on their way over the pass at the foot of which we were now encamped, and that he had already crossed it in 1887, on which occasion he had descended the Altsehk to Dry Bay. I gained the following particulars from him. The valley of the Altsehk once entered, the smaller streams are found flowing west instead of east, and the way becomes comparatively easy as one reaches the wide flat bottom in which the river meanders with a current as rapid and a fall as great as that of the Klaheena. Below timber-line a deep canyon is passed, and at a distance of about thirty miles

from the divide the main branch of the Altsehk is met in the shape of a broad stream about the size of the Chilcat, and with a slow current, which, according to my informant, appears from this point upwards to be suitable for steamboat navigation.

I now learned again that the natives rarely descend the Altsehk in canoes, thus confirming what I had been told by the Yakutat Indian chief, and by white men who had been to the mouth of the river at Dry Bay. This large, deep, slow river, flowing in from the north-west, is clearer than the other branches. At this point are four or five houses used by the Chilcats as storehouses for purposes of trade with the interior or Stick Indians, whom they will not suffer to carry their own furs to the coast at Chilcat. There are other trading posts of the Chilcats higher up the river, some of whom have amassed considerable wealth by acting thus as middle-men. At the point where these rivers join there appears to be land available for agriculture—a rare thing in these regions. He also said that the inland tribe was burning off the timber, so as to form a trail from the divide down the Altsehk, in anticipation that the advent of white men would deliver them from the oppression of the Chilcats. Below the forks there is a dangerous canyon, which

forms the chief impediment to the navigation of the Altsehk; consequently, travel up and down the river is chiefly confined to the winter months, when it can be traversed on the ice.

There are, however, portions of the river which, owing to the rapid current, are not frozen over. On nearing Dry Bay the Altsehk valley appears to be completely blocked by a great glacier (evidently the Grand Plateau Glacier of the U.S. coast survey), but on approaching it the river abruptly swerves to the right, and, running alongside the edge of the ice, emerges at Dry Bay—a great tidal lagoon and network of mud channels, with a dangerous bar and a few Indian hovels.

There are other Indians resident between Dry Bay and Yakutat, which places are connected by a chain of lagoons forming a water communication between them. At the canyon west of the divide (which is many hundred feet in depth) wild goats are abundant. One of the Indians of the party killed a cariboo on the pass. Salmon, of course, run in the Altsehk in the same profusion as in other rivers on this coast.

These discoveries may be summarised briefly as follows: The Altsehk is reached in nine days on foot from the sea at Chilcat; at the great canyon

a fine river comes in from the north-westward, with deep slow current, apparently rising in the heart of the St. Elias Alps; the climate is dry; and the Indians are friendly, and less offensive in their dealings than the Chilcats.

To bring our heavy bear-hides and baggage down we constructed a raft, for the brown bear's skin alone weighed fifty pounds. Before it had proceeded far, however, the raft capsized. Michael got ashore without delay, but John Hammond clung to a tree, which presently broke, and he disappeared below the surface with two guns strapped to his back. The first things that appeared were the black muzzles of the firearms. Lower down the river our two canoes were waiting, one of which we had hewn from a fine cottonwood. The latter still required some completion. After supporting the ends on two logs, it was partly filled with water. We next made a huge fire, and heated forty or fifty round stones, of the largest size we could find, until they were almost red-hot, and, seizing them in a wood-tongs or split stick, we placed them in the canoe until the water was boiled, which made the sides so pliable that we were able to stretch them to a greater width, and fix them in that position with cross-pieces. Into this I placed Hammond and the

furs, which were secured with ropes. The remainder of the baggage was placed in the other. We took the wrong channel, and got into a dangerous predicament, where the river pressed against the bank and turned over upon itself, while great trees, uprooted and bending downwards, formed veritable canoe-traps, interspersed with others under the surface against which the rushing waters foamed. I shot by safely with Michael in the larger canoe, in fear and trembling, but the other was capsized and turned a complete somersault endways, but presently ran aground, and was recovered. A few packages became loosened from the lashings, and floated down-stream, but were fortunately picked up. Thus twice within three days did Hammond suffer shipwreck, attended by considerable risk.

There had appeared no signs of the two other white men, the lost companions of the miner who had joined my party. They were Norwegians, named Louis Lund and Thomas Johnson, and, as I learned afterwards from the survivor, were likewise capsized in the same whirlpool. These men were no inexperienced landlubbers, but sailors from Arendal, below Christiansand. Johnson held on to a snag for a few moments, and was then swept away and quickly drowned, doubtless stunned by the violence

of the water. The other searched in vain for several days for the body, with the help of an Indian whom he paid to assist him. We continued steadily upon our way southwards, floating down the river, now no longer a brawling cataract, and thus took our revenge upon it for many days of labour.

LETTER X.

OUR RETURN.

Sitka, Alaska, *July* 1*st*, 1890.

THE weather was rainy as we paddled down the swollen Chilcat River, which was turbid and high, and bore us southwards at a rapid rate, about three times as fast as we had travelled while ascending. Near the mouth of it we visited a party of Indians camped on the site of our first stopping-place, consisting of a dozen families, who were employing themselves in boiling masses of small fish in a putrefying condition *in their canoes*, by means of heated stones. The oil which floated was then skimmed off, and collected in old paraffin cans to serve as an article of diet. These fish were not the oolachan or candle-fish, which they resembled in oiliness; real oolachan-oil, however, is brought up for sale to these Indians from places where this

fish is found, such as the estuary of the Naas River. One and all were dabbling and luxuriating in the rancid fluid, the scent of which impregnated the surrounding air.

We reached Pyramid Harbour Cannery after a calm crossing of the Chilcat Inlet, Hammond gallantly paddling the small canoe. The south wind frequently blows with great force up this long salt-water channel, which is named Lynn Canal. On either hand rise steep rocky peaks, from three to five thousand feet in height, with a few glaciers, some hanging on the slopes, others coming down as low as the shore, and extending themselves in fan-shaped segments at the valleys' mouths.

Here I remained for some days waiting for the steamer, camped with my men, Hammond and I indulging our mountaineering propensities by occasionally attacking the steep hill behind the camp. One day some wild (white) goats were seen in an almost inaccessible position, but, fortunately for them, it was Sunday.

Every day we had long lines out across the little harbour, baited with fresh fish, on which we caught more flat-fish and rock-cod than we could eat. I also caught a few sea-trout with rod and

line, using mussels as bait, by standing on the small wharf of the cannery.

The salmon were not expected for two or three weeks, though a few might have been taken even then; but it was not considered worth the wear and tear to the nets and gear. The fishing-boats (large safe craft belonging to the owners of the cannery, carrying a single sail, and fitted with centre-board) were still anchored near the shore, while the men were employed in making the tins, and in building, and in other ways ashore, a large number of them being Chinese.

At length the steamer arrived, on which we embarked for our journey southward—my men for Vancouver Island, myself for Sitka. But first we visited Glacier Bay, with its giant snow-peaks, its innumerable icebergs, and its ice-cliffs, where frozen masses are continually breaking off and falling into the ocean below.

The forested shores at the entrance give way to bare granite slopes, from which the glacier masses have so recently melted that no soil or vegetation has had a chance to grow. Bergs as large as a house floated with only their seventh part above water, their surfaces weather-worn and honeycombed until they shone with the dazzling whiteness of snow.

The following day we reached the sea-girt capital of Alaska, quaint and hospitable, in the island-studded Sound, where I disembarked, intending to stay for a while at Sitka. Of course I meant to sketch as much as the rainy weather would permit, notwithstanding the annual rainfall of eighty-three inches on the coast, and, as a humble disciple of Izaak Walton, had hopes of a few Alaska trout. The Alaska salmon disdain a fly, and seldom take a spoon. The trout, too, sometimes will not rise to a fly, but I had brought a few with me. We had a number of anglers on board, but almost all had left their tackle at home, and had to content themselves with fishing over the side of the steamer at every stopping-place with hand-lines for tom-cod, flounders, and halibut. One stout old gentleman fished comfortably from a steamer-chair, taking naps between the bites, waking when the tug on his line warned him that he had a fish.

The first evening I tried black-bass fishing, which I had found good sport during previous visits to Sitka. A white artificial sand-eel thrown like a salmon-fly I found an admirable bait. The scientific name for these so-called bass is *Sebastichthys melanops*, but they are commonly known as sea-bass, rock-fish, and black-fish. At first glance they resemble the

fresh-water black-bass, and have many of the game qualities of that fish. They do not jump from the water when on the line, but make a very determined resistance, darting backward and forward and towards the boat, jerking the line violently, and trying all the usual ways of freeing themselves from the hook. One beautiful fish, weighing four and a half pounds, tested my tackle severely. We had a hard fight for fifteen minutes, and I was glad that he gave up when he did, for I was almost as tired as he was when at last he turned on his side and let us slip the landing-net under him.

I caught one mysterious fish that took the hook, settled down on the bottom, and was as immovable as a boulder; once in a while he sprang into activity. Finally, the line broke. It may have been a halibut, as these are frequently taken on the coast, generally in favourite spots in deep water, and sometimes of enormous size. I also caught a few sea-trout at the mouth of Indian River.

Mount Edgecumbe, Sitka's weather prophet, rose in grand sweeping curves from the ocean, eighteen miles away, the late afternoon sun turning its snow-and-lava-streaked sides to a pure rose colour. We engaged rooms at the comfortable little hotel, where Lady Franklin stayed years ago, and transferred

our luggage from the steamer to our new quarters. Next day I strolled out to the Mission to visit the Indian school and hospital, and climbed the rickety stairs to the old castle. I ascended through the great rooms, all but one unoccupied and fast falling to ruin, to the cupola. The sleepy little town lay below me. The roofs of the old Russian houses are green with moss, and most of them time-stained and dilapidated. The cross on St. Michael's, the Russian church, shone in the rays of the setting sun, and around the spire hovered the ravens that are such a feature of Sitka. A mile east of the town was Mount Verstovia, over 3,000 feet high, the summit of gray rock looking as sharp and clear-cut as an Indian stone arrow. On the east and north, as far as the eye could see, stretched the islands of Sitka Sound, 130 in number. The castle itself is built on what was once an island, which the Russians joined to the town site by an artificial parade-ground. On this cliff once stood a strong fort of the Sitkan Indians, which was destroyed in 1804 in revenge for the cruel massacre at the Fort of Archangel, the first Russian settlement, six miles from the present site of Sitka.

Those that have never visited Alaska can have no idea of the wonderful growth of vegetation

there. It is impossible to make with comfort any excursions on foot in the neighbourhood of Sitka. The only road is that to Indian River, three-quarters of a mile away. The mountains slope steeply to the water's edge, and a dense growth of evergreens, covering earth, rock, and fallen trees, makes walking a very difficult matter. There are a few trails on the mountains; but they are seldom visited, except by mining prospectors. But with the large canoes, paddled by natives, delightful excursions can be made for many miles around the town. In the Indian village there are several Hydah canoes, with good rowers; but a Sitkan wishes to be paid for every trifling service rendered in addition to the labour of paddling.

A pleasant excursion from Sitka by canoe is to Russian Redoubt. The narrow Fjord is enclosed on three sides by bold mountain peaks, and at its head we saw the old Russian earthworks and the dam built across the rapids that connect the waters of Ozerskoi Lake with the bay. An old block-house and the foot-bridges are still standing, but the fort, chapel, saw-mill, and other buildings erected in the time of the Russian-American Company have fallen into ruin. A salmon cannery has been built here recently.

The lake is twelve miles long and one wide, and winds about like a river. At its head rises a grand, snow-capped mountain, about 2,500 feet in height, bearing a glacier on its rocky sides.

We walked across the foot-bridges and saw the little Indian boys catching salmon. With a long, stout pole and a strong gaff fastened to one end they bent down over the rushing water, and, as the salmon darted up the stream, with a skilful motion they struck the gaff into their silvery sides and brought them struggling up to the bridge above. Below the rapids, in the little coves, great Hydah canoes filled with natives were awaiting the arrival of the salmon from the outer bay. The fish seem to come in schools at uncertain intervals, all bound for the spawning grounds in the lake above the rapids. Each canoe was manned by eight Indians, with their heads tied up in bright-coloured handkerchiefs to keep off the swarms of gnats and black flies. Six rowers sat in their places, with oars in readiness, while one Indian stood in the bows watching the movements of the fish and ready to give the signal of starting. The great net was piled up in the stern of the boat, with one end held fast on shore.

On a previous visit I had found that the salmon

took a spoon-bait readily in salt water, and had experienced good sport here.

The wonderful growth of the giant kelp and other seaweed shows the influence of the warm Japan current that bathes these shores and makes the sea life have almost tropical luxuriance. The stems of this kelp sometimes attain a length of three hundred feet, while the broad, crinkled leaves are often thirty and forty feet long. We passed through great beds of the weeds surging up and down in the waves, and suggesting stories of the sea-serpent as the immense coils showed from time to time above the surface of the water.

In the days of the Russian occupation a hospital and other buildings stood near the Hot Springs. The hospital was destroyed by the Indians in 1852 and the inmates turned adrift, to make their way, with many hardships, over the mountains to Sitka. Only a few small buildings are now standing, which have been turned into rough lodgings for picnic-parties from Sitka and Juneau, who stay here sometimes for several weeks. An old man lives here and takes care of the place; but visitors have to bring their own provisions, bedding, and camp outfit. We found a tiny cooking stove, two broken chairs, and a table in one of the little houses, and took possession.

Four springs bubble out of the hillside only a few yards from the houses, the principal spring having a temperature of 155½° Fahrenheit. They contain sulphur, iron, magnesia, salt, and other substances, and are very beneficial in cases of rheumatism and cutaneous diseases. A clear cold spring, slightly impregnated with iron, is very near one of the hot springs. In our cabin we found several neat little bath-rooms, to which the hot and cold water had been brought in pipes, and even here the water was too warm to bear one's hand in it.

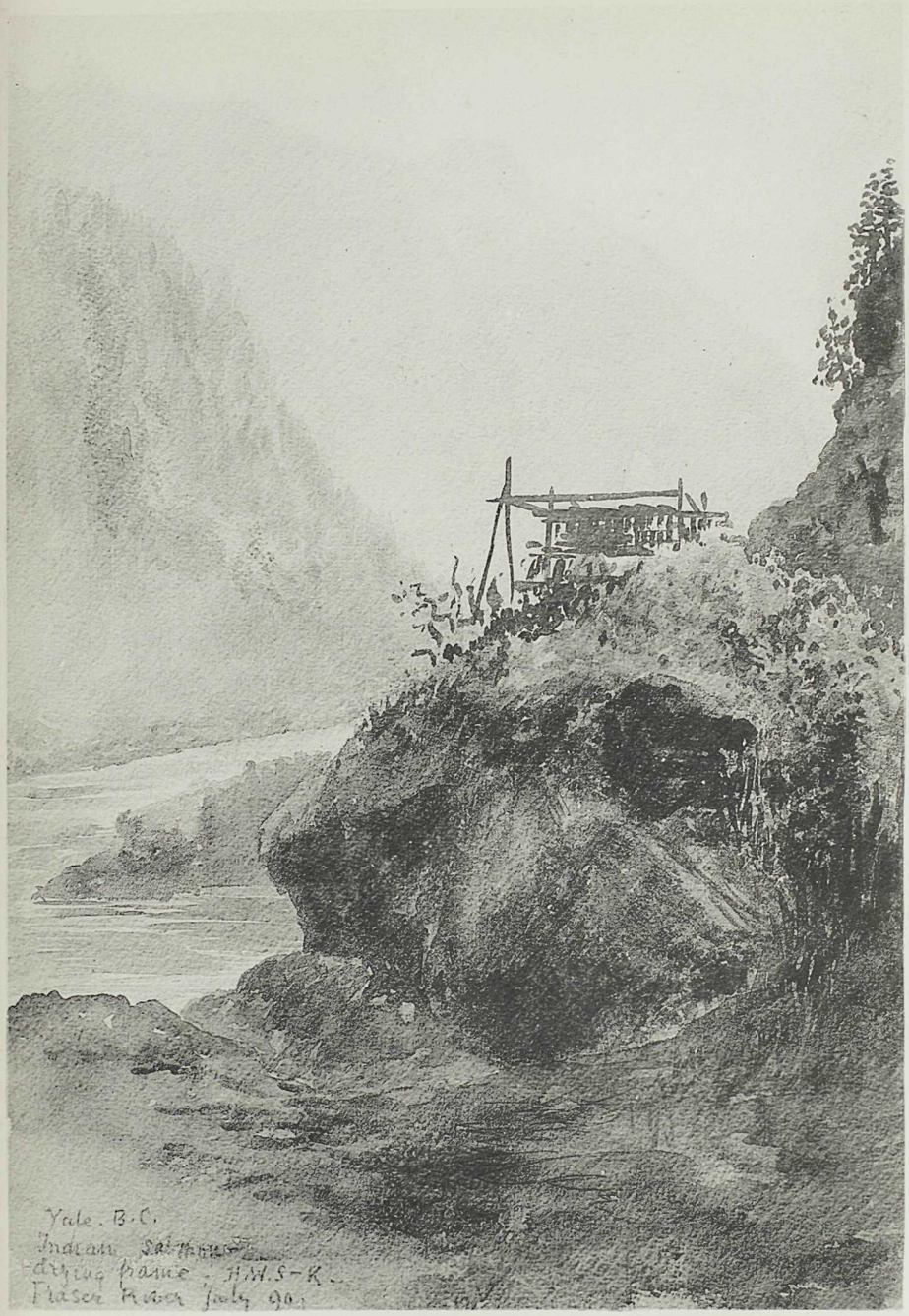
LETTER XI.

AN ANGLER'S EDEN.

Adams Lake, Shushwap District, British Columbia,
July 15th, 1890.

AFTER a few days in Victoria, I joined, by invitation, an excursion, on July 4th, by steamer across Puget Sound to the new town of Anacortes, promoted by an enterprising real estate agent, which was now being "boomed." There were orations, sports, and canoe-races between whites and Indians, and various other amusements. After which experience, so characteristic of the West, I went eastwards, by the Canadian Pacific Railway, in search of "angling experiences" on the almost unknown waters of the upper Thompson River.

Nothing can be a greater contrast in scenery, climate, modes of locomotion, and methods of travel than the coast ranges of British Columbia (more especially the northern parts) and those regions of



BRITISH COLUMBIA.—FRAMEWORK FOR DRYING SALMON ON THE LOWER FRASER.

the interior from which I date this letter. I passed the last two months in the former, in the neighbourhood of latitude 61° N., entering by the Chilcat River, meeting every day some new and difficult obstacle to progress, in the shape of rapid rivers, impenetrable thickets, rugged mountains, or driving mists. But here the rivers are less rapid, and interspersed with long lakes, the timber is thinly scattered, and occasionally the country consists of patches of prairie; the hills are low and rounded, and can be climbed in any direction, even when no paths exist; continual damp no longer festoons the trees with moss, but the climate is comparatively dry. A corner of the so-called great American desert (shown to be no desert at all) has been insinuated like a wedge into Columbia, broken up into patches, and diluted, so to speak, with an admixture of timber lands.

An explorer has a right to travel comfortably sometimes, even when engaged in exploring. I share with others a passion for exploring the angling capacities of this region, although no one seems to have tabulated any reliable information on the subject, and except one or two prospectors, no one seems to have visited Adams Lake.

The daily apprehensions and perils we had under-

gone during the last two months in the far and misty north had become monotonous, and I was in search of a region where we could travel out of the beaten track, yet with some degree of comfort, and it is to be found in the drainage basin of the North and South Thompson rivers. It must also be recollected that in Alaska and Northern Columbia, with two insignificant exceptions, there are no horses, nor would the difficult nature of the country allow of their being used if there were; whereas here pack-horses form the usual means of transport.

I commenced my investigations as an angler so near New Westminster as the Coquitlam River, but without any success worth chronicling, owing to the fact of its being so well known and the absence of any trail up the bank. I remained a day *en route* at Harrison Hot Springs, and without wishing to intrude any remarks upon so comparatively civilised a spot in my descriptions of the wild places of Columbia, I might remark that, while I have visited many warm and boiling springs in different parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia, I found this one exceedingly interesting, issuing below the surface of the lake itself, and rising in level only a few inches above it, within the enclosing woodwork of the bath-house. A desirable addition would be the means of

enjoying a cold plunge in the lake, so conveniently near, after coming out of the hot water, this forming the safest and best of baths for the robust, though ignorant persons generally suppose the contrary. This forms the principle of the Indian, the Russian, the Persian, and the Turkish baths, though not always carried out in practice—all of which I have experienced in the countries named—and was also adopted in the baths of the ancient Romans.

It much resembles the hot baths of Miyanoshita, in Japan, taken in conjunction with the scenery except that in place of a lake there is a deep valley. More recently I visited Hammam Meskoutine, in Algeria, where the water issues from numerous openings on the summit of an immense dome of white carbonate of lime, which it has deposited, and at a temperature two degrees above boiling-point; in the vicinity is a large underground lake with numerous ramifications, which one navigates in a small iron boat capable of containing just two persons and a lamp.

I remained for a day at Spence's Bridge, where the train arrives in the early hours of the morning, and there is an inn, but no one remains out of bed in connection with it; the arriving guest finds his way down the hill, enters the first house he sees (which is the hotel), and chooses a room for

himself, provided that it is not already occupied. This proceeding struck me as an original idea, which might with advantage be adopted in some larger towns than this hamlet upon the banks of the South Thompson.

Some persons connected with a survey of the line were camped here, and informed me that they had angled with natural fly every evening in the main river, but had never succeeded in capturing more than one trout apiece. However, with artificial fly I took eleven, the largest about a pound in weight, on the only evening I was there; they were so bright and silvery in colour that I supposed them to be salmon-trout fresh from the sea, whereas two others I took in the afternoon in a small tributary stream were dark in colour, with black or green spots, and a red band down the sides (*Salmo purpuratus*). I was informed that the Indians occasionally fished in the latter stream, and often brought back long strings of trout; but I found the bushes uncomfortably thick on either bank, whereas on the South Thompson the banks are usually bare. One has to climb round a picturesque waterfall which the aforesaid stream makes close to its entry with the Thompson, which occurs half a mile or so below

the bridge, whence is drawn the supply of water which irrigates the picturesque fruit and flower garden on the north bank of the former. This reminds one how dry the climate is, the rainfall annually ranging from seven to twelve inches. A similar phenomenon, but with more abrupt demarcation, can be observed in the Himalayas, where the line of change in some places is so defined that from a region of rain one enters one of continual sunshine, the transformation being confined to within a mile of the same spot.

Though rain falls so seldom at Spence's Bridge, yet it rained heavily for a couple of hours on the single afternoon I remained there; indeed, I am unfortunate in this respect, for so recently as February, 1890, I found myself in the oasis of Biskra, situated on the edge of the Sahara Desert, where for two years together no rain may chance to fall, or where in any case no more than an occasional shower of rain can be anticipated. On the very day of my arrival there came some hours of very brisk rain, to the astonishment of the nomad Arabs. But on the distant Aures Mountains rain is frequently observed, while the dry bed of the Oued Biskra becomes filled with water brought down from these heights.

This reminds me that, if a few palm trees could be made to grow at Yale, the resemblance would be perfect to the celebrated pass of Chabet-el-Akhira, between Bougie and Setif, in Algeria; and I take this opportunity to recommend pedestrians who are admirers of the grand in nature, to follow the old waggon-road on foot from the flag station of Spuzzum—where the west-bound train is due at a quarter after nine in the morning—as far as Yale, a distance of twelve miles, comprising some of the finest portions of the Fraser River canyon, the advantage of stopping at Spuzzum for the purpose being that at this point the old road crosses the Fraser and joins the railway on the right bank, while above Spuzzum as far as Lytton (near which place the railway crosses the Fraser), the road keeps the opposite bank, and is consequently not to be reached except by crossing in a canoe.

A few words on the subject of the game fish of British Columbia may not be out of place. If there is one thing more than another that will attract the attention of the stranger on his arrival here, it is the excellence and variety of the food fish, while the gameness of some of them will especially commend them to the sportsman. There

are five varieties of salmon in British Columbian waters; three of them may be spoken of as game fish, viz., the Cohoe, the Sockeye, and the Tyhee, or spring salmon. These are emphatically angling fish, and are plentiful in March and April, and when the rivers are full. They may be taken with the fly, minnow, or spoon-bait, in the sea, almost at all times.

The trout of British Columbia are of two kinds, the ordinary trout (*Salmo purpuratus*), having black spots, and the steel-head (*Salmo Gairdneri*). The former occasionally attains the weight of ten pounds, but three or four pounds may be considered the weight of a good fish. The steel-head attains from twenty to twenty-five pounds.

In this province there are two varieties of char, one with red spots, and the other brown with yellow stripes. It is not often that either of these fish are caught with the fly, the last named variety having a fancy for the spoon-bait, the minnow, or a piece of bacon.

The grayling is seldom seen in British Columbia, it being only found, so far as known, in the Cassiar district. On the other side of the Rockies, notably in the tributaries of the Peace River and streams having their outlet in the Arctic Ocean, it is com-

paratively common. Although its average weight is from a half to three quarters of a pound, it sometimes reaches from three to four pounds. It takes the fly well, and is full of fight. It is in the best condition in winter.

The result of my visit to Spence's Bridge was to show that fair bags of trout can be caught with fine tackle and small fly (people in this country are in the habit of fishing with very large artificial flies compared to those we use in Europe) in the afternoon in those parts of the South Thompson which are rocky and not too swift, but not so much where the current is deep and rapid and the bottom smooth.

With regard to my next stopping-place, I took a leap in the dark, not having any reliable advice, though in accepting advice one is usually mistaken. I chose Shushwap, situated two and a half miles below the outlet of the Lesser Shushwap Lake, finding that a store existed there, and that the east-bound train reached it at half-past five in the morning, careless whether or no there were any accommodation obtainable, provided as I was with camp outfit, and quite independent of anything in the shape of an inn.

Meanwhile, let me proceed to give the particulars

of a three days' journey which circumstances led me to make from Shushwap to the unexplored Adams Lake, where I obtained first-rate trout fishing, completely justifying my choice of Shushwap as a base camp.

The Shushwap Lake is a very large and irregularly shaped body of water, resembling in its form a four-armed star-fish, or otherwise it might be described as two long parallel lakes connected with each other about their centres. From the west end of the north arm the water flows into the Lesser Shushwap Lake through a sluggish channel about two miles in length. The latter lake is five miles long, and is drained by the South Thompson. At Shushwap I found a few scattered farms along the south bank of the river, many of the settlers having married Indian wives, one instance being that of the settler in whose house I found accommodation. Others I found living with, but not married to, squaws. The opposite bank of the South Thompson is the Shushwap Indian reserve, where the natives are largely engaged in cultivating hay, oats, and potatoes; they also possess large numbers of handsome ponies and a few head of cattle, the country being comparatively free from timber in places, and suitable in consequence for pastoral purposes. The

hills are rounded in form, in height rising to 2,000 feet above the valley, and sparsely covered towards the summits and round the Shushwap Lake with trees of moderate size, chiefly varieties of fir.

The water of the South Thompson is very clear at this point, more so than lower down its course; the current seems to vary from one to two miles per hour, the depth ranging from about ten to twenty feet. There is another small store at the point where the Thompson leaves the Lesser Shushwap, probably for the purpose of trade with the Indians from the village immediately opposite in the reserve. I was told that a boat might be procured here, but found after walking thither — a distance of three miles — that this was not the case. The settlers, in fact, are not well provided with boats.

By reaching a point immediately opposite the Shushwap Indian village at the outflow of the lesser lake and shouting, a canoe came across, and I was able to make arrangements with an Indian to come down with the horses on the following morning to a point opposite Shushwap, in order to transfer myself and camp to Adams Lake, a distance of fifteen miles northwards, for the consideration of two and a half dollars a day and food.

The canoes in use on the Shushwap lakes seem very much inferior to those in use on the coast, being narrow, roughly hewn, and easily capsizable, not having been "spread" by placing water and hot stones in the interior and stretching them with cross-pieces. But the Shushwap tribe, being an equestrian one, never walking when they can ride, can hardly be familiar with the art of making salt-water canoes, though trees large enough in circumference are to be found in the neighbourhood.

As it was Sunday, the whole tribe, almost without exception, was present, and as I reached the village the bell commenced to ring to summon them to attendance in the very diminutive building, measuring about twenty feet by ten feet, which formed the church. One of the Indians performed the office of a priest. The interior boasted no ornamentation except a few tawdry pictures of the Virgin; but a larger church is in process of erection, and nearly completed, made by themselves.

The land on the Indian reserve side of the South Thompson is much higher than that on the opposite bank, and stretches back as a bare plateau about half a mile in width, which, as before mentioned, is being largely cultivated. There is also an Indian village, which I visited on my way to

Lake Adams, at the head of the Lesser Shushwap Lake, but the Indians are now taking up and clearing ground along the river between the upper and the lower lakes. The profusion of wild berries in the vicinity of the lakes is very large. I was able to gather as many as I wanted without searching far—gooseberries, a few strawberries, two kinds of raspberries, a purple berry, popularly known in the neighbourhood as service-berry, a bright red berry of a tart and peculiar taste, and other kinds not perfectly matured.

After chapel many of the Indians resumed a game they were playing, resembling draughts, others bathed in the lake.

The number of grasshoppers this year was unusually large, but in the neighbourhood of the Indian houses their quantity was something phenomenal.

On July 1st, the Indian having kept his appointment and made his appearance with the horses, I set out for Adams Lake, having first to be ferried across the river in a canoe (of white man's manufacture, and more stable than the average Shushwap article). I placed everything in a pair of saddle-bags, made in London, of light, strong, waterproof canvas, which are much more easily packed than

a pack-saddle, and can be thrown across a riding-saddle and easily secured, as was done in this instance. For the first three miles the road was excellent, as far as the village; then came five miles along the border of the lake, the first two of which were exceedingly rough, as the usual path was yet under two foot of water. Only an Indian pony could have managed to keep its foothold among the loose boulders without falling. After this the path became excellent, and I have rarely travelled a better pack trail than the seven miles which intervene between the second Indian village and Lake Adams. Adams River runs into the upper or large Shushwap Lake near its outlet, on the north bank; the Indians say there is sometimes a dangerous whirlpool where it enters, but I observed nothing of the kind from the opposite side, though perhaps I was too far away to see with certainty.

Adams River is a very swift stream, only available for canoe navigation at lowest water, and rarely attempted by the Indians. There are good pack trails on both banks between Adams and Shushwap lakes, that on the east side being rather the better but the less used of the two; the route along the west or right bank being the one I employed. The way at first rises gradually and mostly keeps along

terraces, high above Adams River, which can be heard thundering below, but is not approached until the lake is almost in sight. The woods are thick with scented underbrush, and I picked as much fruit as I wanted from the saddle without drawing rein. At one spot an Indian log bridge is passed which has been thrown across a small stream. Signs of the district having once been more thickly populated by Indians than at present are observed, in the shape of very old salmon-drying frames, chiefly near Adams Lake, and the square excavations which mark the site of ancient, partly underground houses, so old that firs sixty or seventy feet in height and four feet in circumference have grown in these curious rectangular hollows in a compact cluster and almost filled them up. Then there are also discernible the holes, now overgrown with brushwood, in which salmon refuse was boiled or roasted to extract the oil.

The path descends and Adams Lake bursts suddenly upon the view. This body of water probably took its name from some more ordinary person than our common ancestor; but the Garden of Eden might well have been situated in a less pleasing spot. One of its chief negative recommendations, especially to persons in the garb of primeval man,

is the fact that there are hardly any mosquitoes at Adams Lake. We reached the water at the outflow of the river and camped upon a large grassy promontory projecting into the lake in a horn-shaped curve, enclosing a pool about an acre in extent, from which the river commenced its course in a series of white-crested rapids, while a steady stream from the lake flowed into the pool through its wide end. The surface was of glassy smoothness, reflecting the wooded hills and high bare bank upon the opposite side; but upon the breast of the rapids, where the water toppled over and sank rushing away with gradually increasing speed, the surface seemed elongated and furrowed with changing lines as though drawn and sucked downwards with the growing velocity. Collected by the concentration of the waters from all parts of the lake, were floating to destruction myriads of large and small moths and flies, unable to rise from the surface. The smoothness of the water above this point was constantly being broken by the splash of the great trout as they fed greedily upon the plentiful harvest of the air.

After having picketed one horse and belled the other, my Shushwap uncovered a canoe which he possessed, concealed in the bush. As the deeper water

where the trout were rising lay under the farther shore, I had myself ferried across, as the sun had barely set, and there remained at least half an hour before it would become too dark for fishing.

The canoe was as cranky and dangerous as any of those on the lower lake, and if some one were to build a boat on this lake it would prove a great convenience, as the trout fishing here is undoubtedly the best in the district, and future anglers would then be able to ply their craft in safety, because the best fishing is on the very brink of the rapids, where any delay or accident might result in one's being carried down a mile in five minutes.

On landing I immediately set to work, with a fine cast and moderate-sized brown flies, and enjoyed the best sport I have met with since I fished the Shellefteo River in North Sweden, the Vuoksa in Finland, or the Sardinian Fluemendosa, or the Umeo, or the Saguenay, or other of the best pleasure-grounds of the enthusiastic angler.

I found a large, bright spoon-bait for the Indian, with which he caught nearly as many as I did, but of rather larger size.

The slopes of the mountain above descended in a bare bank steeply into the crystal stream, and left a clear hundred yards in the best portion free

from any bushes to hamper the casting of the flies. The banks, however, are so abrupt that the centre of the river, which was the best part, could only be reached safely by means of a steady boat, of which there was none. My rod was of greenheart, one of the most durable kinds of wood of which rods are made, twelve feet in length and as many years in age. Many large trout fought stubbornly in the rapid current and tore themselves loose; while, from the excited exclamations of the Siwash I knew he was having as much success as myself.

In half an hour we returned to camp in the canoe with the total of eleven trout and one white fish; the largest trout weighed three and a quarter pounds on a small pocket scale which I carried, while the aggregate weight of the twelve fish was twenty-one and a quarter pounds, being an average weight of a little under two pounds each.

The hills round Adams Lake seem to vary in height from one to two thousand feet, and are closely timbered; but along the east shore, up to a height of nearly one thousand feet, there are fine open grassy slopes, where numerous Indian ponies are turned out to pasture. The length of the lake is said to be about forty miles, but it rarely exceeds two miles in width at any part,

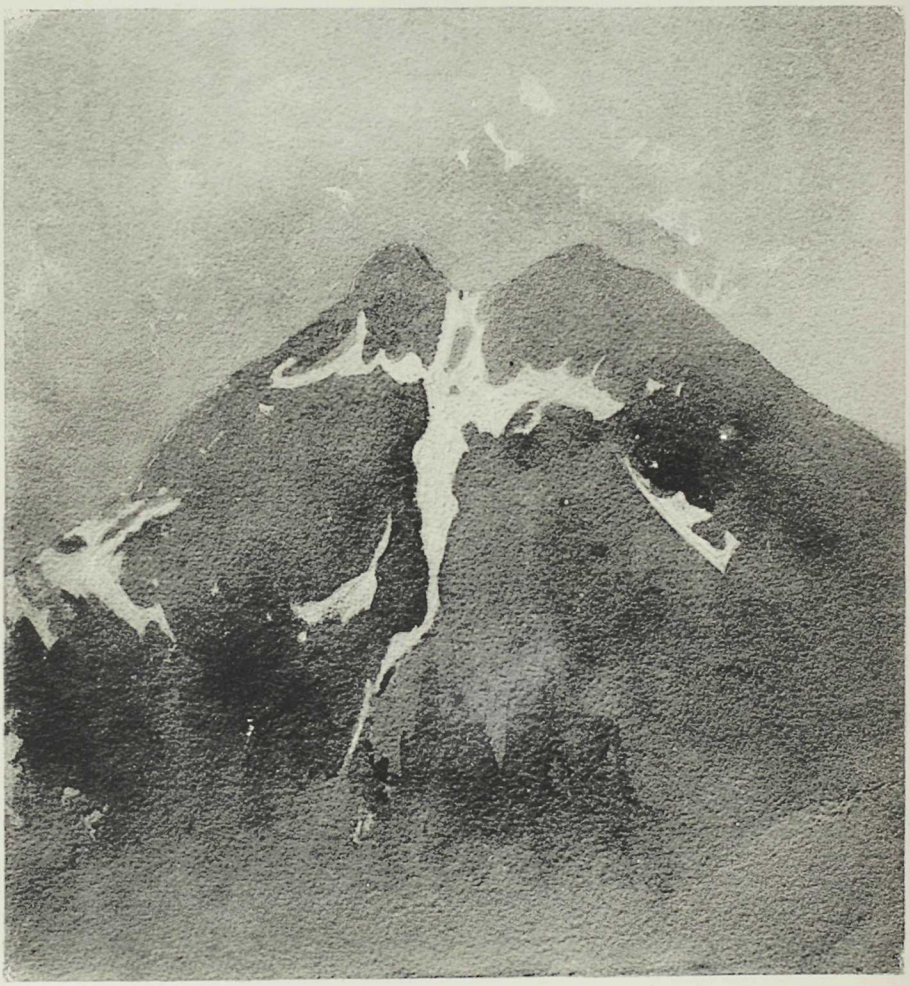
the general direction being north and south. One mile from the lower end, on the east bank, a wide promontory of flat grass land, rising from the water at a gradual slope, affords a good situation for a village, of which the Indians have taken advantage by building several houses at convenient spots, and raising several patches of potatoes, of which they are very proud. About two miles farther on, upon the same side, some high cliffs descend abruptly into the lake. Upon the side opposite our camp, the other trail, to which I previously alluded, reaches the lake at a convenient place for landing, and a hundred feet above the water is one of the most charming places for camping grounds imaginable—a small bare plateau partly shaded by a few pines, and commanding an exquisite panorama of the foaming rapids below as they issue from the lake, together with a view of the distant reaches of the lake itself to the northwards, and the timbered valley to the south as far as its junction with the Shushwap. Wild raspberries were as numerous here as lower down, together with wild currants and gooseberries; but while the flavour of the first-mentioned hardly equalled that of the cultivated fruit, this deficiency was atoned for by its abundance.

I endeavoured to make up next day for the lack of a steady boat by lashing two canoes together alongside with cross-pieces, but not firmly enough to warrant any rough usage, as the Indian was unwilling to do it permanently or securely, and used merely some small bits of string, which soon gave way, being passed through small holes which we bored in the edge of the canoe. The better way would have been to have passed ropes round the underside of the crafts.

Our largest trout the next day scaled four and a quarter pounds. Some Indians passed, to whom I gave a plentiful supply of fresh fish, and they reiterated the statement I had previously heard, that very much larger trout are found at the north end. I also salted a large number of trout and brought them down in a sack on one of the horses, as I have a disinclination to wasting fine fish of one's own capture.

John, the Siwash, spoke a bastard English of the dullest description, but perfectly understandable, which he had picked up while working for white people in the Spallumcheen district, with which he enlivened the return journey. The day of our arrival I had barely pitched the tent when a severe thunderstorm commenced; but the weather

was now cloudless and exceedingly sultry, *apropos* of which John remarked that it was "too much hot" for him. I suggested it must likewise be uncomfortable for the horses, upon which he said: "Nothing for hot horse." The elucidation of this curious sentence is easy when the key has once been found to the grammatical arrangement of similar sentences, of which this one is an example.



MOUNTAIN OF THE HOLY CROSS AT HOPE.

LETTER XII.

HUNTING BIGHORN.

Vancouver, B.C., *September 5th*, 1890.

After returning once more to Victoria to fetch the remainder of my outfit, I again travelled eastward in order to hunt wild sheep in the interior. On the way I "stopped over" at several places on the line which I had omitted on my previous journey. The first place was the Catholic school at Mission for Indian boys and girls, a flourishing farm at the mouth of the Fraser Valley, commanding a magnificent view of the delta. The Father Director showed me all there was to see, the garden was one mass of colour; most of the boys were absent with the tribe, at work; the other Brother was drowned a few days later while saving the life of one of the pupils who was in danger. The next place was Hope, a few miles further on.

There is no edifice in the immediate vicinity

of Hope Station. The entire population dwells upon the farther bank of the Fraser. A few Indian families have the monopoly of ferrying people across for a consideration, but at other times of the day there is no certainty about being able to find Charon. In fact, I stood and shouted for fifteen minutes without producing any sign of human life visible to the naked eye in the neighbourhood of the Siwash shanty across the water, from which a blue smoke was curling upwards, while amongst the trees I could distinguish the red flesh of the split salmon hung up to dry, and some canoes hauled up upon the beach. But it is doubtful if I should have done well, even had I succeeded in getting over on the evening of my arrival. The mail-carrier had already gone, and there was nothing left but to pitch my tent beside the railway track. Comfortable accommodation for the night at the little hamlet of Hope—the ambitious Fort Hope of former days—would have been problematical, because there were only two inns there, and these had both been burned to the ground the previous day. Similarly the young city of Vancouver was razed to the ground by the destructive element on the very eve of my arrival in 1886. In the morning, however, I discovered an Indian family encamped near the landing-

place, and a man with a canoe willing to be hired. Hope is one of the most beautiful and picturesque villages I have seen on the Fraser, or indeed anywhere. But its glory has passed away, it is a dead-and-alive hamlet. It is surrounded by mountains not so rugged as to be repellent, but high enough to lend a grandeur to the scenery.

Here the Fraser Valley first commences to narrow, but the actual canyon does not commence till one reaches Yale. I first visited the black and still smoking ruins of the two inns, and heard the tale of woe from the lips of their once proprietors. It seems that male assistance was scarce on the outbreak of the conflagration, but women and children worked with a will in saving what effects were within reach, and the result was seen in piles of household goods. The only street or highway in Hope is paved with the greenest and closest of turf, for wheeled vehicles are scarce. For a consideration a small boy accompanied me for about a mile to the banks of the Coquehahla River, as guide to a place where fly-fishing might be had. He bore a small can of salmon-roe and rod of his own, but I caught more trout than he with the artificial fly—about a dozen in all, none over half a pound. But the day was fine, the trail picturesque and flat, and the river

easy to fish and very pretty, while there was in many places a broad expanse of stones and gravel between the stream and the trees on either bank, allowing one plenty of elbow-room to cast the line. From Hope, as every one knows, a good pack trail leads into the interior of the country eastwards to Okanagan across the mountains. But snow is apt to block the pass in the early winter, about the end of September; but a route is always available for returning by way of Kamloops.

Has it not yet been discovered; or if discovered, has the fact not yet been published, that about a couple of miles southwards from Hope, and facing that town and the Fraser River Valley, there rises a conical mountain, apparently about 4,000 feet or more in height, bearing upon its dark bosom, about the centre, and immediately below the notch in the summit, a magnificent specimen of that freak of nature of which the renowned mountain of the Holy Cross is the most celebrated example? By walking about twenty yards from Hope Station towards the river to a point where the path descends to the water, one of the finest views is to be had of any upon the Fraser, and in the combination of dark mountains, verdant valley, and rolling river, it is undoubtedly the best upon the line. This

coup d'œil is framed in by the massive trunks and dark fronds of enormous cedar-trees; and then in clear weather in the distance glitters the great cross of snow. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company have given us observation cars. Let them go a step further and stop the train for five minutes at Hope on fine days, to allow tourists to see not only the mountain of the Holy Cross, but at the same time the finest scene, of its class, upon the river.

The finest portion of the Fraser River canyon, as I stated previously, is that between Yale and Spuzzum, where the old waggon road crosses the torrent by a suspension bridge, a distance of ten miles. Higher up still, between Spuzzum and North Bend, the canyon continues grand, especially at Hell's Gate, about half-way between the two latter places, but is less confined and narrow. I passed a day in the gorge above Yale, abounding in wild raspberries and gooseberries, to observe the method employed by the Indians in netting their supply of salmon, and in constructing the unstable-looking platforms overhanging the boiling eddies, upon which they crouch while awaiting the entry of a fish into the huge landing-net, as well as the places they choose for the purpose. I could see the jerk of the rope attached

to the mesh, which the Indian held in his hand, and which informed me of the capture of a salmon, which he promptly hauled up and clubbed, capturing enough salmon to keep his squaw busily engaged the whole day cutting up and hanging them on the frames. I found North Bend a convenient stopping place for visiting Hell's Gate, going by the morning and returning by the evening train. The best *cuisine* upon the line is, I think, to be found here. The angling in the Thompson may be said to be comprised between Lytton and Savona, a distance of seventy miles. I was uncertain whether to stop at Lytton, as in any case angling, I was told, could be had in a lake twelve miles distant, or at Spatsum, where no accommodation was to be had, and where it was even doubtful whether any human being would be found at the station; but I finally went on to Ashcroft. I had previously found fair fishing at Spence's, or Spencer's, Bridge. My objective point being doubtful, I was allowed to embark without a ticket, in order to buy one from the conductor when I should have decided where I was going to, and the conductor was informed to that effect. My baggage occupied a considerable amount of space in the first-class car, but the owner was nowhere to be seen. When that

official did at length find me, I was seated upon the cow-catcher, and he was in a considerable state of heat and exasperation.

Below Lytton, the muddy water of the Fraser debars all use of the rod. The most promising portion of the Thompson River for fly-fishing, as far as I could judge without stopping, appears to me to be that part immediately above Lytton for a distance of, say, twenty miles, which brings one almost to Spence's, or Spencer's, Bridge. And this is a part which seems to be rarely attempted by the angler, yet for mile after mile I observed a succession of rocky pools, to all appearance a very paradise for trout. This portion of the country is not often seen by persons passing in the train, as the diurnal communication by rail takes place shortly before and after midnight in the case of the west and east-bound trains respectively. Above Lytton the Thompson is broken up into deep pools and eddies by great rocks in the river bed, before one reaches Drynock—where the observation car is detached—whereas in other places there are but few obstructions in its course. The moon was at the full, and the landscape was seen almost as distinctly as by day, while the appearance of the bare and stony hills—for at Lytton one enters the dry zone

—was infinitely more attractive than by the garish light of the sun. I was seated on the front part of the locomotive, which the entire absence of smoke and dust renders pleasanter than the observation car as a place from which to view the scenery. I have already described the angling at Spence's Bridge.

At Ashcroft I hooked and lost some fine trout, but caught many small ones. On all parts of the Thompson one catches, without wishing to do so, while fly-fishing, numbers of young salmon from five to seven inches in length, distinguishable by the row of dusky bars along the side. Few of the piscators I met were aware of the fact, but had always considered them to be some kind of trout. Some even refused immediately to credit my statement. It is the custom in Scotland to return these "parr" to their element, but it is doubtful if the few thousands taken from the stream by anglers can have any appreciable effect upon the amount of salmon which return as full-grown fish to the Fraser.

After passing the hamlet of Spatsum, which shows no signs of life, and following the Thompson through several deep, stony gorges, the train stops at Ashcroft at 1.30 in the morning, meeting the

cars bound in the contrary direction. Ashcroft is not an attractive place—hot and dry in summer, but in the afternoon a breeze invariably springs up from the southward, dying down at nightfall. The local anglers flog the water industriously, and fishing is consequently not so good as elsewhere. The small Bonaparte River flows into the Thompson a mile above the town from the northward, in which small trout and young salmon are fairly numerous. Some miles up this stream there is a fall, where I observed a salmon vainly leaping in the attempt to ascend. The salmon have commenced spawning in the gravel reaches, and the trout are eagerly feeding on the ova.

I have had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Dawson, who has just arrived from the north, and is camped near the mouth of the Bonaparte; he was interested in hearing that there is a rival at Hope—as I stated previously — to the Mountain of the Holy Cross in Colorado, which latter is best known through the chromo reproductions of Mr. Moran's great oil painting of the scene. Dr. Dawson gave me the particulars of an interesting tour which any one might make in the summer, but as I shall not have any opportunity for undertaking it I give the particulars here: Leave the railway at Ashcroft, and

go by pack-horses or take the mail car to Barkerville in Cariboo; proceed thence to Quesnelle on the Fraser, and thence to Fort St. James on Steuart Lake—a Hudson Bay post. Continue the journey over the H. B. C. pack-trail over the Pacific-Arctic water-shed to Fort Macleod on the Parsnip River —another of the Company's posts. The remainder of the way is a long and easy canoe trip down the Parsnip and Peace rivers to Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca, the only obstacles being some rapids round which the contents of the canoes may have to be portaged a short distance. At Fort Chipewyan the Hudson Bay Company's steamer can be caught, and the return made the usual way by Fort Edmonton.

From Ashcroft I started northwards on a shooting trip in order to kill one specimen, and no more, of the wild sheep of the Rocky Mountains, or, more correctly, of the Cascade Range of British Columbia. There are three places from which people usually start when they are bound on a hunting expedition in B.C. from the Canadian Pacific Railway—Hope, Ashcroft, and Kamloops. I found a freight-waggon, which happened to be going in the direction I had decided to pursue, very convenient for sending on a few stores and

tents. I bought a quiet horse from two men who had returned somewhat prematurely, owing to an accident, from an expedition they contemplated making northwards, and also secured a saddle, and made arrangements for disposing of the horse on my return for half the price originally paid for it. I also used a pair of light saddle-bags, to contain what I needed until I should rejoin my heavy baggage.

I quitted Ashcroft on horseback, keeping with the waggon containing my supplies. After following the Bonaparte for some miles, we turned to the westward up Hat Creek—a small affluent, being the road to Lillooet, while the main road continues northwards to Clinton and the Cariboo mining district—and camped near an Indian farm, where fodder could be obtained. Further on I found the bunch-grass plentiful near the road, but in the neighbourhood of farms and settlements grazing is very poor. The whole country is exceedingly dry, being situated in the arid zone, which lies in lee of the coast ranges of the Cascades, and the streams are small and few. Timber grows thinly, and small species of cacti abound. In fact, the contrast to the coast climate is very great, where it constantly rains. The mountains here are also

easier to climb, and can often be traversed on horseback, while those on the seaboard are extremely difficult, even for a mountaineer on foot. Indeed, they are too steep even for *Ovis montana*; for only bears and wild goats can cope with their abrupt declivities. Deer, of course, are found upon the islands.

The road from Ashcroft to Lillooet is unnecessarily hilly and circuitous, for it was paid for at so much a mile, and resembles in this respect the railway from Maritzburg to Durban, or Baron Hirsch's line to Constantinople. Next day, during which it rained, I rode through the Marble Canyon—a fine precipitous gorge with tremendous cliffs, which looked all the wilder from the masses of vapour drifting across their faces, and curious rock towers and pillars; and then along the edge of Pavilion Lake for six miles, the water of which is the clearest and most intense blue colour I ever saw. There are no trout known to exist in this lake, although some have been turned in. Some men engaged in repairing the road said they had seen an immense snake swimming across, and the Indians have a tradition that any one seeing a fish there is going to die at once. Pavilion Mountain has several farms and much grazing land on the sum-

mit. No one would guess from below how much fine grassy table-land there is on the summits of most of these mountains, where the herbage grows thick and green. I stayed here several days with an English family, who have been in the country some years. The first morning I rode up the mountain by a cattle trail, and dismounting whenever I put up any blue grouse, killed seven brace in a short time. These birds invariably fly up into the branches of the trees, where they are exceedingly difficult to distinguish.

From here I might have reached Lillooet in a day, but I was induced to put up for the night at a farm about ten miles (leaving fifteen miles for next day) from the lake, in order to examine some ruins of the ancient semi-subterranean dwellings of the aboriginal inhabitants. Next morning I visited a plateau on the hillside covered with circular excavations like diminutive craters, now overgrown with shrubs; after excavating in the centre of one of the largest, I soon came upon cinders, at a depth of eighteen inches, and turned up a flint arrow-head nearly perfect. A covey of blue grouse were regarding my proceedings with great curiosity from a distance of fifteen yards, and at length flew into a tree. The heat of the sun was so intense that

I was forced to be content with my arrow-head and a few bones, and the same afternoon I rode on to Lillooet, stopping at the Indian village of La Fontaine to try and engage an Indian for my trip, and bought two fine jade hatchets. There seems to be some mystery about these ancient jade implements, as no jade has yet been found in the country, except in the shape of knives picked up round these ruins. The Indian chief himself followed me down to Lillooet, and next day I engaged him and another Indian with a pack-horse, both riding their own horses, to accompany me into the mountains, and the following morning, "bright and early," we set out, the Indians having turned up at the little inn in good time.

We made a long "drive" that day in order to reach good grazing for the horses, first following the right bank of the Fraser upwards for some five miles (the Fraser has recently been bridged at Lillooet), as far as Bridge River, which, as its name implies, has long ago been bridged by the Indians at the part where it joins the Fraser. At this point is an Indian village with its small Roman Catholic chapel. We followed the left bank of Bridge River upwards for fifteen miles along a narrow path, across the face of the mountains, where steep slopes

and land-slides left one little choice, and where I frequently found it advisable to dismount; the Indians occasionally did the same. Down below in the canyon roared the river, and small huts and irrigation channels were frequently observable on the other side, where Chinese labourers were washing the alluvial, gravelly strata for the free gold which it contains. Most of them were using flumes, but sometimes, owing to the scarcity of water, they could only use a rocker. The bed of Bridge River is sure to contain a large amount of gold, but I should imagine that a capital of five thousand pounds is needed to get any of it out.

At last, at sunset, we reached the North Fork, and prepared to ford it. On the other bank lay the promised land—grass thick and green, flowers, edible berries of many kinds, and game in plenty. The Indians affected to make light of the fording of this turbulent stream; but it was high and rapid, and the bed was composed of huge, smooth, round boulders, amongst which the ponies floundered dreadfully. We camped at once on a flat near a stream. I picketed my horse with a long rope, the Indians belled one of theirs and hobbled another; they take saddle and blanket off their horses as soon as they camp, however hot they may be,

and it seems to have no ill effect, but the air is warm.

We set off betimes next day; but not before one Indian had fired at a deer, and the other had prepared a supply of kanikanik to smoke in his pipe, mixed with a little tobacco. I had observed him plucking fronds of this plant (which grows close to the ground and bears edible red berries), and roasting them in front of the fire by placing them in a slit at the end of a stick stuck into the ground, and could not imagine what he was about. I smoked some of the mixture, and found it milder than tobacco alone, and the perfume not unpleasant.

It is wonderful what gifts of nature lie ready to hand in the woods and forests for those who know the secrets. What an untold number of berries, plants, and roots are good for food; only for fear of being poisoned one is unwilling to make experiments! Most of these are known to the Indians; but the race itself is dying out, and the secrets of the plants and berries is dying out with them. But now the Indians take white man's food with them, instead of subsisting, as they used, wholly from the earth's wild bounty and game. However, on this trip, Kilipoudken, the Indian tyee

or chief, taught me to eat five kinds of berries new to me, which, untaught, I should not have ventured to taste. I also munched the wild celery, and sipped the sap of the black pine, besides feasting on other wild fruits which I already knew—some sour, some sweet—and smoked, as I said before, the dried leaf of the kanikanik.

On leaving camp, Kilipoudken led the way on his sorrel pony, his legs, Indian-like, working unceasingly, and thumping against the pony's sides, as though to urge it to go faster than a walk, which it never did; but, as green bunch-grass was growing in profusion, it kept snatching mouthfuls as it went, as did all the four; for we were in a grass-heaven compared to other parts of this arid district. The trail ascended constantly in a westerly direction, gradually leaving the clear waters of the North Fork (the water of Bridge River is thick, coming from glaciers evidently, in a country which has not yet been explored). Then we had to cross a deep gully, which took us down and up at least 500 feet. Here we saw some bear-tracks. After this the ascent was continuous, mostly keeping along the summits of ancient moraine ridges, through small but close timber, where the Indians pointed out to me on all sides plenty of deer-tracks.

At last we reached the table-land on the summit, and I found myself in a country like a Scotch moor or deer forest, with bogs, grassy plains, and stony hills. We camped at the head of a valley, which led down to Bridge River. After supper I walked round a hill ridge with the two Indians—one taking his own Remington rifle—and we saw below us a great basin, partly wooded, and speckled with small ponds and marshes. After looking about for some time, and seeing plenty of tracks on the hill, we saw some deer feeding about a mile off on the plateau below. The sun was sinking, so we started for them at once, the wind favouring us, and after climbing over much fallen timber, we thought they must be near at hand, and I went on ahead, and soon caught sight of a young stag. I fired twice, and killed it, and at the same time five or six others bounded away across the rough ground. The young Indian ran after them, and kept firing shot after shot, making me anxious lest he should kill more than we needed, for an Indian's lust for slaughter is insatiable. He kills for the sake of killing. I was thankful to find, however, that all the shots were fired at the same animal, which he succeeded in bagging—a young stag like mine. Leaving the Indians to bring in the meat, I took

both rifles and returned alone to camp. Next morning I cut up most of the meat into strips, salted it, and hung it on bushes to dry; and when we returned, four days later, I found it perfectly hard and solid, and likely to keep for years

HEAD OF BIGHORN SHEEP.

in that condition, for the weather had continued fine and sunny. The exterior becomes hard at once when put out in this manner to dry, preventing the flies from harming it. Wilful waste of good venison is inexcusable when there are means of using or preserving it.

The following day we crossed the mountain, and halted for some time at the farther edge to spy for sheep. A bitterly cold wind was blowing from the Chilcoten Valley below, and from the snowpeaks of the Cascade range, which fringed the entire horizon to the westward. Then we commenced the descent, and immediately scared three fine ewes (*Ovis montana*, or bighorn), which we ought to have seen before. I left the choice of camping-place to Kilipoudken, and, after descending about a thousand feet along the old trail, we crossed a ridge to the northwards, and camped in a charming spot near a brook, amidst slopes covered with the thickest and greenest grass and flowers knee-deep, in which the tired ponies luxuriated to their hearts' content.

The view of the snowpeaks and this beautiful valley, with its abundant food and gentle slopes so easy to climb and traverse, the abundance of game and absence of any human signs, made it one of the most attractive landscapes I have ever seen in North America; the extremely steep and rugged mountains I have been accustomed to on my journeys to Alaska made me enjoy it all the more.

We looked about that evening with field-glass and telescope, but saw no sheep.

Next day we hunted some of the best ground.

We kept too low down, instead of scaling the heights above us, skirting the timber line where the deer love to dwell, of which we saw ten or twelve. The walking was easy, mostly over grassy slopes, the scenery superb, and the weather fine. Not having seen any bighorn, I determined to shoot a deer in returning, and the chance soon came—a fine stag standing broadside among some trees. He was first sighted by Kilipoudken. I do the old man the justice to say that his eyesight was wonderful, yet I was the first the following day to sight a band of bighorn.

While I was creeping laboriously up into position for a shot, the Indians lost patience and advanced, scaring the deer away. It is better to hunt alone when one once knows the ground, unless a man is afraid of being lost.

Next morning we shifted camp, but only for a few miles, intending to hunt the mountains to the southward, as a last chance, before returning. We set out about noon. The younger Indian had overeaten himself, and remained in camp, for which I was not heart-broken, for I felt that two had a better chance than three. First I allowed Kilipoudken to take the lead, and the old man was proud and happy; but I soon saw it was useless to

keep so low down, feeling sure the sheep were upon the cool and rocky heights above, so I was obliged to depose him and make him follow me, which he did very unwillingly, seeming to take no further interest in the chase. I knew the mountain we were on to be cone-shaped; it was composed of limestone, which lay in loose masses upon the slopes, in great blocks and slabs, which often moved when one stepped upon them. The wind was blowing across from below, and I saw the only hope was to climb the peak and descend the other side. We must already have scared any sheep there were on this side, and if there were any upon the other face they would be less suspicious of danger from above than from below.

We reached the summit and commenced the descent upon the other side, which I found was likewise composed of loose pieces of rock. Suddenly, upon a grassy ledge, I saw four bighorn appear, as they fed upwards, climbing from the depths. I made a sign to Kilipoudken, who was some forty yards behind, and we both sank down as if shot, not to move a muscle for nearly three hours. Five more bighorn soon joined the four, and then three more, making in all a ram, eight ewes, and three lambs. After feeding about they presently scratched

the stones away with their fore-feet, to make a smooth place, and all lay down. Then some of them rose and grazed again, and then lay down once more. Hoping they might feed nearer yet, I refrained from firing. One of my legs was cramped and without any feeling. My seat, so suddenly chosen among sharp rocks, was most uncomfortable; in fact, I had almost lost the power of motion for the time being. Presently a ewe rose and forced some of the other bighorn to do the same by poking them in the back with her horns.

The view of the distant snowpeaks and the whole landscape was superb; it was most interesting to watch these creatures eating, resting, and playing together, the lambs taking their natural nourishment (it was near the end of August) exactly like those domesticated. But three hours was enough; I was so uncomfortably placed that I felt that I should be permanently paralysed if I remained any longer. I determined to end the scene.

The distance was about 200 yards, almost directly downwards; the ram was lying in the centre, surrounded by the ewes. I pressed the trigger and fired; in a moment all was confusion. Kilipoudken sprang yelling to his feet; the ram lay struggling

vainly to rise. The band of bighorn, one less in number than before, were racing across the flat, followed by the lambs, one of which was unable to go the pace, and was bleating in a heartrending manner; next moment they passed from sight. So ended successfully my six-days' hunt for mountain sheep. Kilipoudken cleaned the ram, and dragged it down the mountain to a spot we should pass on our way back in the morning, taking enough meat to camp for supper and breakfast. He wanted to throw the carcase down the slope, so that it might come bounding and rolling down the precipices to the very door of the tent; but I refused to permit this for fear it might bruise the horns.

Two days later I was back in Lillooet, after an absence of just a week, and enjoyed some capital trout fishing in the three or four miles of river between Lake Seton and the Fraser. The river was full of salmon, though this did not prevent the trout (some up to three pounds), and in the lake the white fish, from taking the fly freely. The salmon in the Fraser at this point formed a sight that was phenomenal. As in other portions of the river I had not observed such immense numbers, possibly because they remained entirely below the surface, whereas here, on the contrary,

the dorsal fins and portions of the backs of myriads of them projected above the muddy surface of the stream, which in consequence seemed in places almost black. They were so plentiful that I managed to touch several with my hand, and even jerked some out of water with the handle of my umbrella, as they swam and drifted near the edge, apparently tired out, many of them with wounds about the head, perhaps caused by sharp rocks in the turbid current. The Indians were, of course, drying some for winter use. If I had had any need of them I could have landed plenty with a gaff or spear of any kind.

I was not surprised also to find that the white inhabitants of Lillooet were not drying any for food, as people in British Columbia do not care much for salmon.

Lillooet is an odd little hamlet. People with chest complaints sometimes come to stay in the little inn, for the climate is very warm and dry in summer. Rain rarely falls, though the sky sometimes looks threatening. Nothing can be grown without irrigation, and water for that purpose is scarce. The scenery round about is exquisitely beautiful. The clear Seton River joins the Fraser just below the town, flowing through a gorge with

fine cliffs on either side. The Indians in the neighbourhood are mostly employed in agricultural pursuits, farming their own land. Previous to the completion of the C. P. R. the route to the coast used to be across the Seton and Anderson lakes, and thence by waggon to Harrison Lake, and by steamer down the Fraser.

THE END.

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NOTE.

Since my return to England rumours have reached me of the death of Messrs. Wells and Price, within the confines of the unknown district alluded to at the commencement of this volume. If funds were available I should be ready to enter this part of the interior in search of them in command of an expedition composed exclusively of Indians.

The basis of the map given in this volume is taken from that published in the Annual Report of the Geological Survey of Canada to illustrate the journey made by Dr. Dawson in 1887.

My thanks are due to the Editors of those periodicals who have allowed me the use of my former contributions as a correspondent.

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