CANADIAN CAMP LIFE

CLEARING FIRES, SOUTH WESTMINSTER. SURREY SIDE.

Canadian Camp Life

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CHAPTER I

LET US TALK ABOUT THE WEATHER

EVERYONE will remember what unusually cold weather we had in the winter of 1892 and 1893; more especially as such weather is not expected by us, and our houses are not built, as a rule, to keep out extreme cold or heat. The winter was followed by an equally unpropitious spring, cold and rainy. People who got through the severities of winter with very little inconvenience found the prolonged damp and cold of spring more than they could endure, and many fell victims to that most erratic disease, La Grip. Indeed, it seemed as if any complication that puzzled

the doctors was set down as 'Grip,' and then everyone was satisfied that a wise solution had been arrived at; the doctor's reputation was saved, and the patient felt prepared for any phase of suffering that might present itself.

Among its victims was our 'little mother,' and so serious a form did it take, that we sat with closed blinds and silent house waiting for 'the turn,' which both doctor and professional nurse seemed to feel was most likely to be fatal. Even her two small darlings had to be sent from home for fear any sudden noise should disturb the poor weak heart, and stop its beating for ever.

I saw her cover the bedclothes feebly over her ears as Josie was taking them away to the convent, and when I mentioned it after her recovery, she said gently, and with a little quiver in her voice, 'Yes, dear, I was afraid to hear the little footsteps leave the house, for I knew it was likely I should never listen to them again in this world.'

The doctor said that La Grip had been followed by nervous prostration, and if we could manage it anyhow, as soon as the fine

weather set in, we had better look for a quiet place in one of the salt-water bays with which our coast abounds, whether on the mainland or one of the numerous islands was of little consequence, so long as the bay was shallow enough to leave the sand bare at low tide; for when it had slowly made its way back, there would be delightfully warm bathing.

One of the objections to that delightful exercise here is that the water is too cold, not only for comfort, but the shock is too great for weak people, especially if there is any affection of the heart.

Accordingly, we set out in quest of a place not too far from Westminster. Vancouver, we decided, we knew all by heart, for it is our sister city, and we ride or drive, go by electric tram or C.P.R. train, backwards and forwards all the time. Boundary Bay, everyone said, was exactly the place we wanted; so dad and I drove over there—at least we thought we did.

We crossed Fraser by the steam ferry *Surrey*, and drove up and up over a road that tried our axles exceedingly; through the

thickly-wooded country, where only a few farms had been cleared for miles, and several of these had been abandoned. One, we noticed, was fenced with nicely planed pickets, and had a park-like carriage gate, with a small one on either side for pedestrians. But brush and young trees were growing up over garden and path, and a large barn was falling to decay. There were even the remains of a chicken yard.

'Isn't it strange there's no house here, daddy?'

'Well, it would be, only don't you see it has been burned down; these are the charred ruins. His driving seat gave him the advantage of me, and, standing up, I caught sight of some blackened underpinning.

'I wonder if he's waiting for "another remittance from home"?'

'Likely; he would do better to go out to the fishing; this is the "big year," and he could easily earn six to eight hundred dollars during the season.'

'I can't help wondering if some of those dudish, white-handed farmers wouldn't be better

working for themselves, instead of sitting down smoking away their precious time, when perhaps their mothers and sisters have to go short of many things to keep these dear pets in funds.'

'Right, my girl, but you must remember, "as the twig is bent the tree will grow," and I haven't the least doubt most of them will find some stout-hearted Canadian or Colonial girl to continue the process of petting and spoiling.'

'While they sit down and take the credit; spare me, please!'

'Well, I'm sure he was an Englishman, for no one else spends so much in new places, or tries to make a real old-fashioned home-like place right out of the "forest primeval."'

'May his shadow never grow less, dad.'

We jogged along, chatting and laughing, getting bespattered with mud in some of the holes, or ran into stumps occasionally when we tried to drive round them, for, as dad said, 'It wouldn't be right for the road contractor to cut two inches more off a fallen tree than his tender called for.'

We now came to a deserted house of some pretensions on one side of the road; the fence was broken down, the currant bushes in the garden running wild; the front door had been burst open, disclosing a staircase, and the windows were all boarded up.

On the other side was a log cabin, with clean white muslin curtains at its small windows, many acres of cleared land, partly in crop with oats, turnips and potatoes, a large strawberry bed, and some very fine vegetables. Some of the land was quite clear from brush and stumps, although rather uneven; in that more newly cleared the crops were growing between the large stumps. A lad of about eighteen, with a pair of oxen, was hauling trees, which had been sawn in lengths of some ten or twelve feet, into piles for burning, so each year added to their acreage for cropping. The sunshine flooded all, and the sheltering forest of pine and cedar stood round as if to protect the daring intruders who had hewn for themselves a home from its solid depths. The cheerful tinkle of cow-bells in the distance gave evidence that dairying was not neglected.

'There's a woman here,' said dad, confidently, as he surveyed the pleasant scene, 'and a thrifty one, too.'

'You never seem to think anything could succeed without a woman in it!'

'Neither would it,' he returned with the same confidence. 'A man without a wife is like a mariner tossing at sea without a rudder. Every wind catches him, and turns him this way and that; when he has a good wife, he has anchor and ballast and rudder.'

'She boxes the compass, too, I suppose,' I said saucily, for you see father and mother and us two elder girls (we are twins, by the way) are all quite 'chummy'; and when the 'two boys,' as we call our brothers, come home from Mr Gill's to spend the long summer vacation, we shall have more chums, for they are sixteen and eighteen respectively.

'Perhaps she boxes the mariner,' said he, laughing, as we bumped into a hole which seemed to have no solid bottom, and took all his driving powers to flounder out of. He never did seem to notice these places till we were struggling in them.

'I'm going to interview these people and see if we are on the right road.'

'How can we be on the wrong, daddy, seeing there is but one?'

'Oh, well, there was that rather unused-looking trail, and I want to see what these people are like. A bonny, cheerful-looking woman 'll come to the door, see if she doesn't!'

He gave the reins to me, passed into the place by a rustic, home-made gate, and standing under the little verandah over which a honey-suckle was trained, of which any number grow wild in the woods, rapped smartly on the door and awaited results.

First a dog or two rushed round and barked at him, but seeming to understand he was neither a Chinaman, an Indian, nor a tramp, refrained from doing anything worse.

A boy put his head out of a little trap-like window in the side of the cabin and took a calm survey of me and the team. Then a tall, old man, with a yellow sou'-wester put on hind side before to keep the sun out of his eyes, came cautiously out, looked at me and examined the

horses, then stepped softly round the house to the front door, which probably opened only from the inside, and that on great occasions, or perhaps it didn't open at all.

Dad was looking the other way, possibly watching for the 'bonny, cheerful' face of the woman to appear at the window under the vine-covered verandah. So the farmer surveyed the intruder's back whilst he surveyed the window; and I don't know how long they would have remained in this ludicrous position had I not felt how ridiculous it was and laughed outright.

Daddy turned and looked at me, the old man chuckled apologetically, and the two men were face to face.

'Ah! how d'ye do?' said dad, recovering himself. 'Can you tell me if I'm on the right road for Boundary Bay?'

'That jis' depends on which parten the bay ye want to git tue!' admitted the old man.

'I don't know that it matters which part so long as we get there,' said father, rather unwisely as it turned out. 'We just want to get to the nearest part.'

'Jis' so; well, then, about tue mile below, on

this yere road, you'll come tue a finger-pos'; it's gotten three fingers on to it, an' one p'ints tue Blaine on the lef' han', one tue Ladner's on the right han', and t'other tue Wes'minister, thet's where yer come frum?'

'That's where we came from.'

'Pretty bad road, ain't it?' and he looked over our mud-bespattered vehicle.

'Pretty bad. How far is it to the bay from here?'

'Oh! frum twelve tue sixteen mile, 'pends on which way yer go,' and he went maundering on about Blaine and Ladner's and the red barn in his slow fashion. Now we all talk at a great rate, and father never can stand to listen to anyone drawling out their words as if they had to hoist them up from their toes; so, thinking he'd trust to the finger-post and the chance of meeting someone else, he jumped in and gathered up the reins for a start. I was afraid I should get no information about this ranch in the woods, so I said, 'You have a nice place here; how long have you been making it?'

'Nigh on seventeen year. Yis, it's a nice place; the boys is gittin' mighty useful, an' then

Mear hes a good deery, an'—' but the horses were plunging.

'Just a minute, dad,' I pleaded.

'You've lost your neighbours on the other side, I see.'

'Oh, yis; they come in an' made a big spudge; goin' to hev a health horspital there, an' the woman called herself a "lady doctor," or summit, but they couldn't make it stick; ef they'd a set down tue the land now they'd a ben alright, but it teks time, it teks time.'

'And plenty of hard work, and your land does you credit.'

'It due that, me an' Mear an' the boys.'

Dad had given the horses a sly touch with the whip, and they were impatient to be off, and I heard 'vegetables, butter, strarberry patch, and Wes'minister,' coming on the gentle zephyer as we started off; and I saw, too, the bonny, cheerful face of the woman dad had predicted coming out from the side-door. A big clean apron enveloped her ample person, and a warm seal-skin cap covered her head; the latter article had evidently been put on in a hurry.

'There she is, daddy,' I said in a low voice,

and he just turned in time to take off his hat to her with as much reverence as he would have given to a duchess.

'I told you,' he said triumphantly; 'you see for yourself such a man would have been "nowhere" alone.'

I had to acknowledge he was right in this instance, and as we were descending the other side of what dad called the 'Hog's back,' upon a better road, although by no means an even one, I could do little but keep my seat, and watch for the finger-post.

Daddy interviewed a man who was unhitching a novel-looking team from as novel a looking wagon.

Three horses of different sizes and colours were harnessed abreast to the wagon which had been 'fixed up' to carry gravel for road-making.

This man advised us to take the road to Ladner's, whilst I distinctly remembered 'the-old-man-of-the-sou'-wester' saying, 'Ef yer want tue git theer, the nighest way is tue the lef', thru Elgin.' However, this man spoke up more briskly, so dad took his advice and the road to the right. We were soon descending a very steep

grade, through a heavy belt of timber, the road being apparently cut out of a hill of gravel, many of the stones were quite large, and nearly all smooth and water-worn. Deep ruts had been worn by the drags used upon the wheels of the gravel carts, and sometimes one side of your vehicle would be uncomfortably low, then the other, and one horse would be walking a foot or more below the other. As we used no brake, all we could do was to drive as carefully as possible.

Near the bottom was a little clearing, and a cabin of one room. We turned a bend, and lo! the face of the country was changed as if by magic. It was like the lifting of a curtain which had hidden the scene beyond. Miles upon miles of prairie or delta land, divided into fields by ditches, wide sloughs with driftwood lying on their banks, which, by the size of the logs and their water-worn appearance, must have been brought there during a flood.

Some fields in barley or oats, some in long grass, promising abundance of hay; some too wet and swampy for anything, the water lying dismally in every hole and hollow. Others again which had been under-drained, dad said, afforded

pasturage for hundreds of cattle and horses. I must say the cattle had a far finer and sleeker appearance than the horses, which were rather 'scrubby.' There were only a few sheep here and there, it being too damp for them.

At intervals were cheerful-looking, well-built farmhouses, with some truly colossal barns, and a few orchards of from ten to fifteen years' growth.

The road was rather narrow, but raised some two feet above the level, the softest places being corduroyed, and covered with plenty of gravel. Otherwise, one could imagine how the soft, black loamy land would let you down to unknown depths during the rainy season.

We found it a little difficult at times to pass the wide gravel wagons with their three horses abreast, which somehow put me in mind of the chariot scene in *Ben Hur*, for all they were so rough and rude, and their drivers bespattered with mud. But it was such easy driving after our experiences on the higher ground, and gave us so much time to look around us.

The higher road seemed built to avoid the heaviest timber, or the worst grades, and wound

in and out accordingly, but there was nothing to obstruct these lower ones, and they were made in straight lines. You kept going, and going, and going! Oh! the interminableness of them! Looking back, you seemed to have made no progress; looking ahead, the end appeared no nearer. Other roads branched at right angles, and stretched their weary lengths to scenes unknown to us, over the ever-lengthening flats.

'Can we get to Boundary Bay by this road?' finally inquired dad of a man on horseback, who was driving a band of beautiful cattle. We had seen him and his cattle in the distance like specks long before we could make out what they were.

'Oh, yes, keep right on till you come to a house with a red barn; it's the only painted barn hereabouts, so you can't miss it; turn up that road, and half-a-mile ahead you'll strike the sands.'

We thanked him and continued on our seemingly endless way. We found some relief now, for the land on either side had been cleared from what daddy called 'a scrub pine' and

small Douglas fir; a fringe of these had been left on either side, and formed a pretty avenue, hiding the long lines of ditches, which were not cheerful objects, filled as they were with surface drainage, and green with 'frog spawn.'

A big man on a small horse now passed us, and we made further inquiries of him, but he seemed to know little of the country, or else he resented the presence of strangers in his vicinity. He gave us no information, and we could see his poor little beast bobbing away ahead of us for a long, long distance.

The red barn at last! what a relief. A youth of whom we inquired corroborated the herder's information, adding, 'If you don't care to cross the sands, you'd better keep right on to Ladner's, but it's six miles further.'

We decided to take the near cut, for the smell caused by the hot sun on the black mud of the ditches had made me feel sick, and the horses were tired.

In about ten minutes we came to a dyke, where the road ended abruptly. Piles of drift-wood of all sizes, from immense logs to nicely-

WAGON ROAD AROUND BLUFF—RAILWAY TUNNEL THROUGH IT.

cut stove wood lengths, and broken shingles lay piled up by it. Wheel marks ran in every direction over the sands, passing over the dyke which had here been beaten almost even with the road.

Was this the much-vaunted Boundary Bay? this desolate-looking place! Daddy viewed it doubtfully.

'I don't think this is a very cheerful place to bring mammy to, do you, Bess? Sand! I should think there was sand enough! Why, it's three miles if it's a foot to where the water is! We'll follow these wheel marks and see.'

We started, but the horses sank knee deep in the soft sand at the edge, and I was too nervous and tired to stand the strain; so I begged of him to return to solid ground, tie the horses to the buggy wheels till they were cool enough to feed, and, in the meantime, I would boil my camp kettle, make tea, and we could have lunch.

This we did, and whilst Bob and Jerry ate their oats and rested, we set out on foot to explore the bay. We walked fully two miles

out, and seemed to be about half-way to the water that tossed and sparkled in the sunshine, tantalisingly beyond our reach, for we could see the tide was coming in, and thought it best to return.

Huge monsters of the forest, thrown up by flood tides, lay partially buried in the sands, their bare arms stretched towards heaven like lost spirits seeking a mercy which they could never obtain, doomed to bleach and whiten in the suns of summer, and shiver as the blasts of winter sent the white surf thundering and foaming around them.

Cockle shells were there as big and round as tea-cups, emptied by the flocks of crows which cawed and circled overhead; fish hawks making a 'bee line' for the incoming waters, and here and there solitary cranes standing silently in the lagoons left by the last ebb tide; beside immense clam shells, as big as ordinary saucers, made a scene of desolation, neither the brightly-shining sun nor the sparkling waters could dispel. In the distance could be discerned a belt of timber, with the bare bluff of Point Roberts as a background. Looking round, you

could see a farmhouse peeping out here and there over the dyke, or out from among the rather (for us) small timber. Several farm wagons seemed to be making aimless excursions over the sands, occasionally stopping and hoisting something up and taking it along—we were too far off to see what. We waited till one of them came our way. We had some idea of contrabrand goods hidden away, but the solution was very simple, the man had been collecting cedar logs of a suitable length to split for fence rails. This was the general wood yard for all the ranches for miles around; all they had to do was to come and select their sticks and take them away. There would be a fresh deposit at the next spring tides, when much of the land overflows, but the water leaves in ample time for cropping.

We turned homeward with the humiliated feeling one experiences after a defeat of any kind, and were at the ferry only just in time to catch the last boat. There we met a party of English friends who had been spending the summer in Westminster, and who had crossed the river with their horses for a scamper along

the Yale road, which is exceptionally good for some miles up.

'Well, well!' exclaimed Mrs Wentworth, as we brought our bespattered team on board. 'You've succeeded in finding plenty of mud. Where have you been?'

I told her all about it, and how disappointed we were after our hard day's driving.

'Oh, but it takes us new people to tell you "old inhabitants" where your good places are. My dear child, there's Boundary Bay *and* Boundary Bay, there's so much of it. You didn't find the right part. I was coming to see you last night to ask you to camp near us, but some people came in and prevented me. We took our horses down to Ladner's on the *Transfer*, got full instructions there, rode over and located a most delightful spot. It's on the American side, and we've been investing in stars and stripes galore, so as to have one floating over every tent, you know. We came across an old settler there, who told us the Indian name for the place (it's a United States military reserve now) is Chil-tin-um. It was given to the place in this way. Many hundreds of years ago,

so the legend says, a large party of Indians were crossing the Gulf of Georgia in their war canoes, a gale of wind blew them out of their regular course, and then a fog settled down upon them. Still they kept paddling on, till the chief's canoe, to his surprise, grated upon a sandy beach, whilst he had supposed himself out in deep water, making for some point on what is now Vancouver Island. One by one the other canoes found themselves in a like position, so the chief stepped ashore, and said "Chil-ti-um," because he *couldn't see it!*—that is the meaning of the word. They found such treasures of cockles and clams that they visited the place every year in hundreds, held their great "Clambake" carnivals, caught, smoked, and dried their supply of salmon for the winter, and then returned to their inland "illehees" or houses. The immense mounds of calcined shells, upon which maples, said to be from one thousand to fifteen hundred years old, are growing, give evidence of the numbers of Indians who used to come, and of the centuries ago when these revelries were held. The old man, who, by the way, has an Indian wife, told us that

during a storm one of the oldest of these trees was blown down last winter, and the skeleton of a man with arms and legs outstretched was exposed under its roots, which had been buried in the mound of calcined shells before the giant maple had been planted. He was of opinion that the man had been a chief, or someone of note, and the Indians, among other ceremonies, had planted the maple over him. They took no care of the bones, and of course exposure to the weather soon sent them back to their original dust.' She was talking away in her bright and animated fashion, when our ugly, doubled-ended ferry boat bumped into its floating wharf, and we almost fell into each other's arms.

Mr Wentworth led the horses on shore, and she sprang lightly into the saddle from his hand, exclaiming as she went, 'If Josie and you come in to-night, I'll tell you all about it.'

She had such a lithe young figure and youthful face, but her hair was almost white, and showed in marked contrast to her great, dark, nervous eyes, and her habit and riding hat of black. But Josie and I were greatly in love with her.

We went that night, and after hearing 'all about it,' and telling the little mother, we decided to be guided by Mrs Wentworth's choice, and set about our camping preparations.

CHAPTER II

WE laid in a great stock of everything needful for good living, and Josie and I made a special trip to Vancouver to secure an extra heavy duck tent of good make for mammy; we had to be very careful of her yet.

Daddy made fun of us and said we would be sure to make a mess of it; and Charley said, as we started, in his matter-of-fact way, 'Get a surveyor's tent of not less than six ounce filling.'

That gave us something to go upon, and putting the 'cubs' (as our college-bred boys had dubbed our darling little blue-eyed Maud and the petted 'Brown Bobby') upon the front seat of the phaeton, Josie gathered up the reins and we started merrily off. An hour and a half's easy driving found us at the end of our twelve miles' journey, and by the door of the

special sail and tent-maker who had been recommended to us.

We entered with a great air of 'knowing all about it' and accosted the tall, slim, meek-looking individual who rose up, spectacles on nose, from a sewing machine, amidst what looked to us like hopeless chaos. He had the appearance of having always chosen the shady side of the street and the draughty seat at the stove. He assumed the blandest of wintry smiles, and looked solemnly impressed when we talked of an engineer's tent, a surveyor's tent, a cook tent, and four, six, and eight ounce filling.

The truth was we had only been entrusted with twenty-five dollars to make our purchases, and by the time we had looked over his list we found we should need that for one we had made up our minds at once we must get for the little mother.

We made him pull down his tents and unroll them on the floor, and we went down on our knees and inspected seams and patches, the sail-maker going along beside us on his knees, showing and explaining the uses and good qualities of each.

The one we had chosen, he told us sadly, was not intended for sale; it was only made with so much care because he intended it for renting out, and he would not abate a dollar upon it; but he would throw in a pretty tepee in very dark and very light green stripes, which would make an admirable sleeping tent for the two boys, for five dollars, instead of seven and a half.

By sitting round and counting our money under his melancholy gaze, and pretending we would have nothing to do with the bargain, we got poles for both tent and tepee thrown in, he meantime interjecting the history of his life with grim satisfaction at its cheerlessness.

A sick wife, whose value he had never fully appreciated till she was gone; his daughter, who was still so inexperienced as to take without a protest any meat the butcher might sell her, and who fed him on chops and steaks instead of the 'made dishes' her mother had prepared for him.

'I suppose your daughter wrote out this list,' said Josie, who had been studying it over, and noticed the unformed hand in which it was written.

'Oh, no,' and the wintry smile took on a gleam of sunshine, 'my boy did that, my son; he's a good lad. Why, last winter he'd say, "Now, father, don't you go down to the shop till I've been gone half-an-hour, and I'll have it all warm and nice for you"; he did it all winter, too. He's always doing something to help me out. Why, when he looks in the books and sees so many bills that ain't paid, and me so short of money, he says, "Hadn't we aughter make out some bills, father. I'll take 'em round." He's a comfort, he is.'

'Indeed he is,' I said, 'and you'll have a good partner by-and-by.'

'Well,' interposed Josie, 'are we to have those poles or not?'

'Oh, I s'pose you'll have to get the poles too, miss,' he admitted reluctantly, 'for I can't let the ready cash go by.'

'Pack up tents and poles, and send them to the station at once!' she returned briskly. 'Make out your bill and we'll pay you.'

Aside to me she said, 'I have some money of my own here,' for I was wondering where the

other two and a half was to come from, or if the doleful sail-maker would give us credit for the amount.

We got some water for Bob, the horse we always drove, as he was 'kinder' than Jerry, and were soon on our way back.

All we needed now was a dining tent, which would have to be used as sitting tent too, when we had to remain inside if it rained. We decided to get for that sixty yards of cheap unbleached calico, and sew it into an immense sheet, making the seams short way of it, and only filling in one end.

In the evening dad strolled into our 'cubby hole,' as he calls the little place where we keep our sewing machine and sit to work. It is a wee place, to be sure, with just room enough for the machine a table for cutting out, which is fastened to the wall by hinges, and can be let down out of the way when not required; a shelf for our pieces, and some pegs for finished work; these, with a covered stand for cottons, tapes, needles, and so on, complete its furnishings, not forgetting, of course, two or three chairs.

Mammy and the little ones had retired for the night, and the boys were fidgeting about the dining-room, not exactly knowing what to do with themselves, for there was no room for them, unless they consented to be 'put on the shelf,' the suggestion of which from Josie they resented with becoming dignity. But there was always room for daddy, and he squeezed his chair into a corner, and stowed away his long legs under the folds of the tent upon which we were working.

After seriously watching us stitch, stitch, stitch away for a time, he took his pipe out of his mouth and asked, 'Do you girls remember Yan Yansen, who used to cook for my camp in the Rockies?'

'That's nearly fifteen years ago, just before we came to Westminster; you don't expect us to be ancient enough to go that far back, do you?'

Dad only laughed, and continued, 'You know he had the bluest of blue eyes, and one of them had a comical "cast" in it; you can't tell by looking at him if he's making fun of you or not.'

'Oh, yes, I remember; he had the towiest of tow-coloured heads, too.'

'That's the very one, Jo; I thought you were ancient enough for that. Well, he came into the office to-day to say "good-bye"; he says in his quaint Norwegian way, "Mine farder ees got too oldt to roon mid de blace, an' I yoost go an' roon mid him an' de blace. I sold mine ranch for ten tousan' dollar, an' I vamoos. I go back mid de monies."'

'Where was his ranch?'

'At Mud Bay; just across from where we are to pitch our tents, only another part of Boundary Bay in fact, on the British side. His wife and the boys ran the dairy and looked after the cattle, whilst he and his eldest son took a boat and a net and went fishing every summer. The net they used to make amongst them, a new one every winter, and that's no small piece of work, for it's some four hundred and fifty feet long, by eighty deep.

'The boat costs another seventy-five dollars, but they were actual settlers, and of course always obtained a license. Good years they

cleared seven or eight hundred dollars, poor years not more than two or three.

'They came out to Toronto some eighteen years ago, and he worked around a bit at anything he could do. Then the survey party for the C.P.R. were started and he went "cookee," or cook's assistant, for sixteen dollars a month. His party got as far as Winnipeg, and there they were paid off, with the option of returning at the company's expense, or receiving forty dollars extra.

'"Now, I vos standin' around in Vinnipegs," he said, "an' I see dere vos blenty vorks an' goot pay; so I takes de forty dollar, an' vone hoonded as vos coom to me for vages, an' I yoost keep five dollar mineself, an' I sends all de udder to mine vife in Toronto.

'"One day a man cooms ridin' oop to vere me an' some udders vos stan', an' he say, 'Any you mans vant to vork?'

'"We say, 'Yah, ve vant to vork.'

'"'How many man?'

'"'Oh, me, an' four or five Canagens.'

'"'You not von Canagen?'

'"'Oh, no! I von Norvegian, but I can vork!'

'"'Vat can you vork at?'

'"'I'm a cookee, ef yer vants von, or I can vork at anyting. Vere you vant us go? Yoost say.'

'"'Tu de Rocky Mountain, on de survey, an' you can go cookee at forty dollars a mont',' and he hires all de udders at good vages.

'"Vell, in dat camp a Vrenchman an' his vife vos do de cookin', an' dey get von hoonded dollars a mont'. I say to mineself, forty dollars is pootty goot, but von hoonded is more goot. I vatch dese beoples an' see how dey makes de bread, an' de pie, an' de cake, an' all dem tings.

'"So I chop de vood, an' make de fires, an' do all de chores, but I vatch dem pootty close all de same. Von day Vrenchy he get sick, he couldn't get oop, an' he say, 'Vot I doos now? all dem meals to cook, an' mine vife can't do it all.'

'"He lay in de bunk in de cook-house, an' I say, 'Oh, nebber you min', I von cook man, I know all de bishness!'

'"'You?' he say.

'"'Yah, me,' I says, 'dat mine drade.'

'"So he lay dere an' vatch me make de pie, an' de cake, an' de tings. I got me along goot dat day; but den de bread vos go an' roon out. I see dat voman set it all de times, but I vos not quite sure how it vos doon. I fotch de yeas', an' set dat spoonge, an' den I get me to bed. Sleep? Oh, no, I not sleep. Ying! I vos scare dat bread not rise; for den it bust me all my hoonded dollars a mont'. I got oop vonce, it not rise; twice, it rise leetle; dree dimes, it vos rise oop gran'. Dat vos two mid de clock, an' I not get me to bed any more. I knead dat bread an' I bake him; it vos goot, goot! an' mine fortune vos made.

'"Ven Vrenchy got vell, he all de times say, 'You make dat breads, Yan,' an' he let me help do de cookin'.

'"Von days I chops de voods, an' hear you say to Vrenchy, 'Mine cook ees gone, an' vot I do, ve moos eat?'

'"So he take an' show you mine bread, an' mine cake, an' mine tings I make for Vrenchy, an' he say, 'My man he make dese tings, he von goot cookes.' I vent back mit you; an' dere vos de meeschief to pay, for dat cookman vot you had

vos von Irish voman, an' de dirt an' de grease vos in everyting. De maggots yoost grawl in de cracks of dat tables. Den I took an axe an' chop dem tops away, an' I got me a vagon an' fotch clean new boords, an' I clean an' scroob an' I got me along alright. Me, mid two mans, ve put oot five hoonded meals ebery day, not countin' all the stragglers vot coom in to eat. I vork for you in dat camp seventeen mont's, an' ven I coom to Vestminster, I get dat nice leetle seventeen hunded dollars to draw mid the bank. Den I fotch mine vamilies, an' ve varm, an' feesh, and vorks at eberytings, an' now I got me here mit you to say 'Good-byes!'"'

The two boys had stood one on either side of the door during this recital, and when he had finished they clapped him and said, 'Well done, dad; it was worth while being a cook in the Rockies.'

'It was that; but come on, girls, and let's have some music and a game of cards. You've worked long enough for one day, surely.'

'We've finished our tent, anyway, and that's a comfort,' said Josie.

CHAPTER III

OUR preparations were now complete, so the goods were all hauled down to the Canadian Pacific Navigation Company's wharf, and sent to Ladner's Landing, daddy and the boys going with them so as to have everything set up and ready for Josie and me to put in the finishing touches a day or two later.

What a lovely beach! The sands were shining in the sun, the water sparkling beyond, for the tide was out. Nice clean sand, with only a margin of barnacles and stones; we could easily have a pathway cleared through these. Lots of driftwood piled above the shingle, most of it cedar, and cut in nice short stove lengths, for it came from the shingle mills over at Blaine, and had been washed up by the high winter tides. There were none of those ugly monsters lying half-buried in the sand that I disliked so

much. The beach here rises some ten feet above the level of the tidal sands; it is still sand, but covered with a growth of sour grass and other weeds which hold it together somewhat, and runs back from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet on a level, till it is met by a lovely forest of pine, cedar and cotton wood, but no maples just at our encampment.

The bay stretched something in the shape of a horseshoe, and mostly encircled by forest, except where clearings had been made for farming or fruit-growing purposes.

Right opposite to us was Blaine, its white buildings visible across the twelve miles of sand and water.

Beyond, in the blue distance, stretched the Cascades upon the coast, and behind them the Rockies, wave upon wave, peak upon peak, their snow-capped turrets and dark caverns looking like a raging sea which had been suddenly petrified during a storm. The hoary head of Mount Baker rose in majestic silence, dominating all; and near him (as it seemed to us), the Four Sisters, with the many jagged peaks and snow-filled crevices of the Olympics.

That first night the setting sun sent a fiery red glow over crevice and peak, which, as Josie and I gazed in awestricken silence upon it, changed to rose and deep yellow, fading to a purple veil of loveliness, whilst from the departing monarch of the day the rosy rays shot up once more, like an immense halo around the head of a saint.

Next day father returned to town, and the day after he came back, bringing the little mother and the bairnies. How tired, and worn, and white she looked! We hurried to give her a refreshing cup of her favourite tea, a kind we buy from the Chinese, done up in little pasteboard bottles covered with lead paper. It is very pale, almost straw-coloured when made, but very nice. When I bought the first bottle upon the recommendation of the Chinese merchant, he volunteered the information as to the right way to make it. In his insinuating Asiatic tone and manner, he said, holding the bottle or package of tea in his hand, and emphasising what he said by gently tapping it with his long, claw-like nails —a sign, by the way, that they are above the necessity of labour,—'You take fresh cold water,

make it just come to boil; then you take teapot, put little hot water to make it warm, put in one small spoon tea for one per*son*' (a great emphasis on the second syllable, and all the prepositions spoken with slow difficulty), 'let it stand two minutes, then pour it out. You like cream and sugar, Chinaman think that spoil it.' Then he handed me the package. I thanked him and followed his directions, and a delicious cup of tea was the result.

Mammy drank her tea, and then lay down to rest in the curtained-off end of the tent we had bargained for, and where we had made a sanctum for her. It was such a pretty little nook, for all the washstand was a water-washed log of wood about two and a half feet high and some three feet through, round which we had tacked a piece of bright cheap muslin. The toilet table was another of these logs treated in the same way. But, what do you think? we had forgotten to put in a looking-glass! Daddy laughed heartily at the bare idea of two girls, each twenty-two years of age, who *could* commit such an appalling blunder.

Charley had got his first rifle and was off to

shoot grouse for mammy, as there are no game laws on this side of the line. Frank had the boat and was out with a trolling-hook. He didn't know what he intended to catch—anything that would bite, I suppose; but we know better than to trust to the rifle of one, or the fish-hook of the other, and dinner was merrily under way in the cook tent, with our old and tried Chinaman Ke Tan in charge, who, in white shirt-like coat, apron, and high, white, cork-soled shoes, was as silently and solemnly engaged as if he had been in the convenient kitchen at home.

'Maudie, here's your new tin pail and your sand shovel, and here's yours, Bobby. I'll take off your shoes and stockings and you can go and dig in the sands, can't you? while we're all busy.'

They came joyfully with me, and I carried each over the barnacled stones at the edge, and left them digging away in great glee.

There were so many things to be arranged and settled to make our encampment cosy and nice that for a time we thought no more of the children.

'Where are the children, Bessie?' came from a sleepy voice behind the curtain. 'I don't hear them.'

'I'll go and see, mother,' I returned, and set out at once, expecting to find them where I had left them. Instead of which the tide was coming in, was already in all the deeper places on the sands, and their two little white bonnets and pinafores were away in the distance, apparently still running from the shore as fast as they could go.

I didn't wait an instant, but dashing over the sands and through the first lagoon, which already reached my ankles, I gathered up my skirts and ran in breathless haste. The next lagoon was nearly to my knees, and I seemed as far off as ever from the children.

I looked round in helpless terror for Frank and the boat, too much alarmed to scream; but he was off in another direction, more inland. I turned to the shore in my despair, and saw a buggy and a stout pair of horses making towards me at full gallop. I waited; in it was seated a broad-set, sturdy man, his blue eyes looking earnest and troubled, and beside him a baby girl

of three or so, also with the same earnest blue eyes, but they were untroubled, whilst a mass of dark hair was being blown across her face, for the wind seemed to freshen as the tide came in. I took all this in at a glance—in acute suffering ones wits seem to grow keen; and he appeared to have taken in the situation in which I was placed, for he handed out to me the baby, saying, 'Take care of Dolly, and I'll fetch those children if possible!'

It was no time for ceremony; I clutched the child, and he gave whip and lines to the horses, which splashed the spray even now above the footboard.

I turned in an agony to see if my darlings had realised their danger, and could just see the two little forms clinging to each other on the only piece of sand left above the incoming waves, which were rolling quickly in, flecked everywhere with white caps.

'Tome on s'ore, papa's horses tan svim,' said the baby voice of the little girl I held. Recovering myself, I waded ashore, the water now reaching my knees even at the edge of the sands.

As I stood there straining my eyes over the tossing waters, someone came quietly to my side. I was afraid to look lest it should be the little mother, and my thoughtlessness might be answerable for the lives of three, even four, for by the stranger's look I felt assured he would bring them with him or perish in the attempt.

A sigh of relief from my companion recalled me, and mother, who was looking through a field-glass, said, 'Thank God! just in time; he's picked them up.'

Now came the chase back! Could he make it? Our hearts seemed to stand still as we saw the horses were already swimming, and still so far from shore. But they struggled nobly, and their driver knew the sands better than we did. He made for the nearest shore, some distance below us. We could see they plunged less, and then they were galloping only hock deep.

I looked at mother; there was no sign of fainting, only her eyes were strained upon the incoming horses. They had reached the stones of the beach, and were coming more slowly to

NORTHERN INDIANS IN THEIR SHELL-EMBROIDERED BLANKETS.

where we stood. I had held Dolly closely to me; the little head drooped upon my shoulder and the child slept.

Papa's horses could swim, and with papa behind them this small creature's confidence allowed her to sleep peacefully.

They had reached us now, man and children, horses and buggy, all drenched. The stranger leaped to the ground to lift out the little ones; and mother, seizing his hand, cried, 'Thank God!' then kneeling down, kissed the hand she held.

Quickly raising her up, he said, 'It's nothing, madam; I assure you I ran very little risk; and luckily I was just in time to catch these young explorers before they were taken off their feet.'

Mother wrapped the sleeping Dolly in the shawl she took from her own shoulders, and taking her tenderly from me, he got in and drove his exhausted horses slowly away, saying he must go and attend to them, but would call again by-and-by, if we would allow him, and see how the children were getting on.

How we hugged those two youngsters and

cried over them as we changed their dripping garments; and how thankful we felt none knew but ourselves; and really it seemed to rouse the little mother, and do her more good than anything yet.

CHAPTER IV

MR. AND MRS WENTWORTH, with their camping outfit, arrived to-day, and all hands were busily employed in helping them to 'fix up.'

'What an extremely flexible expression that is,' said Mr Wentworth; 'you "fix up" the tent, you "fix up" your hair, you "fix up" the house, you "fix up" the horse, you "fix up" an old dress, you "fix up" dinner, you "fix up" matches matrimonial; if you break a cook stove, a wagon, a hair brush, or a brooch, you send them to someone to "fix up," and I have a very strong suspicion, that for dinner-parties, balls, operas, and the like, you "fix up" yourselves.' He got near the entrance to the tent before he reached the end of his tirade, for Mrs Wentworth had her hands full of tin cake plates and baking dishes she was unpacking, and they went rattling after him as he fled in haste.

The tinkle of a little bell announced dinner in our camp. Ke Tan was quite proud of his dining tent, although when he first arrived on a wagon load of his cooking utensils and stores for the pantry, and the tents came into view, he said to the boys in a tone of disgust, 'What for! Good house, garden, town; come here! Allee same Siwash.

'Oh! come catch 'em salt water, Ke Tan.'

'Plenty salt water Bancouber, Bitoria—good hotel.'

'Well this is Chil-tin-um, it's not Vancouver nor Victoria.' He shrugged his shoulders, astonished at our lack of good taste, and went to work to make the best of existing circumstances.

The immense sheet we had run together was stretched over a frame of poles which dad and the boys cut out of the woods; they weighted it on each side with heavier poles upon which sand was packed; one end was filled with a smaller sheet, and at the other two very large old curtains of cretonne, lined with Turkey red, were hung, and looped gracefully back, giving quite an air of comfort; a coal oil lamp with an amber shade was swung from the ridge pole,

and Josie's guitar and Charley's violin, with a pile of music, lay upon a side-table.

Ke Tan was contemplating with much satisfaction a sideboard he had 'fixed up' from a packing case, opening and shutting the doors that we might see and admire his neatly-constructed shelves below, whilst above a curtained box held glass, china, and a plain set of dishes for dinner service.

A cosy rocker for mother, and several plain wooden chairs completed the furniture; for, be it known, the long dining-table had its legs firmly set in the soil, its top being plained boards nailed on, and the seats on either side were of the same make and material, only covered with a piece of striped carpet.

Mrs Le Ford, this soup is delicious, something like oyster, only much richer. These little rings in it puzzle me.'

Mr Wentworth had travelled in many countries, and thought he had tasted everything under the sun. Mrs Wentworth looked inquiringly at me, and mother laughed and said, 'Tell them what it is and how you came by it.'

'We were busy "fixing up" the tents yesterday, when a hideous-looking old squaw came along with a basket on her back, slung from her forehead by a band, you know, as they always carry things, and I asked her what she had there. She turned partly round, smiling almost from ear to ear and showing all her toothless gums, intimated I was to go and see. I lifted up the ferns that covered the basket, and saw the most immense cockles! the shells being fully five inches in circumference.

'"Hyas clush!" (very good), she said in the slow, soft way they have. But the cockles looked too big, I thought, and hesitated to buy them. Ke Tan came out from his cook tent and looked at them too.

'"Heap good! soup, chowder!" he remarked in his laconic way. So I bought them; this is the soup, we are to have the chowder for lunch to-morrow.'

'I wonder how he made it. I should like Susan to make some,' said Mrs Wentworth.

'Susan, indeed! she never makes anything twice alike; you'll never educate her as to quantities.' Mrs Wentworth's antipathy to

Oriental help was a standing joke with her husband. She kept a cook and housemaid, and had to put out her washing, and use baker's bread, whereas Ke Tan did everything but the dusting and tidying for our large family.

'These monster cockles were laid in fresh water over night in order to remove the sand This morning they were opened and slowly stewed six or seven hours; then the soup is made exactly as you make oyster—the long stewing accounts for its richness.'

Ke Tan was bringing in a juicy roast of beef, and mammy remarked quietly, 'Our hunters went out, but as they brought in neither fish nor game, we must be content with plain roast beef.'

'It's a fine cut, too, mammy, and just to my mind,' remarked daddy, cheerfully, as he carved away.

The boys looked somewhat sheepish, and I went on to tell about the squaw and the cockles. 'After I had concluded my bargain for the cockles, the Indian woman asked for "chuck," water, you know, Mrs Wentworth. She drank deeply and handed me back the tin dipper,

after throwing out what few drops remained, and I stood looking after her as she went toilfully over the loose sand, when I heard a small voice come from "somewhere," "Say! Bethie, where's de Inan?"

'"Gone! Where are you, Bobby?" I looked round the sleeping tent, whence the voice appeared to come. There, from under the skirt of your grand dressing-table, mammy, came his white, tousled head. "I sink dat's a bad Inan; don't you, Beth?" he remarked solemnly, as he emerged; and then added after a thoughtful pause, "Hers got no teefs, but her mouf's orful big—her migh'n't bite mine head off."'

Everyone laughed, and the sleepy brown eyes of the rogue looked wonderingly at us. 'Ise so seepy, Dosie,' he said presently, and Josie took the small couple off to bed; but they wouldn't be left in their novel surroundings, and Josie's sweet voice formed a pleasant accompaniment to our cheerful dinner as she sung them to rest.

'What do you say to taking our coffee round the camp fire, mammy? You must light it, you know, it's all ready. Then I'll wheel your chair

out under the awning,' said dad, in his happy way.

It was soon blazing cheerfully, and we were seated in its pleasant glow, when a man came upon horseback, holding a child in one arm. His foot was put through the stirrup strap, and the little one comfortably seated on his knee. We recognised at once our hero of the day before. He stopped in the light of the fire, and mother went swiftly forward to welcome him, inviting him to come and take coffee with us.

He laughingly dismounted, and Dolly, looking round, made straight for me, and climbed into my lap.

'Here's a chair, papa, tome an' sit here, dis is my mamma,' and she settled herself for a cosy sleep. I looked at him and smiled, and I thought he seemed slightly confused, but the reason never occurred to me.

'Mrs Le Ford,' said mother, introducing herself, and waited for him to give his name.

'Tom, old boy! can it be you? Where have you been this last four years? You disappeared, and we could find no trace of you!' exclaimed

Mr Wentworth, going up to him and seizing both his hands.

'I travelled for a while, then I bought "The Flats"—and—here I am. But I'm heartily glad to see you, Wentworth. Here's Dora, too,' and he shook hands with Mrs Wentworth like an old friend. 'Won't you present me to your friends?'

With her ready tact, she quickly perceived he didn't wish to be questioned. 'Let me present my cousin, Tom Templeton! My very dear friends, Mr and Mrs Le Ford, the Misses Le Ford, Charley and Frank, and some baby Le Fords. I believe you'll have to wait until to-morrow before you can see, as they have just retired.'

'Oh, no!' said mother, 'it was to the baby Le Fords Mr Templeton introduced himself just in time to save them from drowning,' and she cast a grateful look towards him.

'Then my own cousin is the hero of the hour with all this encampment, for it has been hard to get a word about anything else in edgeways than the narrow escape of their darlings, mingled with high praises of you and your horses, and

the delightful confidence displayed in you and them by wee Dolly.'

Dropping her bantering tone, and looking very earnestly at him, 'Who is Dolly?'

'She's my baby daughter.'

Mrs Wentworth came over to kiss her. Looking up at him again, she asked, 'Did you call her Dolly from—from—' she didn't finish the sentence, but looked inquiringly at him.

'Yes,' he returned gravely, 'from your Dolly.'

Then the eyes of Mr Wentworth and Mr Templeton met, and Mr Wentworth said, 'Come, Tom, and help me just pile these goods in the tent in case of rain.'

'Let Dolly sleep with Maudie,' suggested mother as the two men were leaving.

'Will you sleep with Maudie?' asked Mr Templeton, taking the child in his arms and kissing her. 'Papa will come and fetch you in the morning.'

She gave a sleepy assent, and Mrs Wentworth and I took her to the tent and disposed of her comfortably for the night; mother followed us in. Charley had taken up his violin and was

playing some sweet, plaintive music, whilst Mrs Wentworth told us of her long-lost cousin.

'We were brought up together like brother and sister, as my parents had both died in India. I came home to my uncle, and Tom was just such a tot as Dolly is now. I was eight years older. When he was nineteen and I twenty-seven, Mr Wentworth came and took up a small estate near us that had been left him by a relative; and, naturally, we soon became acquainted, and, it seemed to me, just as naturally fell in love with each other.

'Tom was away at Cambridge when the engagement was announced, and he wrote in a most aggrieved tone of the injustice done him, as he had supposed his father's wish, which was that he and I should marry, would be carried out.

'I felt as if I was doing wrong myself, and when, after our marriage, my own little Dolly died' (her voice quivered, and mother leant over and kissed her), 'it seemed like a judgment upon me. What with fretting for my darling, and feeling that I had treated my kind old uncle badly, I came to the verge of insanity. Added

to this, was the fact that Tom, after performing some wild escapades, disappeared.

'Travel far and wide was prescribed for me as my only chance. This was four years ago; now we've found him here, his wild spirit held in check by this wee mite. I wonder where her mother is?'

'Where's my mamma?' came from the sleepy Dolly. Mrs Wentworth, hungry with mother-love, went up and bent over her.

'Not you,' she said decidedly, and looking at me, 'You!' I went and sat beside her, stroking her hair and face till she slept. Then I followed the elder ladies out.

Mr Wentworth and Mr Templeton soon afterwards returned, and Josie brought out her guitar and sang some of daddy's favourites whilst he and mammie and Mr and Mrs Wentworth played a rubber at whist, looking bright and pleasant sitting inside the dining tent, under the amber rays shed from the lamp above. I was knitting socks for daddy, whilst the two boys and Mr Templeton discussed the possibilities of the country and its probable future. But they soon came down from their lofty

flights to horses, fishing and shooting, and a party for the latter sport was arranged for the morrow.

'Why, mammy, you're holding out splendidly,' daddy was saying to her. 'We shall have you "bossing" us all in good shape soon.'

We were all round the camp fire now, and Josie struck 'Auld Lang Syne,' which we all sang to her accompaniment, assisted by the quiet lap of the waves upon the pebbly beach and the sighing of the wind in the trees behind us.

It was eleven o'clock when we said 'Good-night' and retired to our several tents.

'Girls! girls!' came nervously from behind mother's curtain in the night, 'what is that? Are you awake?'

'Only rain, mother. Doesn't it seem funny to be so near it? It feels like sleeping under a big umbrella.'

'Do you think it can come in?'

'Oh, no,' we assured her. But we had to acknowledge it had a weird effect upon us.

'Well, see that the children are covered up,' she returned, and the unusual patter soon lulled us off to sleep again.

CHAPTER V

'COCKLING! Cockling! Girls, come on! we're all going! Come on, mammy, too. Daddy says I'm to carry your camp-chair for you!' and Frank rushed in like a small cyclone to the sleeping tent as Josie and I were arranging it. He had neither shoes nor stockings on, and was rushing out again pell-mell, when Josie and I quickly stretched a blank t across in front of him, and into it he tumbleu, then we rolled him over and over on the ground.

'Pretty well done, girls!' said daddy, looking in and laughing, 'but don't smother him, we want him to carry the sack for cockles, don't you see; you can have it out with him when we get back.'

Frank emerged, looking somewhat tumbled and crestfallen.

'We had to capture him, you know, dad, to try and find out what he came to say. It was something about cockles, and girls, and mammey, and a camp-chair.'

'The water's a long way out this morning; so come on, everybody, we'll get our own cockles.'

'I'll stay and mind the camp and the children; besides, Mr Templeton might come while we are away.'

'Oh, he's here, and going too; he says there's lots of time before the tide turns. We'll carry your camp-chair, mammy, and when you're tired you can sit down and look on.'

'Isn't it dreadfully hot, though?'

'Up here it is just like an oven in these tents, but there's a fine breeze on the sands.'

Everything was wrapped in a pinkish, purple haze, that showed the mountains in the distance as through a veil, only Mount Baker's snowy crown stood out white and clear above it.

'A sure sign of fine weather that, isn't it?' I asked of Mr Templeton, pointing it out to him.

'I'm sure I don't know,' he said, looking quizzically at me. 'I'm no weather judge in this part of the world.'

'The young ladies at the Point told me, whenever they wanted fine weather for an excursion, the first thing on rising in the morning they looked for Mount Baker's head. If it rose white and glistening above the clouds, no matter how dark it was below, they were sure of a fine day; but if clouds wrapped his crown about, they knew it would rain before night.'

'You see,' he returned, 'everything depends upon the weather. When the rain pours down in that determined, never-to-stop way it has here, it is just as well to make up one's mind to be amused or busy at home.'

'Don't you go out in the rain, then? Why we never stay home for that. Josie is a school-teacher, and rides three miles out of town every day, no matter what the weather may be.'

'Oh, yes, I know you natives ignore the rain, and make out it's perfectly delightful to be paddling through it, as if you were ducks. I wonder Nature doesn't come to the rescue and provide you all with webbed feet!'

'Webbed feet! indeed,' laughed daddy, who now came up with the little mother; 'these creatures will all go home with webbed hands as well if we don't watch them; they spend every spare minute in the water. Look at that head, will you?' and he raised a mass of my hair, which was hanging down my back. 'I don't think it's ever been dry since we came.'

Now, Josie and I were strikingly alike in form and feature, but she had the fair, fluffy hair and blue eyes, which mother had inherited from her German forbears, whilst mine were like daddy's, decidedly dark.

Don't they say that sea water spoils a lady's hair?' asked Mr Templeton, looking at the heavy mass as it fell from dad's hand.

'Oh, we've always wetted ours whenever we went in for a swim,' I said carelessly.

'Then it must be decidedly a beautifier,' he returned, looking admiringly from my head to Josie's.

'I suppose it comes from mother's German ancestry. I've always noticed what heavy heads of hair the Ger—' began Josie, with an air of 'knowing all about it'—when—

AN OLD SQUAW.

Daddy said solemnly, taking off his hat, and displaying his big bald crown, 'Josie, Josie, don't forget the admixture of Anglo-Canadian ancestry you derive from your pater, and give those great nations credit for some of your flowing locks.'

We all laughed at this, and some of us started at a run down to the sands. There were some three miles of it, clean and bright, lying before us.

The little ones stopped after they had passed the twenty feet or so of loose stones and had their shoes and stockings taken off, so as to run through all the little lagoons of water and splash everyone within reach.

'Why don't you girls take your shoes and stockings off to-day? You did yesterday,' shouted Frank.

We looked at each other, and Josie called back, 'Because we don't want to, young man.'

'Oh! I know it's because Mr Templeton's here, and you don't want him to see your—' corns, he was going to say, but Josie ran after him with hands full of sand, and daddy took

Maudie's tin pail and chased through the shallow water after him, showering him with spray.

Charley was marching soberly along with Mr Templeton, carrying a shovel and sack for the cockles.

'Where shall we go for cockles, I wonder?' said someone.

'Don't you see those Indian women in the distance? I expect, if we make our way over to them, we shall get a practical lesson,' suggested dad.

Over we went accordingly, and after seating the little mother comfortably in her camp-chair upon a high and dry piece of sand, we proceeded to erect over her a Japanese umbrella of brilliant hues, the long handle of which we drove into the sand, leaving her cool and free to enjoy the gentle breeze blowing up from the Gulf of Georgia. This had been Frank's idea, and he had himself been to the Chinese store where such things are kept, made the bargain, and paid for it from his own savings; now he danced in glee round it and his mother, shouting and gesticulating like a wild thing. A

shower of sand aimed squarely between his shoulders brought him down to things terrestrial, and he scampered off to interview the busy squaws.

The two younger ones took up their already filled baskets, put the strap across their foreheads, and trudged off, with rather uncomplimentary remarks regarding our inquisitiveness, it seemed, for though we couldn't catch what they said, their gestures were significant. The third, an old squaw, still went silently on with her hunt for cockles. We all waded up to her, ankle deep in water, and looked on, whilst Frank plied her with questions in Chinook, English, and a few words of Indian jargon which he happened to know. She made no reply for a time.

'Try her in French,' suggested Charley.

This time she nodded her head and smiled. So he tried Chinook again.

'Halo comtux Chinook!' she said sadly.

'How do you know where the cockles are?' he queried again in English.

'Halo comtux Englees!' she returned in the same sad tone.

'Try her in Greek, Charley,' said he, disgusted; 'she'll say,' and he mimicked her tone and manner, 'Halo comtux Gleek!' and he flung himself off with a laugh and a splash to look for better sport.

All this time she kept steadily treading around in the water, apparently feeling with her naked toes, for whenever she stooped she always came up again with a cockle in her thin brown hand. We were all watching her, and didn't notice that Mr and Mrs Wentworth had joined us.

Mrs Wentworth addressed her in a soft language I didn't know; and the squaw smiled from ear to ear as she answered, but still her voice had that gentle, sad intonation. She had filled her basket, and slinging it from across her forehead as the younger ones had done, she went slowly and somewhat painfully after them.

'Poor thing! no rest from labour in old age; although I daresay, according to actual years, she ought to be in her prime. They break down so early these Indian women, their lives are so hard, and they're so much exposed to all weathers, then, too—'

'Why, dad, aren't you getting sentimental?' laughed Josie.

'Only common, everyday facts, my girl,' and turning to Mr Templeton, he said, 'Why, man, I've seen them in the fishing season, when money was plentiful, going round with velvet dresses, and great thick blanket shawls, of brilliant colours, over their heads; then, in the winter, shivering around in somebody's old cotton wrapper. Perhaps a tilliceun (friend) had gone off with their clothes, or their good (?) man had gambled them away; but they seldom complain. Come day, go day, with them, they're like a lot of improvident children.'

'But these women,' I said, 'especially the younger ones, were sensibly dressed, in plain, clean cotton, and the great bright plaid of it seemed to suit them; although the make of it, of course, was atrocious.'

'A straight piece for the waist, holes for the sleeves, which, by the way,' remarked Josie, 'did you notice, were very full, and gathered in at the shoulder and wrist?'

'They're half-breed Spanish girls, and married to Spanish fishermen, as the elder squaw was,

she told me, but he was drowned, and she lives with them. They have been instructed in sewing by the sisters of one of the missions, and in religion by the missionary priests. Didn't you notice their rosary?'

We had; and then we stood discussing the work of civilisation among the Indians, and the work of the different churches.

'Well,' said daddy, 'there were martyrs of old, and there always will be to the end in some way or other; but the lingering martyrdom of educated men, and sometimes women, who bury themselves alive, giving up their entire existence to the improvement of these people, and actually living amongst them, as I know Christian priests and clergy of all denominations do, are suffering more tediously, and to better advantage in many respects, than those who went to a sudden, if painful, death.'

'You must have had a bad time of it, then, dad,' said the serious and usually silent Charley, 'when you were on those long survey trips of yours, for you hadn't the consolation of a high purpose.'

'Don't you think so, my lad?' he returned,

with more seriousness than we generally saw in him. 'I think I had a very high purpose in view, as I was working for the comfortable support of my wife and family; and, for an ordinary mortal, that was enough.'

'I beg your pardon, sir, so it was,' and he raised his hat to father and mother both.

'Well, well,' said Josie, coming up flushed and glowing from a chase after Frank, 'you look like a solemn assembly, judge, jury, witnesses and all, ready to sentence some poor creature to the gallows or penitentiary. All you need is just what is coming to us, over the sands, in that most uncomfortable-looking wood wagon.'

We turned and looked in the direction from whence came the rattle of harness and a certain low rumble from the loosened boards. Hoofs and wheels, of course, were silent as they came on over the sands.

There was one of our young and popular clergymen from Westminster accompanied by a newly-arrived Chinese missionary, whose zeal was great, and his hopes of converting the

Celestials high, for he had opened a night school and had more pupils than he knew what to do with. They would sit patiently while he discoursed of Christianity in broken English to suit their understanding, for he knew nothing of their language, till their patience could bear no more, when some individual, bolder than the rest, would rise and say respectfully, 'Vely good talkee, heap likee; now lead (read) em book ay?' Then they would work industriously as long as he would keep them.

The driver of the wagon stopped by mammy's brilliant umbrella, and Mr Wilbert alighted with a bound that sent the clerical coat-tails flying in anything but a solemn fashion, whilst his wide-awake hat alighted ahead of him at her feet.

'Mr Wilbert,' she said, rising, with a pleased air, 'I'm so glad to see you; I hope you are going to remain till Saturday.'

'Can you put up with me till then? Here's Mr Strange, too,' he continued, as the serious little missionary came up, and in his impressive manner greeted her.

'If you will put up with the small tepee, just large enough to accommodate two cots, and

where you,' turning to Mr Wilbert, 'can only stand upright near the centre pole, I can. I don't know that you need go on Saturday, Mr Strange. I know Mr Wilbert must be in Westminster for Sunday.'

'Thank you very much, Mrs Le Ford; I'm afraid I must return with the driver and take the afternoon boat from Ladner's, for my Chinese class will be sure to assemble to-night and I must not fail them for any pleasure of my own.'

'There's no afternoon boat to-day, Mr Strange; the *Transfer* only goes back to-morrow and takes the Victoria passengers on to Westminster to save the long delay they would experience while the through boat delivers freight at the many canneries along the Fraser,' said Charley, in his precise way.

The driver confirmed this statement, and Mr Strange appealed to Mr Wilbert, who was swinging the three little ones in the air, by turn, splashing water on Frank, telling father the latest politics and informing us girls that Lottie Smith was to be married to her rich but somewhat aged lover next week, and what a glorious

affair it was to be, and how they were to live happy ever after amidst parties and balls, and operas and receptions, and 'At Homes,' not omitting handsome donations to the church.

'Don't you think she's a wise girl, Josie? Won't you go and do likewise?' he asked teasingly. She flushed scarlet, for we all knew she had had just such an offer of marriage only a few weeks before.

'No, I won't! If I can't marry a man out of pure regard, let him be rich or poor, I shall remain a "lady bachelor" and earn my own living. I believe in working women,' she returned, with her head high in the air and her bright blue eyes sparkling.

Frank broke in upon our heroics with 'Come, Mr Wilbert, let's get some cockles; the tide'll be coming in and we sha'n't get any.'

Mr Wilbert looked quizzically at Frank's naked feet and then at his own clerical extremities.

'Go on, girls, and sit down by mammy,' urged Frank, 'and then no one'll mind taking off their shoes and stockings. I haven't got half-a-dozen cockles yet.'

Dad's shoes and stockings were already off, and he was tramping away in the sand as the squaw had done. 'Ah! Eureka!' he shouted as he stooped and picked up an enormous cockle. 'The squaw was feeling for them with her toes, that's how she came to pick one up every time she stooped; they're from two to four inches under the sand!'

Frank dashed into the water and we went and sat down by mammy's chair. Mrs Wentworth was knitting some pretty lace and talking in that bright, entertaining way she had; we sat idly and listened, scooping holes and building little mounds with our hands.

The three children were wet to their necks trying to follow the men, who had all gone in for cockles, whilst the clerical coat-tails of Mr Wilbert were being hung on to by one or more of the youngsters, and were getting decidedly damp.

'Here, Maudie,' said Mr Wilbert, taking off his coat, 'go and lay this down by mammy's chair; there's a good little woman.'

She started off in high glee at being big enough to be so employed, but Master Bobby

felt himself left out and started in pursuit of his sister. The consequence of which was that the children and coat had to be fished out of the lagoon in a dripping condition.

Meantime Frank, finding the cockle bag grow heavier and heavier without any great effort on his own part, made excursions where the water was deeper, and waded through the crab grass. All at once he gave a most unearthly yell and went down on his back, kicking up his heels in the air. This showed us the cause of the trouble, for fastened by its big claw upon one of his toes was a crab some six or seven inches in length. Up he came again, sputtering and gasping. Charley was at the rescue before anyone else seemed to realise what had happened. He carried the cockle bag in one hand and a stick in the other; dropping Frank's foot into the bag he prised off the crab with his stick, thus releasing Frank and securing a fine crab.

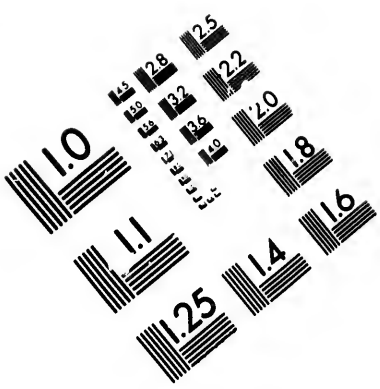
Poor Frank was pale with fright, he couldn't think what had got hold of him. Mother's soft handkerchief was tied round his foot and he soon forgot all in fresh exploits of mischief.

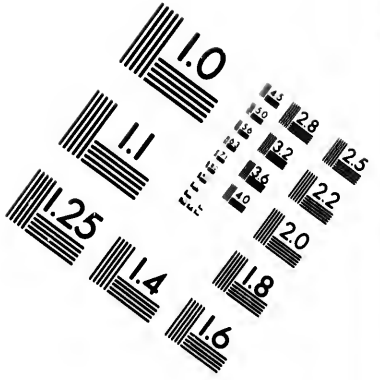
Mr Strange was still consulting with the

driver and mother as to what he was to do when Mr Wilbert called to the driver, 'Sam, take these ladies and children up to camp and feed your horses. You can't come to a decision on an empty stomach, Strange, and the tide has turned some time ago.'

So we all got into the wood wagon, stowed our dripping children, the coat and the cockles 'somewhere,' and went lumbering up to camp.

'How in the world did those two men stand this over that broken piece of corduroy road from Ladner's?' said Mrs Wentworth as well as she could speak for the jolting we were getting; for the driver went off with a crack of the whip and a flourish of his reins, starting the horses at full gallop.





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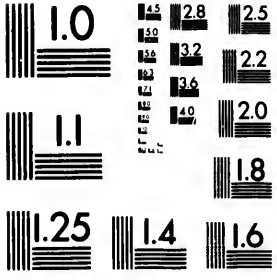

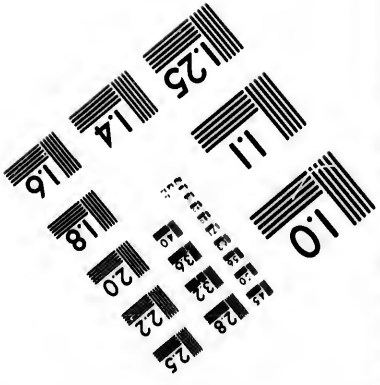


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CHAPTER VI

HALF-AN-HOUR later, when the men all strolled into the dining tent, someone said, 'Where's Mr Wilbert?' A pair of broad grey shoulders turned round, and Mr Wilbert's voice said, 'Why, here he is!'

'Well, well,' said Charley, quietly, 'there *is* something in dress after all. Really, you look like a sporting character in that Norfolk suit of Mr Wentworth's.'

'Didn't I always tell you,' said Josie, saucily, 'that Mr Wilbert had such expressive coat-tails; now you see what I meant. They sway solemnly when he walks up the church; they flutter merrily when he's going to tie some poor creature up in "the bonds of matrimony"; they have a protective sway when he's going to a

christening; an important flap when he's been distributing the crumbs which fall from a church "At Home"; but when he gets gracefully down from a carriage you all know they stand out in a circle around him and his hat alights first.'

'Josie, Josie,' said mother, 'I'm ashamed of you; your tongue runs away with you.'

'Oh! that's nothing,' he returned with mock humility, 'to what I often have to endure. Don't lessen my self-mortification in the least, my dear madam. I'm delighted that such an observant young lady should correct my faults and show me my absurdities.'

It was a merry lunch; fun and laughter was the order of the day till Mr Strange began to worry again about getting back to Westminster.

'You could ride, you know,' suggested Charley, who thought nothing of a twenty-mile ride.

'Me! On horseback!' he said with a horrified air, and his light grey eyes grew large as he looked round at us all through his glasses. 'I should make a worse exhibition of myself than John Gilpin did, and I suspect the road would nowhere be barred by turnpike gates, but the brute would carry me straight into that beauti-

ful Fraser of yours. I really don't know how you ladies ride these half-broken, half-Indian ponies!'

'Nothing like use,' laughed Mrs Wentworth. 'I think it the most delightful riding in the world, notwithstanding I have followed the Kennelworth Pack that "cast off" from Bosworth Hall on the first of November, commencing the delightful Leicestershire "meets." All the tricks and antics of these animals are so amusing.'

'Especially,' said her husband, slyly, 'when they double themselves neck and heels for a glorious bucking escapade, or back down hill.'

'Oh! I don't bargain for that. I must say when they start to "buck" I leave them to it, and let them amuse themselves by splitting the girths of my saddle and flinging it off instead of me; and as to backing down hill, that's the one thing which completely unnerves me. Don't you remember, Claude, that time we rode to Vancouver by the new road, coming back by the old Hastings road?'

Mr Wentworth said he did. Turning to us she continued: 'You know, after passing the

Hastings Hotel you make an abrupt turn and go up a rather steep hill?'

We all knew the place well, it made such a good ride of twenty-five miles in a circuit, and we often took it.

'Coming down that hill, if there was no bend, you'd go straight into the Tulet.'

'Of course,' we returned, all attention.

'The horse I rode was an exceptionally handsome fellow, standing fifteen and a-half hands high. Indeed, as we passed the hotel slowly, a man, who had the appearance of an ostler, said, "Don't she look like a horsefly stuck up there?" to which the other had coolly assented, although I was looking straight at him. The "power of the human eye" was lost on him, poor man.

'I hadn't been long in the country then, and knew nothing from experience of "bucking" or "balking." As I said, we passed the hotel and turned to go uphill. Two men who were boring rocks for blasting below the bluff, ran out and called to us to "hurry up" as they had just lighted a fuse. Turning round in our saddles as we went, we saw them both run to a place

of safety, and almost immediately Big Ben planted his fore feet slightly apart and wouldn't move a step.

'I whipped him, then he reared and tried to turn back. I resolutely kept his head uphill, and he as resolutely backed himself down in spite of the whip and spur I used rather freely. Claude rode up and tried a cut or two of his own whip across his flanks; Big Ben winced, but kept slowly backing down.

'He was so tall I couldn't very well jump; in fact, it never occurred to me, as I intended to conquer him. But we were getting dangerously near the edge of the bluff, which drops from thirty to forty feet sheer, and is covered at the bottom by broken rocks and jagged boulders. Claude jumped from Pet, intending to seize the reins, lift me down, and let Big Ben go over alone if he was fully determined to break his neck.

'The men shouted and gesticulated from behind their cover, and the blast went off with a tremendous bang! Whether a piece of rock struck him, or the sudden explosion startled him so that he forgot his purpose, we never

knew, but he bounded forward as Claude reached for my reins. It was well I was still seated firmly in my saddle, for he never waited to draw breath till we were going up the long hill, where I have heard you say your much-respected pioneer, Dr Black, was killed. He went up hill and down dale, over broken corduroy and through water holes with never a stumble, and I seemed to be expending my strength in vain, although I lashed the reins around my pommel and put on the curb.'

'I felt it was rather a narrow escape,' said Mr Wentworth, seriously, 'and blamed myself greatly for not having ridden him more myself before I allowed Dora to mount him. However, his price was one hundred and forty dollars, and as I hadn't paid for him I simply sent him back.'

'Yes, and we heard of him working in one of the six-horse stages that run from Ashcroft to Cariboo.'

'How long is that ago?' inquired daddy.

'About four months.'

'Well, last March I had business in the upper country and a horse of that description was

going round a bluff, harnessed in with five others to our sleigh, when he began to balk. The mountain rose inaccessibly on one side of us, the Fraser was tumbling and foaming among rocks and boulders five or six hundred feet below us on the other. Our road was built out on trestles, and was only just wide enough for the one team. The passengers sat still, waiting to see what the driver would do, for a false step or two would land us all into eternity. People don't say much at these times, and we all had the greatest faith in our driver. He spoke to the horses; the five seemed perfectly aware of their own peril and ours, only this big, handsome fellow was obstreperous. Taking out his revolver, Bill aimed for the animal's ear, and the horse, which had the inside of the road, fell without a struggle, leaning against the mountain side.'

'That was a cool shot,' said Charley, admiringly.

'It was that. Some of the passengers got out, cut the traces, led his companion forward, and tumbled him over the precipice, where those whose nerves were steady enough might

look over and see his carcase buffeted about in the surging waters below, looking no bigger than a jack-rabbit. The other horses were hitched together, the odd one going on ahead, and all danger for the present was over.'

'Well!' said Mr Wentworth, drawing a deep breath, 'I'm greatly relieved, for I've always thought I did a selfish thing in sending that horse back for the sake of that paltry one hundred and forty dollars. I ought to have shot him myself.'

During all this time poor Mr Strange was fidgeting and looking at his watch, and coughing, much to the delight of Mr Wilbert and Josie. As soon as there was a pause he spoke out. 'But, my dear madam, how am I to keep my engagement for to-night? Those poor Celestials of mine'—and his face took on a sad smile.

'Will be delighted to have two ladies of the Cathedral Women's Auxiliary to take your place, my dear fellow. They'll have less "singsong," no "talkee, talkee," and "heap much spellum," which will be more to their liking.'

'I'm afraid,' he returned sadly, for he was

very sincere, 'I shall make but slow progress with them.'

'They only come to you,' said Charley, with a youth's thoughtlessness, but with his practical way of looking at things, 'because you teach them free of cost and they are anxious to learn English; it helps them as cooks and household helps of various kinds.'

'That is a very dreadful way to look at it, and rather cynical in one so young.'

'Nevertheless, it's very true,' returned Mrs Wentworth, warmly, for Charley was a great favourite of hers; 'and what is more, their ancestors were good and consistent Confucians when yours and mine dressed themselves tastefully in woad; and they'll be Confucians still when Christianity has taken on another form to suit the evolutions of time.'

He held up his hands and looked at her through his glasses in perfect horror. The boys took the opportunity of slipping out and joining the three babies; and whilst our elders discoursed learnedly of heredity and other subjects that didn't interest Josie and me, we followed.

Mr Strange forgot for a time his hurry to be off and his perplexity at finding no public means of transit. It must strike those people rather forcibly, who come from older countries, and have been used to trains and steamboats at all hours, and almost to any place, to find communication possible only every few days, or even weeks.

In the meantime the teamster had fed and rested his horses, refreshed himself amply, although he had an idea that something a little stronger than tea or coffee would have improved things, made the round of all the camps, taken orders for the following morning for the regular boat to Westminster, and was delighted at having booked passengers enough to load his team. He wanted to know if the 'missionary man' was going back or not: and Mr Wilbert came and gave him a telegram to the Secretary of the W. A., asking them to take charge of the Chinese class till Saturday. So the mind of Mr Strange was eased, but his conscience reproached him. When Ke Tan came in to clear off the lunch-table, he recognised him as one of his 'boys.' He went

to him and shook hands; here was a chance for individual effort, and he was left to make the most of it.

Mammy retired to her tent to rest, and we all strolled along the beach, waiting for the water to come up a little more, when we would put the children in for their paddle and then go in ourselves.

CHAPTER VII

'THE DAYS WHEN WE A-GIPSYING WENT!'

JOSIE always went down with mother when she took her dip; and then, whilst she assisted her to dress, I made a cup of tea in what we called her 'little old maid's teapot.' It was a small blue and white affair with a handle like a sauce-pan on one side, and the spout near it, holding about two small cups full.

Whilst making this tea I remarked to Ke Tan, 'We go horsee to-moller, allee same picnic.'

'Yes? You likee chicken pie?'

'Heap muchee, Ke Tan; you savee ketchem chicken.'

'Oh! s'pose Charley, he takem Bob, go lauch, catchem tree chicken, two roll butter, hi-yu milik, two, tree dozen egg; me makem cake.'

'Alright! I'll see you ketchem dese tings; I go send 'em Frank.'

'Oh, no! Flank he no good; he blakem egg, spillem milik.'

'Alright! I ketchem.' I knew Charley would be swimming and paddling for the next hour or two with the men-folks, and if my picnic basket was to be well filled to-morrow I must have these things at once.

I carried in the little mother's tea and was greeted by Josie with 'Better hurry up, Bessie, if we are to get our swim, for the tide is coming in very fast; the wind is with it, and the men will soon be out.'

'But what can I do? Ke Tan wants chickens, eggs, butter and milk brought from one of the ranches. He says Frank will break the eggs and spill the milk; and if he doesn't get these things pretty soon he won't trouble himself to make anything, and we shall have to do with canned goods and bought cake.'

'That wouldn't be nice, would it? I know Frank would just as soon escape the swim, for the elders are rather unmerciful to him when they catch him in the water, and pay him off for

his pranks when they have the chance. I'll ask him to catch and hitch up Bob whilst we get a dip, and then we'll bundle all the youngsters in and go ourselves. It will take an hour to drag through that loose sandy road, and mammy can rest in peace, for we shall have the children along.'

We acted upon that suggestion, and after our dip, our wet hair hanging over our shoulders, we turned our backs upon the sparkling waters, the shining sands and the happy shouts of laughter from the dozens of bathers; each camp, as a rule, going in in a cluster.

The last thing we saw as we left the beach being a ring of merry girls, almost children, dancing in the water, at the same time keeping 'a weather eye' on a boat coming their way. In it was seated a youth home for his summer vacation. He wore a becoming suit of blue and white, his hair was plastered down upon his lofty brow, and he was rowing himself out to deeper water in order to swim back before the admiring gaze of his 'sisters, his cousins and his aunts.' His head was bowed as if in deep thought; no doubt his great mind was groping

in the dark and unopened recesses of his vast cranium, seeking the solution of some deep question in theology, algebra, geometry, or deliberating on the suitability of his last new necktie.

On he came, apparently oblivious of the merry group; they unclasped hands in one place, when lo! he had propelled himself within their magic circle. Screaming and laughing they seized upon his boat and overturned it, and the last we saw of its dripping occupant, he was wading off amidst a shower of spray and shouts of laughter, rather ignominiously hauling his boat with him.

We didn't light our camp fire after dinner, this being the signal that we were 'not at home,' for the moonlight was flooding bay and shore, woodland and mountain, so we decided to have, as Mr Wilbert suggested, 'A long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull all together.'

Mammy was very tired, so she and the little ones were left snugly in bed.

'Bring your guitar, Josie,' said someone; and then Mr Wilbert assisted her into the boat.

I followed, and we seated ourselves one on either side of Mrs Wentworth.

Mr Wentworth seated himself with Charley and Frank in the bow; Mr Wilbert, who had rowed in the Oxford, and Mr Templeton in the Cambridge teams, took the oars; daddy pushed us off, and then he and Mr Strange returned to the dining tent for a smoke and a chat, as daddy wouldn't leave mother and the children alone, and Mr Strange 'never ventured on the water except in a case of necessity.' No wonder, poor man, when he had suffered on the smooth river trip to Ladner's, and even an ordinary drive made him 'sea-sick.'

We pulled out some distance before anyone spoke; then Mr Templeton said, 'Give us one of your Spanish serenades, Dora, won't you?'

Without a word she took the guitar from Josie's lap; her husband was watching, delighted to see she acquiesced, for she had never sung to harp or guitar since the loss of her baby, and he was glad to see her coming to a healthier frame of mind. She touched a few chords in introduction, and then, in the sweetest, most liquid contralto we had ever heard, she

poured forth song after song in Spanish and Italian; and then, it seemed by way of breaking the spell which entranced us, she ended up with a bright little French *chanson* that set all our feet moving, and the rowers dipped their oars again and merrily kept time.

As we stepped ashore Mr Strange met us with the remark, 'You gave us some divine music, Miss Josie.'

'Oh, no,' said Josie, rather bitterly, 'that's where we colonial girls are at a loss; the higher accomplishments are out of our reach. It was Mrs Wentworth you heard, and wasn't it lovely?'

'Never mind the "higher accomplishments," little girl,' said Mr Wilbert in a low tone, as he drew her hand through his arm and led her off, whilst we were surprised to see our little 'spit-fire' so submissive for once.

Mrs Wentworth put her arm round my waist as I stood looking after them. 'Weren't they rude?' she asked in a bantering tone. 'We shall have some news soon, and Mr Wilbert will endanger his popularity by entering the Society of Benedicts!'

'I — I — don't know what to think! First your singing like an angel, and then those two going off like that—I can't lose Josie—' And, overwrought and tired, I began to cry.

She turned off from the other and called out to Mr Templeton, who was coming in search of us, that we would return presently. We walked along the beach in silence, and I got myself in hand, then we returned. She went to the entrance of our sleeping tent with me, and there we met Josie, looking very subdued, but happy.

She kissed Mrs Wentworth. 'Forgive me!' she whispered. 'I felt such a little ignoramus beside you; and I did want to be something better for his sake.'

'It's all settled then, is it, dear?' she returned tenderly. 'Then I wish you all the happiness that can fall to two such whole-hearted people.'

Next morning we were astir by times; even then Mr Templeton was there before we had finished breakfast, with two horses and a dear little pony.

'Don't you think your mother might ride

this little fellow, Miss Bessie, and go with us? I can vouch for his steadiness and reliability, for he belongs to a good-natured old pioneer, who frequently goes home on the little creature's back fast asleep; but it makes no difference to Billy, for he picks his way with the greatest care, and knows every soft place that has to be avoided.'

I went up and stroked his neck and rubbed his nose. 'Isn't he a dear little fellow,' I said, 'with his soft, intelligent eyes? Come and look at this pony, mother! You can ride him, and we can all go. Everyone says it's simply impossible to drive.'

Presently we set out, and all the rest of the campers turned out to wave handkerchiefs to us and wish us a pleasant day.

We had six horses between us, but then there were the three babies, who certainly would have objected to be left behind.

We gave Josie and Mr Wilbert the two best horses, and as they rode off ahead, Josie looked so sweet in her dark green riding-habit and the little jockey cap perched on her fair, fluffy hair.

All the rest of us rode as we were, in our camping dresses of dark cotton. Only one horse remained for the men-folks to ride in turn, and Charley and Frank started out together upon it. Dolly was seated on Mrs Wentworth's lap, Maudie sat behind me and held on to my waist, Bobby decided to walk 'wis de big mans,' and trudged bravely along. Daddy and Mr Wentworth carried one basket on a stick between them, Mr Templeton and Mr Strange carried the other.

We wended our way slowly up the bluff, till about half a mile from camp we came upon the outlet of a small but never-failing mountain stream, which supplied all the camps with the purest and coldest of water. It gushed out from under a pile of the fallen giants of the forest which lay crossed and tumbled in all directions. Someone had inserted a little spout of bark, and here each comer had to wait patiently whilst the other filled his or her bucket. This was generally a clean coal-oil can, arranged with a handle through which a stick was passed, and carried by two persons. It was surprising how many young couples found it

necessary to fetch water 'for ma' in the pleasant gloaming, and what a long time they had to wait for their turn, and how obliging they were, sometimes sitting round on the logs and allowing quite a number of matter-of-fact kind of people to step in ahead of them! Ah! well, it is pleasant to sit till the stars come out and discuss poetry and art with a nice, intelligent companion.

Several of the campers were here to-day with some of those useful cans boiling over a fire made in a hole in the ground. They were 'doing the washing' in company, as it was easier to bring the clothes to the water than it was to take the water to the clothes; consequently every bush and briar boasted some article of wearing apparel or household (tent-hold) use hung out to dry, and there was some difficulty in getting my horse by them. Mammy's little Billy took no notice of them; but presently from the bush, and amidst the laughter of the 'washers,' crawled Frank. The boys' horse had shied unexpectedly, and he was thrown into a bushy hollow. These had broken his fall, and he came out with the

comical expression he always wore when he had had the worst of it. Charley had succeeded in bringing his horse back, and came apprehensive that Frank was hurt.

His horse was one of those hard-mouthed creatures that showed the white all round his eyes, and dad had said, before they started, 'Look out for him, boys; you'll find him ugly!'

Mr Strange for once threw his cares to the winds; indeed, who could feel the worries of life when the sea breeze fanned his cheeks, the sunlight filtered through the rustling leaves, and the resinous scent of the pines was so delicious, with every now and then the faint sweetness of the wild honeysuckle that climbed thirty or forty feet, entwining the forest trees.

The road was very steep here and very uneven. Daddy came to mother's side and said, 'How are you making out, mammy? Getting tired? If you are, we'll go back and take the youngsters.'

'No, dear, I'm not tired, but won't Bobby come up behind me? I think those little fat legs must be very tired.'

He consented reluctantly to be hoisted up,

and Billy stepped more carefully than ever with his added burden. We came upon a very wet place, quite swampy, in fact, almost on the top of the bluff, and mammy drew rein, looking helplessly at us.

'Let him pick his own way, Mrs Le Ford,' said Mr Templeton, reassuringly, as he came up; 'he knows the road better than any of us.'

She laid the reins on his neck and told him to go on. He crossed to the opposite, and what looked to us the worse side of the road, and stepping steadily upon the most solid places, trying the more treacherous before trusting his weight to them, he carried his burden over without a plunge. Mrs Wentworth and I followed, making our horses step in the same places. Charley's horse floundered around, but Frank had taken the precaution to get down, for he could see quite a likelihood of his taking a seat in the bog, and he preferred to trust to his own feet.

The descent on the opposite side of the bluff was rather steep, but the view of the Gulf of Georgia, the numerous islands lying in

it, and the mountains beyond, was simply magnificent, and gave one a sense of the unlimited, with a feeling of awe for the Greatness and Power of the Creator of all this, and of thankfulness for being allowed to enjoy its beauty.

On the flats between us and the sparkling, restless waters stood the house of a rancher, built quaintly of shingles, near the beach. There were some acres of cultivatable land, and some of it was planted, but the whole place had a go-as-you-please air about it which made it jar upon its surroundings. A sloop lay on its side upon the beach; and when we sent Frank to inquire the way to Light House Point, a youth came out, followed by a seafaring-looking man, and took a good survey of us. The youth made out from Frank that we were only 'campers' before he answered any questions. Then he said, 'Keep right on tell yer come to a putty good-lookin' house, an' ast agen.'

We inquired if they had seen a lady and gentleman pass on horseback. 'No!' they said, and that was all we could get out of

them. So perforce we had to make our way to the 'putty good-lookin' house' as best we could. Frank was again sent as messenger. This time he had to climb a great pile of brushwood, which had been cut and piled to keep some cows in a very wet-looking meadow.

A troop of little children followed a very tall lady out, and a very pretty girl with handsome, large, dark eyes and auburn hair came up to us. She had a small, pretty figure, and we were told she was an Icelander, but she spoke excellent English.

'You should have taken the beach road from the last house,' she said. 'If you don't want to turn back, the best thing you can do is to tie up your horses and walk through the forest. There's no real trail, only a line blazed out, and you must look out for the marks all the way or you may get lost.'

She recognised Mr Templeton as the gentleman from 'The Flats,' and asked him if he had never been to Light House Point before.

'Only by boat,' he returned, raising his hat and smiling down upon the brisk, pretty little maiden.

'What are we to do with the basket?' inquired daddy. 'Don't you think we had better go back, mammy, and camp at the foot of the bluff for to-day?'

'Oh, no! we shall soon be there now, and Josie and Mr Wilbert are on ahead.'

'Well, come on, then,' said dad, lifting her down, 'and follow me, everybody, for I expect I'm the most experienced woodsman here.'

So off we started, single file, except for the three little ones, who were carried by the boys part of the time.

'Maudie, you must get down and walk,' said Charley, very decidedly. 'I shall go and fetch Billy, so mother can ride when we get through this thicket.'

'Oh! my dear boy, you'll break the poor little fellow's legs, and I wouldn't have him hurt for anything.' But Charley was gone, and I noticed, as we crept under logs whose thickness rose above our heads, climbed over others, or made our way through brush and undergrowth, she frequently looked back to see if her boy and the little horse were coming.

At last, tired and heated, we came upon

what we had been told we should if we followed the young girl's directions, namely, a road in course of construction, and upon the other side of it a house.

We all sat down in the open space to rest, when lo! looking through the rough fence, were two little mites, hardly as big as ours, holding the handle of a small 'express wagon,' in which was snugly tucked a darling little fat baby, looking at us all with its wondering baby gaze.

A lady came out as mother and Mrs Wentworth passed into the garden; she invited us all into the house. Only us three women-folks and the children accepted the invitation. The house was built of huge logs, the walls were very low and had been finished by cedar shakes, which let in the light here and there. But the floor was carpeted, there were some comfortable chairs, an open organ with plenty of music piled near, and a great many books and papers.

The pines and cedars reared their mighty heads from two to four hundred feet, standing so close together that they had only branched out near their tops. They formed a dense wall

of dark green round the little clearing of an acre or two, in which stood the dwelling.

Flowers were planted and blooming in profusion; vegetables, fruit trees and bushes filled the clearing. The sun could only have penetrated to the ground for a short time each day, until this road had been 'logged out,' showing a clear line of sky from north to south, and, as it were, taking down the wall of impenetrable greenness from one side of the clearing.

The lady of the house, a very handsome brunette, her hair cut short and curling all over her head, the children, the house, all showed the greatest refinement, and mother and Mrs Wentworth seemed loath to leave her. She promised to call at our camp, if possible, but the three babies made it difficult for her to go anywhere.

When at last we said good-bye and rejoined the rest of our party, Charley had arrived, and in some way had managed to bring all the horses with him.

'However did you get through with them, Charley?'

'Why, they are better woodsmen than we are, and can climb like goats, and led me out by an easier way than you came.'

Mother was very glad to mount Billy again and, as we had a comparatively good road, and only to look out for and avoid the sharp stumps caused by cutting down the smaller trees and brush, we soon found ourselves at Light House Point, when, lo and behold! upon a bluff at the edge of the forest stood a pretty hotel with the legend written up—'Meals, 25 cents.'

We looked at our baskets and at the clean, bright landlady, who soon boiled us a large kettle of water, and never did the refreshing cup of tea taste nicer to thirsty travellers than it did to us. The landlady set for us a clean table, and we did ample justice to Ke Tan's good things.

Mother went and had a good rest; the little ones laid their heads in Mrs Wentworth's lap and mine and went to sleep as we sat under the pine trees, from which the lower branches had been cut near the house, and watched for Josie and Mr Wilbert to appear. This they

finally did, from a direction opposite to the one from which we expected them.

'Why, which way did you truants come?' exclaimed Mrs Wentworth.

'Oh! we were here an hour ago and had lunch, then we went up to see the monument.'

'What monument, child?'

'It's about a mile through the woods from here, but the last part has only a very indistinct trail, and we had to leave our horses and make our way through on foot.'

'Was it worth the trouble?' asked Mrs Wentworth, doubtfully.

'As a work of art, decidedly not, for it was only huge blocks of granite supporting a square pillar upon which was engraved the names of the English and American members of the International Survey party.'

'And marks the boundaries of the two great nations who are so much one in blood and principle,' said Mr Wilbert.

'Some day we shall see them all under one government,' said Mrs Wentworth, looking at daddy.

'What a grand Republic that will be!' returned he, seriously, pretending to understand that as her meaning.

'Or Monarchy!' she retorted quickly.

We all laughed, and began to talk upon other subjects, for daddy always teased Mrs Wentworth upon this point, and she as invariably took him in earnest.

The men and boys went and inspected the barns, and the horses and cattle belonging to the ranches scattered along the flats near the beach. These farmers combine fishing with ranching, and make a very good living. Some of the sloops which they use for deep sea fishing were drawn up on the beach, and they were casting their nets from small boats near shore, catching salmon for the canneries.

We womenfolks sat round under the shade of the pines and chatted with the landlady. Presently Mr Brewer, the owner of this quarter section, came up from the beach on horseback. He had passed the allotted threescore and ten, but his blue eyes were bright, his step firm, and his seat in the saddle as steady as a young man's.

INDIANS CAMPED AT THE CANNERY BUILDINGS.

'Don't you find it very bleak here in the winter?' we asked.

'Bless yer! no. We get the mild winds from the Gulf Stream, and it's never as cold as it is on the other side of the mountain.'

While we stood talking he pointed out the smoke of a steamer in the distance. By the help of a glass we made her out to be one of the *Empresses* that ply between the Orient and Vancouver. She was now inbound.

When we were ready to return, the old man mounted his horse and insisted upon acting as guide back over the flats.

Mr Wilbert and Josie, who came out that way, had come across some rather bad bog holes.

Bobby stood looking up at the old man as he mounted his tall bay mare. 'Come along, young man,' he said, stooping from his stirrup, and picking up the rather astonished boy. He placed his own foot in the strap just above the stirrup, as we had seen Mr Templeton do, seated the child on his knee and started off.

Seven horses in procession! Daddy was riding the one Mr Wilbert had taken out, and kept along with Mr Brewer.

INDIANS CAMPED AT THE CANNERY BUILDINGS.

The meadows we crossed at first were covered with a coarse grass, upon which a great number of horses and cattle were feeding. This gradually became more soft and yielding, and daddy waited back for mother and little Billy to come up.

She was trying to guide him over what appeared to be the more solid places, but he sank to his knees several times, and she was getting nervous.

'What are we amongst?' called out Mrs Wentworth. 'Claude, do gather some of this green stuff and let me look at it. Why, it is samphire! Exactly the same as that which grows upon the marshes of the Wash, on the east coast of England. Don't you remember the people there used to boil and eat it with vinegar and pepper, and it tastes something like spinach would treated in the same way, only it leaves a little woody stem, and spinach doesn't.'

'Guess we d better gather some. It's so English, you know,' laughed daddy, throwing himself out of the saddle and suiting the action to the word.

'It's the first time I've seen it since we were in

Norfolk and Lincolnshire,' continued Mrs Wentworth. 'The fishermen's wives and children used to walk all the way from Lynn, dragging and pushing little handcarts, a distance of fully nine miles, and gather samphire to hawk round the streets. Then, Claude, don't you remember seeing them go along with a basket full of it balanced upon their heads, singing out in voices that resounded along the monotonous-looking, quiet streets of private residences, "Long green sam-fire," through their noses.' And she mimicked the tones of the fishwomen.

It was new to us, and we determined to try some; so we filled one of the lunch baskets, and as 'the boys' trudged along with it between them, Mrs Wentworth added, 'I'm sure you'll like it, and it will taste of "home" to me.'

How deliciously the cool breeze from the water blew over us as we made our way to the low-lying gravelly point, which was Light House Point itself. Little Billy, the reins laid upon his neck, stepped cautiously along, trying the tufts of samphire before trusting his weight to them; he never went in over his fetlocks, whilst everyone else's horse, Mr Brewer's ex-

cepted, was always putting one foot or other into a hole or a yielding piece of sand.

We were now upon the gravelly beach, and able to look round us without fear of our horses 'going out of sight,' as daddy said. The bluff rose green and precipitous on our left, the waters sparkled and gurgled on our right, our backs were towards the setting sun, and the cool breeze fanned all. But it was very tiring for those who had to walk, for the sand and gravel was loose, and slid away from under their feet at every step, and they took turns in riding the two horses. Even Mr Strange allowed himself to be hoisted upon the quieter of the two, and clung shudderingly to its mane, lying almost flat over the English saddle of his horse.

'"What thing upon its back had got
Did wonder more and more,"

whispered Josie to me, for the creature was getting very uneasy, no doubt thinking he was carrying home the carcase of a deer, after a hunting expedition; and very few horses will do that unless blindfolded. Whilst we were watching him, he threw up his head, humped his

back, and had evidently made up his mind to 'buck' whatever it might be off. But the English saddle-girths wouldn't stand much of that; they burst, and down rolled the poor man, saddle and all, into the loose sand, where he lay motionless till the others came up.

'Am I killed?' he inquired in a sepulchral voice, without turning his head.

They assured him he still 'cumbered the earth.'

'Kicked?' still lying still.

'Not scratched; but you ought to have to carry the saddle, seeing your horse has gone on, and the saddle will have to follow.'

'Carry the saddle! I'd carry a dozen saddles, but I'll never mount a horse again, at least one of these half-Indian ponies.'

Tying the stirrups together, the saddle was slung across dad's shoulders, and Mr Strange, tired as he was, was only too thankful to walk.

Presently we came to 'Go-as-you-please' ranch, as Mrs Wentworth called it; and, passing along in front instead of behind it as we had done before, were soon upon the trail over the bluff.

If the sun had brought out the resinous perfumes of pine and cedar, and the sweetness of the honeysuckle and other wild flowers, the dewy evening was still more delicious, and we chatted in subdued tones as we drank in its sweetness.

I saw that Bobby had fallen asleep, and must be a heavy weight upon the old man's arm, and wanted to take a turn with him myself, for I was riding a man's Mexican saddle with my knee over the horn, and that gives you a very secure seat.

'Bless you! no, my dear young lady, I could carry two of 'em.' And I believe he could. He stayed to a late dinner with us, and, when he went off on his return with a string of horses, amongst them Billy, the children set up a perfect howl of disapproval.

'Billy's my little horse, an' I dest let mammy ride him, an' now de mans is taken him away!' The other two joined in chorus, and were only quieted when their tired heads were laid upon their pillows, and Josie sang them to sleep.

As we sat talking round the camp fire, in that languid, contented way people have whose

nerves are at rest from many hours spent in the bright sunshine and sweet, fresh air, someone said the fish traps would be opened to-morrow morning about five o'clock, as the water would be at its lowest then.

'Let's go and see it,' suggested Mr Wilbert; 'we shall have a novel experience.'

So we arranged that Mrs Wentworth, Josie and I would be ready to accompany Mr Templeton and Mr Wilbert at that time.

CHAPTER VIII

WHEN I awoke next morning Josie was standing with the tent opening drawn a little apart, and gazing out in wrapt attention. I rose and joined her, and we both stood in silent awe and admiration. The sun, like a globe of transparent amber, was just coming over the mountains, and tingeing the snowy crown of Mount Baker, and the chains of peaks and crests which stretched away from him, with gold; the sands below were wrapped in a grey stillness, and the waves in the distance, tossing restlessly, gave out no sparkle.

We watched his majesty as he slowly revealed himself, and extended his golden veil of light down, down, revealing dark crevices, deep ravines, ragged chasms and silvery lines which we knew to be torrents dashing and foaming down the sides of those mighty mountains fed

from glaciers of immemorial antiquity, till everything was flooded with his brightness.

We dressed hastily and joining Mrs Wentworth, started to walk to Point Roberts over the sands. When we arrived the courteous proprietor received us very kindly, and gave us a seat in his steam tug, the *Yarno*, which was ready, with a string of scows attached, to go out and bring in the haul.

Seated upon her bow, on coils of ropes and empty barrels, we steamed along a line of poles driven into the sands by means of a pile driver. These were placed about twenty feet apart, and on them was stretched one continuous fish net for a distance of three quarters of a mile. This was called 'The Lead' and terminated in 'The Heart,' at the apex of which was the only outlet, and through this fish found their way into 'The Pot,' which was an immense bag net, supported by many piles, and kept from closing at the top by other horizontal poles fastened between the perpendicular ones, and which had no opening.

'De feesh dey coom oop de channel,' said the captain, putting his head out of the wheel-house window, 'skirting de land all de vays, an' tastin'

for de Fraser Ribber water. Dey tink dey find him ven it ees only des Bay. Dey svim all round, an' ven dey strike des net, dey keep along, dey can't go oonder, 'cause eet ees fastened to de bottoms, an' den dey get into de heart; dey svim on round, for dey never turns back, an' dey find de leetle opening, an' dey's in de pot. But dey not mooch find deir vays out any moor. An' de nex' ting dey gets into blenty people's pots.' With a laugh at his own wit, he went off to attend to the placing of the scows in position.

The trap was like a huge basin filled with fish, leaping and springing, and bulging out the net on all sides. The tug steamed alongside, and a lad stepped from it on to the cross poles, holding on by a second line of cross poles above the net. He made his way to the opening of 'The Pot' from 'The Heart,' which, by drawing up a rope and fastening it, cut off all means of egress. Then, returning to the point from which he had started, and where the scows were waiting, each manned by four or five stalwart fishermen, mostly Norwegians, encased from head to foot in garments of

oilskin, some black, some yellow, he undid another rope, lowering the net sufficiently for one scow to enter; a few fish escaped as he did so, but he soon drew up the rope again and refastened it.

The scow was now in the midst of the surging, silvery mass, the men, all standing on one side, slightly tilted the scow, and they began hauling up the net by its meshes. The scow itself formed a barrier below, and the squirming, shining mass, fighting for life, gradually raised above the water, came flapping and sliding round the men. When that lot was mostly secured, they hauled in the net again, and so on, until the men stood waist deep in the slippery, silver mass; indeed, you could scarcely distinguish them from the fish, so covered were they with shining scales.

The lad who had manipulated the ropes amused himself by standing on the highest parts of the scow, and with a stick, into which was driven an iron hook, he threw out flounders, crabs, skate and many other kinds of fish. There was one spring salmon, a splendid fellow, weighing, they said, some sixty pounds, who

had lost his way, and come in with the Sockeyes, which only weigh from five to eight pounds apiece.

The scow being now full, the net was again lowered, and it passed out, another taking its place. The tug went off with the loaded scow and us to the Cannery, one man remaining in it to throw up the fish upon the wharf, where another stood ready, check book in hand, to count them.

'How many fish do you think you've got there, captain?' asked Mr Wilbert.

'Vell! I reckon deres sometings like fifteen hoonded in de scow, likely deres atween five an' seex tousand in de feesh trap. Goin' out agen?' he asked as we were nearing the wharf.

'No, thank you, captain; I think the ladies have seen enough, haven't you?'

We said we had. Josie was white with excitement.

'What's the matter, Josie? did it upset you?' inquired Mr Wilbert.

'I hate death in any form; and to think we higher animals have to commit such wholesale

slaughter to keep our vile bodies together is dreadful!'

'Nevertheless, I've seen you eating a salmon cutlet with great relish.'

'Yes, I know; but I think I shall never eat salmon again without remembering how hard those fish fought for their liberty.'

'And, when once in the toils, did you notice how few escaped?' added Mr Wilbert.

We were in fine trim for breakfast, and did ample justice to the porridge, chops and eggs, corn meal cake and coffee Ke Tan set before us. All the poetry, and all the sentimentality vanished before our ferocious appetites. We had scarcely finished when some little figures in pink flannelette came rushing and shouting in, and we had to carry them off to be bathed and dressed.

Josie and Mr Wilbert took a canter over the sands, mother and father went for a drive, as you could go almost anywhere, the only quicksand being about a mile below, between our camp and Point Roberts, quite near the beach.

This was Friday, and Mr Wilbert had to

return to Westminster on Saturday afternoon, so some of our neighbours came over to ask if he would hold service that evening, and it was arranged that our dining tent, which measured twenty by fourteen feet, should be ready for those who wished to come, by half-past seven.

Mr Wilbert looked out the hymns he thought appropriate, and Charley was pressed into the service as accompanist, the violin being the only suitable instrument we had.

By a little after seven our friends and neighbours were there in such force, not only Episcopalians, but Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists, that the tent was wholly inadequate, and the service was held in the open air. The men soon rolled up logs enough from the beach for seats, the camp fire of drift wood, with its flames of many hues, gave light enough to read the hymns by; and this handful of people raised their voices in prayer and praise to the Maker of the Universe, the Creator of this vast temple. Oh! how insignificant we were!

Mr Wilbert stood with his back to the

lighted tent, the ladies and children occupied the logs around the fire, groups of men and boys formed the background, sending up a grand anthem into the blue, star-spangled vault above.

After Mr Wilbert's impressive sermon, the 'Old Hundred,' to the accompaniment of some three violins which were kindly brought over, was sung as heartily as ever that grand old hymn has been; meanwhile the tide had risen, and gently lapped upon the beach, and the wind sighed in the pine tops.

Many stayed and talked for an hour or more, and Mr Wilbert and Josie, escaping from the many congratulations, took a quiet stroll along the shore, for the moon was just making its appearance over the mountain crags, showing them out like dark phantoms, and flooding everything below with its silvery light.

I was sitting on the pebbly beach alone, resting, for I had had a tiring day. My little charges were snugly sleeping, whilst I sat watching the figures of Mr Wilbert and Josie, as they meandered here and there, following the water line.

Without looking round I became conscious of a 'presence' near me, and thinking it was Frank up to some of his tricks, I said, 'Don't tease me to-night, Frank, I'm so tired; come and sit here on the log and be good for once.'

Someone came and sat on the log, but it wasn't Frank, and I rose hastily to leave.

'Pray excuse me, Miss Bessie,' said the voice of Mr Templeton; 'I know you always run away if I come anywhere near; but do stop this once, and let me ease my mind by giving you my confidence. If you wish to avoid me then, I shall obey the mandate.'

I sat down feeling uneasy. We knew so little of him, yet we owed so much to him. He sat some time in a silence I felt powerless to break. At length he said in a quiet tone, 'You already know I am Dora Wentworth's cousin; we were brought up together like brother and sister, and it was my father's wish, when I had taken my degree, that we should marry.

'Shortly before that time arrived he was thrown from his horse and fatally injured.

Dora would hear of no marriage within two years of his death; in fact, I knew it was as much to put off the evil day as anything, hoping that in the meantime I might change my mind. I didn't change my mind, but Mr Wentworth came into a small estate in our neighbourhood, and Dora and he became acquainted. He was a member of her own church, and you know she is a Roman Catholic, and as good and consistent a Christian as ever lived.'

I assented warmly to that, and he continued: 'When she wrote and told me once for all that we could only be as we had always been, and that she had accepted Mr Wentworth, I wrote her a wild letter, upbraiding her with fickleness, and telling her my ruin would be upon her head.

'I went abroad and travelled far and near, until, in wandering through the Rockies, I contracted a very severe attack of mountain fever. I was at that time staying with a man who called himself a rancher, but he was more hunter and trapper than anything else. His half-breed daughter nursed me through, for

she had a good knowledge of Indian remedies and we were scores of miles from any doctor. She had been educated in a convent, and was as innocent and unsophisticated as a young fawn. She had only returned to her father's dreary abode a few weeks before my hunting expedition took me there, and was always pining for her schoolmates, and longing for a talk with Sister Agnes or Sister Beatrice.

'After I was strong enough to travel by easy stages on horseback, that being the only means of travel, to the C.P.R., and make my way back to civilisation, I wanted to pay them, and, with my Indian guide, go on my way.

'"What are you going to do about Nanette?" the rancher asked abruptly. I looked at Nanette; her face was buried in her arms, and she was sobbing convulsively.

'"Don't leave me here with him," she sobbed, "I'll be your slave, anything, only take me with you."

'The thought of marriage had not entered my mind, and I felt rather dazed and confused, so I went out and wandered round, thinking

and pondering over what I ought to do. In the course of a few days a priest came by on his way to one of the inland missions. I allowed him to marry us, and we left immediately for the lower country. Nanette was good and true, and I have never regretted my hasty marriage. I bought this ranch and we led a very peaceful life till after the birth of Dolly, when Nanette showed signs of rapid consumption, the disease which carries off so many of her people. I took her down to Lower California, and all was done that medical skill and money could to make her last days easy, but she died in six weeks.

'I returned with my baby girl, and have spent most of my time in caring for her, as I feared my housekeeper had little love for children. Now you see how I came to be the Hermit of the Flats!'

'Dolly is a dear little pet and well repays your care,' I said, scarcely knowing what to say.

'Indeed she does. Dora knows all this, but I made her promise to let me tell you myself. If you feel you can be friends with me, I shall remain; if you despise me, I shall leave Dolly with Dora and go my way again alone.'

'You must think we are very uncharitable people if we could despise you. I—I hope you'll stay and let us help you out with Dolly. I'm sure you're a great favourite with mother; and we all think so much of you for saving the children.' He smiled rather grimly, and the situation was becoming unbearable, when Frank came rushing over to say Mrs Wentworth was going to sing, didn't we want to hear her.

Mr Templeton took my hand and said, 'Then I am to stay?'

'Yes, please!' I returned without realising I was committing myself to anything.

CHAPTER IX

SATURDAY always brought an air of bustle and expectation into the camps, as that afternoon the business men came down to spend Sunday, and there was an extra return boat from Ladner's; so Mr Strange and Mr Wilbert were driven over by Charley, who, to our surprise, brought back Lottie Smith and her sister.

'We are so glad to get away from the muddle of preparation, and came to spend a quiet Sunday with you.'

'But where's Mr Baggs?' inquired Josie, who seemed to imagine her friend would feel the absence of her betrothed, especially as so little time intervened before the wedding.

With a toss of her pretty head and a wave of her neatly-gloved hand, she said impatiently, 'Oh! he's on his way. I couldn't be allowed even a day to myself!'

We looked at each other, and Lottie and her sister laughed. 'Do you think I'm marrying for love, you noodles? You know we have only papa's salary to depend on (unless his debts might bring something), and if anything happened to him, we would have to get our own living. And what could we work at? It isn't everyone can be a school teacher,' and she glanced at Josie, 'and earn fifty dollars a month all to themselves. Work! Pshaw!!' and she looked at the delicate white hands from which she was pettishly pulling her gloves; 'anything is better than work! Let's go and see your mother; she's in love with her husband yet, I suppose. It must be rather wearying to keep that kind of thing up so long.'

I went and made tea for them, Josie helped them off with their linen dusters, and they looked charming in their boating costumes of navy blue serge with cream vests and trimmings; we felt quite shabby beside them.

Mr Templeton came up on horseback as we sat under the awning taking our tea, and, of course, mother offered him a cup.

'Where's Dolly?' he asked as he threw himself from the saddle. 'I didn't catch sight of those youngsters as I came along.'

'They're digging holes in the sand, and making castles and moats under Frank's direction,' said Josie.

Mother introduced the newcomers, and Amelia Smith made herself very entertaining. When they strolled off with Josie, he said, 'Those seem very bright girls.'

'Yes, they are brought up to please,' she returned, unconscious of her own satire. 'Miss Smith is to be married on Tuesday, and she has come to spend a quiet Sunday with us. It's very nice of her and her sister, at such a time.'

I carried away the tea things, and followed the others.

'Who's that fine-looking man, Bessie? He seems quite taken with you; but I shall "set my cap" at him. I give you fair warning.'

'Suppose he's already a married man,' I returned. She made a droll face, and said,—

'Oh! if he is, I shall break my heart, for it's a case of "love at first sight" with me.'

'Well, he's a widower,' I returned somewhat ungraciously, for I felt convinced she knew all about him; and I went off to prepare the little ones for their swim.

'Jealous! Ay?' I heard her say as I left.

'Why should she be? Mr Templeton is Mrs Wentworth's cousin,' said Josie.

'Oh! then he probably belongs to the English aristocracy, and there might be a title in the background. I shall'—but I heard no more, and felt glad to be away from their gay banter. It was evident they had not yet heard of Josie's engagement, and I knew they would not from her.

As I brought the three little ones out in their bathing suits, Mr Templeton was waiting for us, and Dolly rushed into his arms, giving her little imperative orders to be carried over the stones.

'Papa was waiting to carry all you little monkeys over the stones,' he said, returning her kisses.

'We isn't monkeys,' said Bobby, looking up with an offended air, as he strutted along in

the tights he was so proud of, because they were the same as the 'big mans had.'

'How's that?' holding Dolly to one side, and looking down at Bobby.

''Tause we hasn't dot no tails.' We laughed at his decisive manner; and I went and sat upon a log that was stranded just above the pebbles, while Mr Templeton carried the children over the rough stones and barnacles, then he came and seated himself beside me to watch their antics in the shallow water. Amelia Smith soon joined us and began rattling on in her usual style.

He answered her seriously at first, but she soon challenged him to row her to Point Roberts.

'Will you come, Miss Bessie?' he asked, turning to me.

'I have too much to do, thank you; and it's time the children were out of the water, and Josie will have to help mother with her dip.'

'Well, well, what a business you people make of it all,' she laughed. 'I propose that Mr Templeton takes Lottie and me out of

your way. The water is high enough to float the boats now, and Lottie's time of liberty is short.'

'Who says my time of liberty is short? My emancipation has just arrived,' cried Lottie, gaily, coming up with Mr Baggs.

I left them arranging for a boat ride, and I knew Mr Templeton would have to join them. 'What business was that of mine?' I asked myself, feeling annoyed that it troubled me at all. I was only a little grey moth, and they were brilliant butterflies, as mammy had said, 'brought up to please.' A good marriage, that is, one which would put them in a good position socially, was their end and aim in life. Then Amelia had had some ten years' more experience in the world than I had, and knew perfectly well the power of her pretty ways and fine appearance. I had often heard them say jestingly, 'If you can get a husband that you like, my dear, who is well off, too, why, so much the better. If not, just take the one that can keep you best.'

Two of their sisters had already married men in good positions and were known as gay

society women, leaders of the younger matrons. Now, Lottie was making the best match of either, financially, and her brothers - in - law would look to Mr Baggs to help them 'tide over' the dull times. If he didn't they would simply 'make an assignment,' having previously taken care of their own interests, and start afresh. Of course, many of the struggling class who wished to do right would suffer, but . . . 'How uncharitable I am!' I said to myself as I dressed the children and prepared for my own dip. But I strove in vain to put away the thought of them. Josie was so full of her own affairs that, for once, my preoccupation had escaped her. I knew it was for no love of us they had paid us this unaccountable visit; it was for some pleasure or profit of their own. Mrs Wentworth had always carefully avoided them, and I knew if she could have been pressed into the 'show' next Tuesday, wearing some of her magnificent old lace and jewellery, they would have been more than content. 'Especially if her well-to-do cousin was with her,' suggested some hitherto unaroused fiend within me.

Throwing my dark blanket cloak around me I carried in mammy's tea. 'What is the matter, dear?' she inquired kindly.

'I think I'm a little tired, mammy, and my head aches.'

'Well, your bath will refresh you.'

It did, for we joined a party of ladies and children, danced and floated, swam and dived, splashed and choked, till someone proposed a game of leap-frog.

'Now, look out!' called two ladies of splendid stature and great weight, for it was a standing joke that when they came in the water rose perceptibly. 'We're coming in; you'll all be taken off your feet.' One threw herself upon her back, and with a graceful motion of the arms floated towards us; the other supported her young daughter with one hand, so the child could swim out. They joined in the sport. It was now the turn of the larger of the sisters to stoop for the others to jump. All had passed easily and run on ahead but one young lady who was not very tall, who, in her efforts to succeed, forced the head of the lady under the now rising water, so that when she had at last

wriggled herself over, and the stooping lady was allowed to rise, she was almost suffocated.

As we resumed our cloaks at the water's edge we noticed a party of Saturday people coming down in bathing trim. Amongst them, a young lady and her lover. She had a life-belt round her, placed quite below the waist; it never occurred to any of us that she would enter the water with it in that position. But when we were half way to our dressing tent we heard a most fearful scream, and looking round saw the venturesome damsel, some twenty feet from shore, floating head down, and her black stockings kicking frantically in the air. The scream, of course, had come from one of her companions, and the young man, rushing in, soon placed his lady-love 'right side up with care.' It seemed she had waded in till the water reached her waist, and then, confident in the support of her life-belt, had boldly struck out, when, naturally, the wrongly-placed life-belt had sent her head down. She was taken back to her friend's tent, and after recovering sufficient breath declared that, as this was the

first time she had ever been in the salt water, she was sure it would be the last, for she was certain her lungs were permanently injured by the amount of sea water she had involuntarily imbibed.

When we emerged from our dressing tent Charley was standing, telescope in hand, intently gazing at a long line of black smoke out in the Gulf. The smoke was so dense, you had to look quite closely to see that it came from the funnels of two separate steamboats, which appeared to be very near each other.

'What are they doing, Charley?' asked Josie.

'Well, as far as I can judge, it's a revenue cutter of Uncle Sam's chasing a tug. And, by Jove! the chase is pretty close. If she overhauls the tug before she makes the next three or four hundred yards, it's a gone case for the tug.'

We stood by him whilst he made running comments on the movements of the two boats. He fairly held his breath, and then exclaimed, 'The cutter tried to throw a line over her, but seems to have missed! If the tug passes that

point—Ah! what a close shave that last throw was! She's in British waters now and safe! Hear that rattling of the anchor chain?' he went on, lowering the glass as he drew a deep breath. 'She's safe; that's her anchor.'

The cutter was seen standing off and on most of the afternoon, but the tug stayed where she was, and her very fires seemed to be extinguished, for no smoke issued from her funnel.

CHAPTER X

SUNDAY morning broke clear and calm, and when Mr Templeton drove up in a double rig and proposed to take Mrs Wentworth and Josie and me to church at Ladner's, we hailed the idea with pleasure and instantly prepared to accompany him.

Daddy assumed the charge of the little ones, and we saw him and Mr Wentworth, with the three happy mites, starting for a long stroll on the sands.

As we drove by 'The Flats' we came upon Lottie and Amelia with Mr Baggs.

'Oh! you mean people,' cried Lottie, gaily, 'to be going off so happily without us! Why, we've been making an early call upon you, Mr Templeton.'

'Very kind of you, I'm sure; but we must not wait or we shall be late for church,' and

raising his hat he drove on. Amelia gave me a very black look, which Mr Templeton noticed, for he said, 'That young lady seems to have a grim temper of her own.'

'I suppose she thought I might have given up my seat to her as she is a visitor, and I was just going to propose it as you drove on.'

'Exactly what I thought, and I was selfish enough not to allow you to spoil my morning's pleasure.' I looked up at him as he spoke, and the grave earnestness with which he met my glance somehow sent a thrill of pleasure through me that brought the colour over neck and brow; and I was content to sit and listen to the cheerful conversation of the others.

This was our first trip to Ladner's from Boundary Bay; we had only seen it from the steamboat in going to and from Victoria. The first two miles of road was through loose sand, which skirted the bay, till we came to a pretty grove of maples, rather stunted, and very much knotted and gnarled by their exposure to the winds from the Gulf. Here Mr Templeton showed us that the road branched to the right and left, and we could either take the one to the

right and cross some three miles of tidal sands, or the one to the left, which was the wagon road. We preferred the wagon road, as the tide had gone out during the night, leaving the sand high and dry for some hours, consequently the wheels would sink somewhat; when we returned the water would almost, perhaps quite, reach our wheels, and the sand would then be quite firm, scarcely leaving any impression.

At the turn was a small schoolhouse, open and ready for a service given by a Presbyterian minister every three weeks. Some men were already sitting on the steps, waiting, smoking and talking. On the opposite side a tiny house, covered entirely with shingles, a large barn and cattle-sheds standing near it. Mr Templeton said this was the abode of a bachelor whose occupation was the raising of choice horses and cattle.

Still along the flats, with heavy crops of oats on either side almost ready for cutting, then up a short, steep hill, and we are travelling over a road raised by casting up a rather deep ditch on either side, putting corduroy on the top of this, then gravel. It was densely wooded with heavy

timber, and had a heavy undergrowth of brush. In the dryer spots were huge cedars, firs and pines.

We knew the abrupt rise of the neck of land, which runs from Point Roberts on the American to Englishman's Bluff on the Canadian side, was to our left, and that the trend of the road into which we had turned was away from it, but the dense forest shut out all view, and the jolting of the corduroy gave us quite enough to do to keep our seats; the few times anyone essayed to give their opinions, the words came with such a jerk, they waited for a more favourable opportunity.

After over a mile of this we came to a somewhat open space, where a green and grassy road branched from either side, and Mr Templeton said they led to farms through the forest. Here stood a team in which were several large barrels drawn up to a box-like structure some twenty feet square, in the centre of which was an iron pump with a wooden trough placed from it to one of the barrels, and a boy was pumping away vigorously.

'Isn't that a strange proceeding, Mr Templeton,

in a country like this where the very ditches are full of water?' asked Josie.

'I suppose it does appear so to you, but on some of the lowest-lying ranches the water is too "brack" for the horses and cattle, and they have to carry all their water for horses, cattle and dairying purposes from this spring. The experiment has been tried of boring some two hundred feet, in hope of striking a good spring, but to no purpose.'

'I should think, in time, they would extend the Westminster water-works here and bring the delicious water from that mountain lake, the Coquitlam, where Westminster brings its supply from,' suggested Mrs Wentworth.

'I suppose it could be done; but how far is that from Westminster? You see,' he said, turning to me, 'I have been very little in Westminster, as I always went to Victoria on any business I might have; and, by the way, Dora, I know some very nice people there.'

'So do I,' she said, laughing. 'It seems so strange we never ran across each other till I came here "to camp."'

We drew to one side, and a water-cart, like an immense box on wheels, passed us, bound for the pump.

'That must take a deal of time,' remarked Mrs Wentworth.

'So it does; and in some measure accounts for the little dairying that is done here. Cattle and horses are raised instead.'

'And explains to me what has always been a mystery—that so much butter and cheese should be imported, with such a grazing country as this of the Delta, which ought to raise tons of both for export.'

We now emerged from the timber, and Mrs Wentworth exclaimed, 'Why, this is just like the Cambridgeshire Fens; miles and miles of fields, divided by ditches, and as level as a table!'

Here and there were farmhouses, neatly painted, some surrounded by orchards of many years' growth, others newly built and standing in the fields with no attempt at flower or fruit garden. One was a scene of desolation and told its own tale. The water-barrels were falling to pieces for want of moisture; the badly-

built shed or two had a tumbledown hitch to them; the reaper, the wagon, a sulky, and some broken machinery were left here and there; no attempt at sheltering them had been made. The house had stood for years without a morsel of paint, and was almost black with weather stains. The few blinds in the windows had once been white and were twitched this way and that, most uncomfortably awry, and, to crown all, some empty pint-and-a-half bottles decorated the largest window.

Some of the farmhouses were both handsome and substantial, and belonged mostly to men who 'had grown up with the country.'

We came to a well-kept vegetable garden of some eight or ten acres in extent. It was planted with peas, beans, cabbages, cauliflowers and roots of all kinds, laid out in lines of great exactness, and scarcely a weed to be seen; everything properly hoed or tied up, as the case might be.

'This is a Chinaman's garden, I'm sure,' exclaimed Josie, 'only it's strange his hut isn't built where he can watch his cabbages and cauliflowers grow.'

'I'm happy to tell you, Miss Josie, that a white man owns that, and always finds a ready market in Victoria, Vancouver and Westminster.'

'That is good to hear, for I'm sure if white men would only spend the time, and take the trouble Chinamen do, they would be even more successful, as they understand the climate better.'

But we forgot the vegetable garden, for now stretched acres and acres of a nursery for fruit trees, currant and gooseberry bushes, flowers, seeds and shrubs, evidently worked upon the most intelligent of plans.

'Ah!' said Mr Templeton, 'that's an institution we're all proud of out here; and it would be well worth your time, Dora, to come and go over it some time. Look at the acres of strawberry plants. The fruit is shipped away by tons, not only in the Province, but to the "other side." Some day the great fruit-growing possibilities of this country will be fully recognised, and with our shipping facilities for the Orient, the Occident and the great North-west, we shall form the "fruit garden of

Canada," as one of the delegation of Yorkshire farmers prophesied.'

'It seems to me you ought to be essentially a dairying province—at least round here. But I noticed, Tom, you have a very large orchard of young trees planted out round your place.'

'Well, you see, Dora, with the abundant crop of hay I can raise at little trouble and expense, I could combine dairying with fruit-raising, and I need never spend a winter here unless I choose. I could leave my stock with a reliable man and go where I pleased. Nicer summer weather can't be found than in British Columbia on the Pacific Coast. But if a man hasn't capital to start with, you see, it would be a work of time and patience, and would at least take from fifteen to twenty years to accomplish what I have done in four. But anyone with the requisite patience and industry need never be afraid; he will be sure to succeed. I have some thirty acres in orchard, mostly solid apples that will stand travel either by rail or water, and prunes. I intend, if things turn out all right, to plant thirty acres more this fall.'

'Fall! indeed! Have you forgotten you're an Englishman as well as a Colonist?'

'No! Dora, I certainly haven't, but somehow one gradually acquires these colloquial phrases.'

The road was still somewhat narrow and planked over; the ditches seemed extra wide and deep, and I was thankful we met no teams, for it seemed as if one or other must have tumbled into these uncomfortable-looking receptacles, over which the ends of the heavy planking protruded in irregular lengths, sometimes indeed hidden by small brush or reeds, but still there to entrap the unwary.

We passed a blacksmith's shop, a sawmill and a cannery, an Indian camp, and came to a large public wharf and freight sheds, built upon piles over the muddy bank of the Fraser, which is very wide here.

Ladner's consisted of two streets running at right angles to the water, connected by several short cross streets. There was a very large store from which one might purchase anything in the shape of dry goods, groceries, hardware, crockery or feed; several smaller stores, one well-filled tin shop; two butchers' shops, each

with a notice tacked up outside that the store would be open only at certain hours daily; a baker's shop standing quite back from the street, and approached by a two-plank footway, displaying some very nice-looking bread, and the tuneful notes of a well-handled violin came from within; two hotels, besides some private residences of very pretty design built back from the street, with well-kept lawns and flower borders, and an abundance of gaily-flowering creepers.

There were many vacant lots, of course, and the gardens surrounding some of the residences occupied several lots, so there was no crowding of buildings; but our eyes, being accustomed to the hillside streets of Westminster, wearied of the dead level of everything.

After service we returned by the other road, which was far superior to the one by which we had come. It was part of the same interminable highway upon which daddy and I had come in search of Boundary Bay. We soon came to the Red Barn and turned into the planked road.

'You will see the sands presently, Miss Bessie, that you thought so desolate-looking, or at least part of them,' said Mr Templeton, 'for the water seems up pretty high, and we may have to retrace our steps.'

We drove over the broken dyke down to the soft-looking sand. Along the edge it was very yielding, but Mr Templeton drove where the broken shingles and cedar chips were the thickest, and we were soon bowling merrily along, the waters of the incoming tide reaching our wheels just as we came in sight of the grove of stunted maples.

We were in splendid condition for a good lunch, and w -e somewhat disconcerted to find Ke Tan gone, daddy setting the lunch-table, bringing out everything eatable he could find and placing it for our benefit; whilst, coat off and sleeves rolled up, Charley was making a tremendous fire in order to boil a small tea-kettle of water.

But there were our visitors to be provided for. We knew that Mrs Wentworth had returned to 'The Flats' with her cousin and would probably remain there till after the departure of the

Smiths, as she was determined not to become acquainted with her 'pet aversions,' and we had been duly warned not to escort them to her camp, as she would most certainly be 'Not at home.'

I set the table and we made a good showing with canned tongue and corned beef cut daintily, a nice salad, and some tea and cocoa, with a glass dish of Bartlet pears, canned, of course.

Our visitors drove away directly after lunch in a handsome new carriage drawn by a fine pair of grey horses. This formed part of Lottie's future 'establishment.' They stepped into it with a languid air of having done their duty over-much in lunching off canned goods and putting up with the discomforts of camp life—or, was it a sense of failure?

After dinner, while we talked quietly round the camp fire, Charley's violin sent forth sweet, sacred sounds from the lighted tent. Then we sang softly several old and beloved hymns; peace and calm fell upon our very souls, and we retired to rest feeling God was very near.

CHAPTER XI

'THE CHINESE MUST GO'

It seemed, after our departure for the Landing, that mammy, sitting under the awning quietly reading to herself the Psalms and lessons for the day, had noticed an air of alarm and expectancy among the camps. Groups from the English side were making long, gossipy visits while on their way to and from the mountain spring, but no one stopped to talk with her; they even appeared to avoid our camp, which was unusual.

At last daddy and Mr Wentworth strolled back with the children and a lad from an adjoining camp ran up to dad and thrust a piece of paper into his hand. He looked idly at it and saw that it contained these words: 'Send your Chinaman away. You have been informed on, and the officers will be after him as soon as the tide is high enough.' Daddy looked

upon it as a good joke someone was playing on him, and took no notice of the warning. He showed it to the little mother, who went and joined one of the expectant groups who were watching developments. They ceased talking as she came up, and soon dispersed, some of them showing quite a surliness.

She espied an elderly man she knew, who was here with his grandchildren, and going to the log upon which he was seated sat down beside him.

'Do you think, Mr West, there's anything in the report that my Chinaman is likely to be seized and deported?'

He held a ship's glass in his hand, and he turned his blue eyes upon her, drawn so close together that the grey, curly lashes almost touched, as he said, 'Take this glass, madam, and look across at that cutter. She's doing something besides watching the tug throw thousands of bad fish overboard that we'll get the full benefit of next tide. Didn't you notice everybody carrying their row boats across the border, and the wagons and horses coming back quicker than they went?

And I guess, too, if the camps are seized, and they can be, for no one has reported to the Customs as I can hear of, the campers'll lay the blame to you for bringing of your Chinaman along.'

Mammy adjusted the glass and looked towards the cutter. A boat was alongside and men were getting into it.

'What are they doing?' asked Mr West. She told him.

'Yes, and they'll be right here in fifteen minutes or less.'

This explained the sullen avoidance of the morning, and she said to him, 'You think, then, Mr West, it would be safer to send away the Chinaman before they arrive?'

'I have nothing to say in the matter, mind,' he returned, again scrutinising her through his lashes, 'but he'll be took and sent to China if he's caught here.'

Mammy returned to our camp and entered the cook tent; as she went in she encountered another Chinaman from the other side coming out. Ke Tan was as white as his yellow skin would allow him to become.

'You savee nis Melicanman he come, takee you?'

'Me savee,' he returned, as he hurried with his dishes and put his bread in a good place to rise.

'No washem dishee, you takem blanket, go udder side, bime by me send Frank take you steamboat—you go mind em house, garden, Westminster, makem jam, jelly—send me clean clo's, bread, cake, pie, every week.'

All this time he was washing his dishes as fast as he could, and from an air opening in the tent watching the approaching boat from the revenue cutter. He put them away quickly but calmly, rolled up his blankets and tied them, put on the clothes he wore when going out, and just as calmly, but very quickly, took the short path through the woods to the Canadian side as the officers came over the sands which lay between the water and our encampment.

Their information must have been pretty correct, for they went right up to the tent Ke Tan had occupied, and where Charley sat, book in hand, calmly reading.

'Where's your Chinaman?' asked one.

'He was here a short time ago?' queried another.

'I have nothing to say about him, gentlemen,' returned Charley, quietly.

'Will you come with us to search the other tents?'

'If you like,' and he rose slowly; 'but perhaps you had better search this one first.'

'Oh, we've seen all that's to be seen here!' they returned, so there was nothing for it but to lead the way.

As he passed the trail through the woods he caught sight of Ke Tan leaping the serpentine fence that divided him from British soil, and felt greatly relieved. If the officers saw him they made no sign, but they really appeared not to. After a very thorough but respectful search they made a tour of the beach; of course, all the row boats were 'over the border.' Then, to the relief of the alarmed campers, who were all outside their tents like bees round their hives, watching every movement of these dreaded officials, the men returned to the boat marked U. S. Customs, and rowed away.

CHAPTER XII

DURING the night the bay had been churned into foam by one of those sudden and dangerous wind storms which are likely to sweep down upon it at any time, and all the men and boys had been out at short notice tightening their ropes and bracing the tents. One unfortunate camp was blown flat, carrying stove-pipe, crockery ware, tin pans and provisions into a conglomerate mass, and the inmates crept from under their canvas with more celerity than elegance, and sought shelter with their more fortunate neighbours.

This was always a rather doleful day in the camps. The wagons and different vehicles had been round at half-past five to take back the business men to the steamboat at Ladner's, and the women and children, disturbed early to prepare a hasty breakfast for them, were

somewhat dishevelled and forlorn-looking; the men-folks seemed to have taken the fun and jollity away with them.

Daddy cooked breakfast, Charley collected and split the wood, Frank was detailed to wash the pots and dishes, whilst Josie and I set about our usual work besides taking charge of the dining tent. When we had finished and returned to the cook tent, Frank was still wrestling with his department, eyeing the unwiped and sticky pile with an air of martyred resignation that was too much for our gravity, and we laughed in chorus at his wet and disordered appearance till the tears came into his eyes. 'You wouldn't laugh, girls, if you'd got it to do. I can't get the grease off these things, and the porridge sticks to the bottom of the pot like it was made there!'

'So it was, laddie,' said Josie, cheerfully, as she tied on a big apron and took down a second dish pan, which she filled with boiling water, and soon had them in a shining pile. Poor Frank, feeling greatly relieved, stepped round in an alarmingly lively manner, and Josie called to him, 'Look out, Frank,

or you'll walk through the walls and take the shelving with you.'

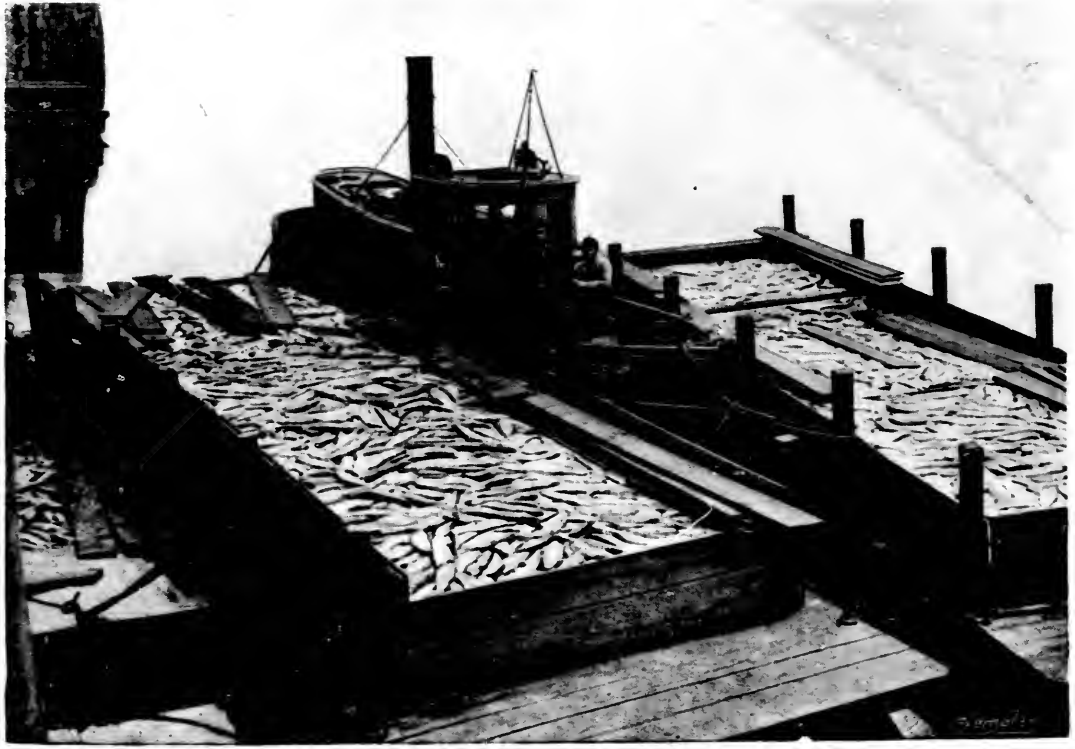
Josie and I decided to prepare everything for dinner as far as we could. I sat down with a dish of peas to shell; Josie was just beginning to scrape some new potatoes when dad came in with an armful of nicely-cut stove wood.

'Put down that knife, Joe!' he exclaimed. 'I won't have your fingers all stained up with those things; nice they'll look on that guitar of yours, won't they? Charley!' he shouted, and a figure, daintily gotten up in a light summer suit and white tie, raised itself, book in hand, from among the drift logs, and taking its straw hat from over its eyes said lazily, 'Yes, dad!'

'Come here: I want you!' He strolled leisurely over.

'Just scrape those potatoes for the girls; I won't have their hands all stained up and you boys lying around doing nothing.'

Charley looked at his well-groomed hands and carefully-kept nails. Now it was a standing joke with us the time he spent daily over



CANNERY TUG COLLECTING FISH. (25,000 SALMON.)

this part of his toilet, and we were regarding him, as sisters will, with a somewhat unpitying and quizzical air.

'They'll stain, will they?' Then, noticing our lack of sympathy, 'Oh! yes. I know you girls are bubbling over at a fellow's misfortunes; but I'll fix the "taters."'

He took the dish, touched the 'taters' gingerly to see how tight the skins were on; then looking round be espied a clean coarse towel. This he took in his hands, dipped each newly dug potato in water, gave it a twist or two in the cloth and had them all done 'in no time.'

'You didn't get ahead of me that time, girls,' he remarked triumphantly as he went off to his sleeping tent to inspect his hands and remove any spot that might have chanced upon them.

Daddy took the youngsters down for their dip, but poor Maudie soon came running out with the skeletons of fish clinging to her bathing dress, round her ankles, and tangled in her long, fair hair. The other two soon followed, begging to be dressed.

CANNERY TUG COLLECTING FISH. (25,000 SALMON.)

'Water's up, girls!' said dad, putting in his head. 'Don't you hurry yourselves for half-an-hour; we can all wait awhile if dinner isn't in time.'

We had mammy's tea ready, and he took it from our hands and carried it to her himself.

As we dressed more quietly than usual we heard daddy say, for canvas walls are light, 'Those girls ought to marry twin brothers; I don't know what they'll do apart!'

'Yes; but how we shall miss them! I dread to think of it,' returned the little mother in a tearful voice.

Josie looked at me; and then, in her impetuous way, rushed into mammy and declared she would stay with her always.

Mother cried a little and patted the fair head of Josie as she knelt in front of her. 'My darling!' she said, 'the Bible tells us "A man must leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife," and that rule works both ways. What would a lonely old age be to me without your father and all you children? I tell you a woman has fulfilled her highest

destiny—at least, I'm old-fashioned enough to think so—when she has retained the confidence and regard of a good man for near a quarter of a century. No amount of success in other ways could ever content the inner heart of a true woman or compensate to her for the home life.'

Daddy took an arm of each, and pretended to march us out, and we were soon splashing and laughing, swimming and floating with the merriest. But the decaying fish were very unpleasant, touching us in unexpected places, the broken pieces clinging to us, and the very water was redolent of them. However, by going out a piece we escaped the worst of it, although an oiliness was upon the surface, and we all came out quicker than usual.

We hadn't noticed the figure of an Indian painfully making its way along the beach and groping among the drift wood with a long staff till we were coming out, chattering and laughing. Then the Indian stood still and appeared to be listening intently.

'Who dat talk? dat Josie, Bessie?' Then,

as we remained silent a few moments, he called excitedly, 'Josie! Bessie!'

'It's Douglas Billy!' said Josie; 'but he's blind!'

'Yes, Douglas Billy. I get blind one time.'

We took him up to the cook tent and told him to wait for us. Then whilst we prepared dinner he told us in mixed Chinook and English his history for the past three years.

He had worked in camp for daddy when he was out with survey parties at different times, and all one winter in town for us, instead, as the Indians generally do, of going up to their reservation for the winter.

'Dat was good time I stop all one snow in town, s'pose I not clatterwar (go to) Douglas I not lose my eye.'

'How did you get blind, Billy?'

He made us understand that the winter he worked for us and the summer following he saved his wages. When he went up to Douglas he was pretty well supplied with clothing, provisions and money. He bought lumber and built himself a cabin, then he looked round for a 'klootchman' (wife).

He found one he thought he liked, and making presents to her father and mother, married her in the Indian way; that is, with the understanding that if he didn't like her, or they couldn't agree, she was to be sent back and his presents of blankets and clothing returned to him.

She proved to be a pilton (fool), and he didn't like her, but was so glad to be rid of her he never asked for the return of his presents.

That was a rather disastrous matrimonial beginning. Now Billy was a good and simple-minded member of the Roman Catholic Church, and you never saw him take a meal without going through the proper ceremony of grace; and when the chimes of the *angelus* rang through the city, from the sonorous bell of the Indian church there, he would stop his work, take off his hat, drop on his knees and say his *angelus* with the utmost earnestness; so in his matrimonial difficulty he went to the priest, who married him to a stout, strong Indian girl of his own tribe from one of their mission schools.

But Billy was not satisfied this time, for his second wife was somewhat of a virago, and if Billy displeased her she could and did give him 'a good thrashing.' Now Billy could whip the first and foolish wife himself, and he didn't like to have the tables turned on him.

He tried to get Jenny to go to the priest with him and get unmarried; but she wouldn't go. So he went himself and told him that the wife he had given him was hiyu salix (very bad tempered); that she whipped him and pulled out his hair. Then she had her lame grandmother, and her great aunt and all her cousins to live in his house till there was no room for him, and he had to go and camp out under a big umbrella we had given him.

This state of affairs he considered highly unsatisfactory, and he thought these quite sufficient grounds to get unmarried. He shrugged his shoulders and spread out his hands in deprecation as he said, 'La Pleat say, "Skookum" (strongly) "married; not could unmarry; you must bear it."' If he refused to keep his wife and provide for her he would be put in jail.

'But how did you get blind, Billy?'

It seemed one time his wife's relatives were there in force, all females and young children, and Jenny ordered him out to hunt for game of some kind. The snow was very deep that year, 'half way up the tall pines,' he said. He lost his way and wandered about he couldn't tell for how long. When he at last found his way back without any game Jenny was highly indignant, and asked him how he thought he was going to keep the papoose which had put in an appearance during his absence.

'Man?' (*i.e.*, boy) we asked laconically.

'Klootchman' (girl), he returned as shortly, with an air of deep disgust.

But his eyesight seemed affected, and he realised he was getting snow-blind. Had he used the native remedies he would have been all right, but instead, he went to some reputed 'doctor,' who gave the poor fellow an ointment that 'burned.' He went back to the doctor and told him what effect it had upon his eyes, but he said that was all right; it was a sign the medicine was good. So Billy persevered in the use of it till he could only see a glimmer

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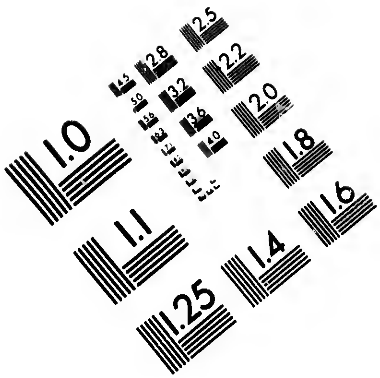

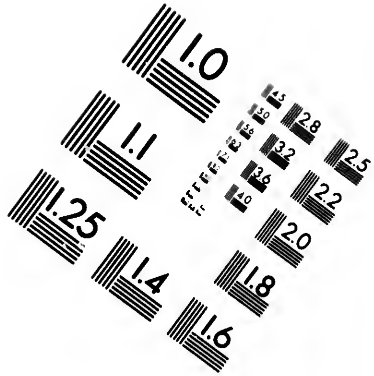

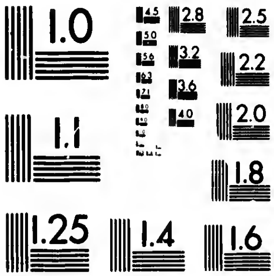

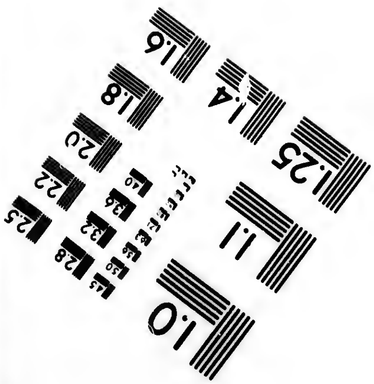

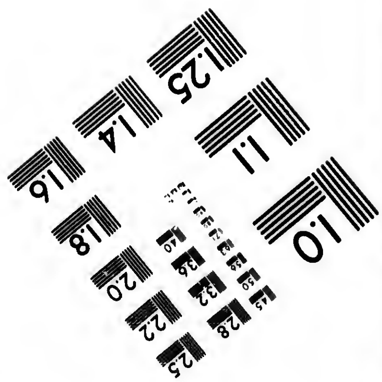

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of light, and that was how he was at the present time.

His matrimonial troubles didn't end here. Last summer, during the fishing season, his wife eloped with a Japanese fisherman, leaving him and the old grandmother in charge of baby number one and an infant a few weeks old.

At first he felt very glad, he said, for he would get no more whippings, and his hair would be allowed to grow; but he found he could do nothing with the children, especially the baby, and when she returned in a more humble frame of mind to take up her abode with him, he let her stay 'for the sake of the children,' he said with a resigned air. 'Man halo comtux papoose' (A man doesn't know what to do with children).

The priest gave Jenny a wafer to make her better, but she soon got worse than ever, and it didn't improve her temper in the least.

'Ax,' he said, breaking in upon the recital of his woes, 'give me ax.' He had located the cook stove and the wood pile, and by

listening knew the fire had burnt low. So he groped carefully out, cut up some wood fine and soon made up the fire. Whilst he was at it dad entered with another armful. Frank had discreetly disappeared and Charley was playing some delightfully soft and plaintive music on his violin.

Daddy started back as he saw the wreck of his faithful Billy.

'Ah! boss, dat you?' he asked, as he stood up with beaming face and outstretched hands.

'Why, Billy! what's happened to you?' Dad heard with indignation the story of the doctor's stuff, and said very emphatically he 'would like to wring that fellow's neck.' Billy felt quite comforted, and stayed round till after dinner, which meal we put upon the table at seven instead of six o'clock, but everybody said our clam soup was delicious and our chickens cooked to a turn.

Billy and dad piled up a delightful camp fire of drift logs whilst Josie and I brought round the coffee.

We sat by the fire that right with only our own family party, for Mr and Mrs Wentworth

were still at 'The Flats,' as Mr Templeton was preparing to harvest his hay. While we sat there, Mr Templeton rode over to inquire for Dolly, who flatly refused to go back with him.

CHAPTER XIII

DAD had not returned to town, so Charley and he rowed over to the tug to see what was the matter, and Captain Sorrel came back with them and stayed to dinner. He was a short, stoutly-built Englishman, with grizzled hair and beard; but his grey eyes were bright and keen, and it was easy to see he was the man for an emergency. Over our coffee he told us about his late dilemma, and we heard the history of the chase we had witnessed a few mornings before.

'My tug was chartered by one of the Fraser River Canneries to cruise among their Indian fishermen, collect, and carry their catch, to save time.

'Now, the forty-ninth parallel is easy enough seen on a map, but where it passes through Point Roberts, amongst forest and brush and stumps, it ain't so easy to keep track of it.

'I was most up to old Brewer's place, that hotel on the other side of Light House Point, and still collecting fish; for, as you know, there's no restriction on the Indians; they can fish just where they want to. An Italian fisherman hailed alongside, and a rather dudey-lookin' man got on board. I didn't think anything of that, for we often pick up all sorts and sizes and nationalities, and give them a lift as far as we're goin'. Sometimes it's them book-writin' and newspaper fellows, sometimes it's smugglers, and sometimes it's folks tryin' to see if the laws on one side ain't easier to get over than they are on the other.

'This one walked straight up to me like he owned the boat and me too, and I felt riled. "Hullo, captain!" he says, "what you dewin' in these waters?" I knew his tongue for an American cousin right off. I took a good look ashore to see where I was; I'd drifted over the line. I looked at Petro, for I'd often done him a good turn, and he began to protest his ignorance as to who his passenger was; but my mate, big Helgeson, bundled him over into his boat in quick time. "I'll chook dis fellar over-

boord yoost so vell if you say de vord, boss!" he said to me. I shook my head, and he gave me a wink and went below. I soon heard him firing up, and I knew Helgeson was getting on more than the regulation steam. I knew I must gain time, and was wondering what I'd say to my man, when he says again, "What are yer dewin' in these waters?" It struck me I'd better play I hadn't much savey; so I looked as silly as I could, and says, "Doin'? doin' nothin'!" He looked at me in disgust. "Wall! I guess I kin tell yer. You're takin' fish in yer Uncle Sam's waters! That's what yer're dewin', and I kin tek yer boat! Where's yer flag? Lower yer flag!"

'"Flag!" I said, and I took off my hat and scratched my head as if to help me to think, "flag?"

'"Don't know what a flag is, I guess, dew yer?"

'"What the"'—he looked at mammy and us girls, and said—'"the mischief have you got to do with my flag? Who are you, anyway?"

'"I'm a new Customs officer, that's who I

am!" I looked him over, but could see no badge.

'"Show me your authority!" I says.

'"My authority's on the revenue cutter, and she's round the Point! But yew'll dew; yew're pickin' up, ain't yer? I'd advise yew tew order up full steam ahead for Blaine."

'I was going to keep him parleying over the authority business, when I heard two taps under my feet, and I knew Helgeson was ready.

'"What's that?" he asked, quick as a dart.

'"Spirits rappin'; or else it's rats," I says.'

'He looks at me, and he says, "Air you goin' tew give the word?" I would have gone back, but I was cut off that way by the tug that had brought out the officer. Now, I knew the cutter, and I knew my tug, and how many feet of water they both drew; besides that, I knew every boulder and rock about Point Roberts, and I started so near inshore it made me shiver for fear she'd strike bottom, and have to wait for the tide, for then we'd be boarded and lost. We started in slow time, and soon came on the cutter standing on and off in deeper water.

We were abreast of each other off the Cannery Point, but I had the advantage of being nearer the forty-ninth parallel, and I smelt a strong odour of burnt fat bacon. "Cookin' lunch below, I guess; yew air great eaters, yew English!" sneered the officer. I didn't say anything, for I guessed Helgeson had stuffed the side of fat bacon we had on board into the furnace, to make her fire up good.

'"Keep her out, man!" says my new boss. "Yew'll run her aground presently."

'"Let me alone, cousin," I says, "I've navigated these waters while you was in long clothes!"

'I kept my weather eye on the cutter and saw she thought it was time I changed my course. I did, but away from her, and made a bold run for the line, win or lose! Helgeson clapped on all steam, and my man didn't take in the situation for fully two minutes, for I was pretending to skirt a big boulder; by that time I'd got my start. The cutter was in full chase, and when she threw out the line it was nip and tuck with us. The second line my Customs officer caught, and ordered the Siwash deck

hand to help him wind round the capstan. But instead of giving it a second twist, he threw it off, and as our visitor was holding on he went with it. The cutter had to back water or drown her own man; by that time our anchor was down in Canadian waters and we were safe!'

Charley and Frank were greatly excited over the recital. Throwing up their hats in the air they shouted, 'Hurrah for Canada! Canada for ever!!'

'Well, but I'm an Englishman,' quietly observed the captain.

'All the same, captain; and you've got some young Canadians at home in Westminster.'

'Ay! I have that, lads, and they're as proud of being Canadians as you are.'

We looked at dad and laughed. 'Oh! "all's fair in love and war," you know,' he returned.

'But how about the bacon?' I asked. 'Did they put it in the furnace?'

'They did that, and they sat the Siwash fireman on the safety valve to keep it down and increase the pressure of steam.'

'But if the boiler had blown up?' said mother, looking horrified.

'It would have been no worse for him than us; we should never have known what struck us, and we could only lose the boat whichever way it was.' We laughed at his easy way of looking at it. 'Our man seemed none the worse for his wetting,' continued the captain, 'for we saw him on deck watching us for three or four days. After that, of course, our fish was no good, and we had to throw them overboard. I'm sorry if they've annoyed you; we couldn't stand them any longer, and we didn't put out to sea. It was a pity, too, for we had some fifteen thousand aboard, and our cannery was running short.'

'Well, well,' says daddy, 'have another cup of coffee after that, captain, then the youngsters'll give us some music whilst we have a game of whist.'

'Can you play cribbage? I used to play it with my mother and father and my eldest sister when I was a boy.'

So a game of cribbage it was, with me for fourth. But when Josie sang 'The Ivy

Green,' in honour of our English visitor, he forgot to count, and, putting his hand, hard with honest toil, over his eyes, let fall a tear or two, for it had been 'his mother's song.'

CHAPTER XIV

BREAKFAST over with its usual calm and quiet, the gentle breeze from the sands whispering in the tree tops, our hammocks swung below, with dad and the boys off to 'The Flats,' we promised ourselves a long day of rest.

Charley was to sit in state and drive the mowing machine; for, strange to say, though so many idle men were standing round the Delta, professedly waiting for 'fish,' and in the meantime sponging upon the Indians in their ranch-a-ries, sufficient hands for the harvesting could not be obtained.

One stalwart white man, when asked by Mr Templeton if he would like to work for two dollars and a quarter a day, asked surlily, 'What at?' When told, 'Cocking and

carting hay,' replied impudently, 'Not much, sonny. I'll run yer reaper for that; but I'll cock and cart hay for no man living.'

This was no solitary instance; and as it was hard to tell the loafer from the man who was really waiting for the run of fish, the magistrates decided to take no action till the run commenced in the river, which is later than at Point Roberts, then either jail or fine the tramp element, for the Delta should be no abiding-place for those who would not work.

So, to make hay while the sun shone, all our men-folks had departed; Mrs Wentworth had taken Susan and was diligently looking after the inner man for her cousin and his hands, and we, as I said, promised ourselves a day of utter repose, which, sooth to say, threatened to be rather lone and dreary.

The rattle of Billy's dishes and pans came from the cook tent, whilst he crooned to himself a monotonous Indian ditty, when, of a sudden, our repose was rudely broken in upon by a volley of abuse in a woman's angry tones, accompanied by blows and the clatter of tin

pans, all heightened by a perfect chorus of baby voices in different keys of terror.

Mammy looked up from her hammock in grave alarm; Josie and I sprang out and ran to see what was the matter.

There was poor Billy, who weighed some ninety-five pounds, in the hands of an Indian woman who must have weighed fully two hundred, for her short, squat figure was about three or four times as broad as 'good proportions' would have suggested. She was pounding the unfortunate and unresisting Billy with a vine maple stick, giving vent to cries of anger and disgust in a deep, guttural voice meanwhile.

The papoose basket was propped up by Billy's pile of cut wood, and on either side stood a small Indian girl, both mere babies, whilst at a short distance, crouched upon her heels, sat Billy's aunt-in-law, uttering grunts of approval every time the stick descended upon her male relative by marriage.

When we appeared upon the scene she held her stick in abeyance and gave us to understand in Chinook and broken English that she

had supposed Billy was cutting reeds for her and her female relatives to make mats with during the winter. She suspected Billy was deceiving her, and had traced him up, to poor Billy's sorrow and her aunt's satisfaction. She further informed us that if her sitcum-man (half a man), with an air of great disdain, was going to work for us in the summer we could keep him in the winter. She had only brought him with her to help paddle and gather reeds, or she would have left him to hoe the potato patch and look after the chickens at Douglas Lake, instead of her grandmother, who, she added, with a withering look at poor Billy, was more skookum (stronger) than he was.

Billy winced under the expression of her scorn, but wisely kept silence. She took up her papoose basket, slung it across her forehead, ordered her aunt to take charge of the two small girls, and prepared to depart.

Mammy had appeared by this time and stood near the crestfallen Billy, who, however, showed himself to have some knowledge of feminine humanity and its weaknesses, for he whispered to her, 'S'pose potlatch hyas cloosh

HAYING ON DELTA LANDS.

ictas nica klootchman?' (Will you give my woman some good clothes?) She took the hint at once and, passing along the back of her sleeping tent, intercepted the old aunt and the children. Jenny had strode angrily off and was some distance ahead.

'Nica potlatch ictas tenas klootchmen' (I'll give clothes for the little girls), said mother to the old woman, who eyed her dubiously for a moment, and then called a word or two in the tribal language to Jenny. She seated herself upon heels, drew her knees up to her chin, clasped her brown and withered hands around them, and patiently awaited developments. Jenny seated herself where she had stopped and, without looking our way, likewise waited.

Billy chuckled to himself at the success of his strategy, and disappeared into the cook tent, listening intently for the next act.

Mammy came out with some small garments. The old squaw looked them over and shook her head, saying they were 'Halo cloosh' (not good), intimating she expected something bright and pretty. Finally two flannelette nightgowns

of deep pink, with frills at the neck and wrists, took her fancy, and though they reached to the toes of her small charges, she put them on at once with evident satisfaction. She bundled up the other things and prepared to follow her niece, when she noticed the straw hats on our youngsters, and gave us to understand she would like some for hers. So we gave them each a straw hat of Charley's and Frank's, and they were going off in triumph when Jenny herself came up and signified her approval. She also admired mammy's morning wrapper, and when we offered her one of like make but brighter colour, she was won over completely, and showed us how she could set a piece in down the back and enlarge the fronts to fit her. She was very clean and neat in her appearance, as were her children, and her black hair shone with bear's grease as it hung in two heavy plaits, tied together at the ends, down her back; a pale green silk handkerchief was tied round her head, which made her look extremely dark, and somehow emphasised the very decided 'cast' she had in one eye. She looked rather longingly at the children's hats,

so Josie went and brought out an old one of her own, upon which she had hastily arranged a pink sash of Maudie's. The hat was one of those that come out with a big scoop in front, but had scarcely any brim at the back. Josie had pinned the ribbon in a big bow at the back, bringing it plain round the front. Jenny took it, looked it all over, and decided that the pink bow should be in front, so she put it on hind side before and trudged off with the pink bow standing up over her brown face, which was still surrounded by the green handkerchief, the long front hanging down her back, and almost touching the papoose basket.

She was reconciled to herself and to Billy, for she called back to him in the tribal language quite pleasantly; and he said she was satisfied, especially as she found Billy was to get fifteen dollars a month whilst he worked for us. So our somewhat troubled domestic affairs once more settled themselves on an even footing.

All our haymakers and Mrs Wentworth came over for coffee that evening, and after the dusk had fallen, and we were thinking of saying

'good-night,' we heard a clatter of hoofs, as they came over the beach wood, and presently up rode two girls with their brothers, in breathless haste. The tide was very low, and they had ridden right across the sands from a farm four miles distant, and could only stay a few minutes, or they would have to return by the road, which would make it more than twice as far.

We had gone to school with them in Westminster, but had lost sight of them almost entirely since. Mrs Wentworth was greatly taken with Edna Cracow, the elder of the sisters. She had grown into a woman of grand proportions, and sat her horse in fine style. Her skin was as white, and her flesh looked as solid, as marble, the flush of health was in her cheeks and sparkled in her dark eyes, whilst her magnificent hair, as black as night, had fallen in her hasty ride, and swept the flanks of her Indian pony.

They acknowledged the introduction to Mr and Mrs Wentworth with grave courtesy, still seated upon their horses (in ordinary dress, of course), but rather pointedly avoided Mr

Templeton, till daddy, taking the rein of Edna's horse, faced her round and introduced them, saying they had been such near neighbours he supposed the ceremony was unnecessary. She gave him the most haughty and distant recognition, they all said 'good-night' almost immediately, and scampered off over the sands for home.

'What have you done to those young ladies, Tom? They don't seem to be very cordial.'

'I'm sure I don't know, Dora; they always treated Annette with great coolness, and, of course, I haven't sought them out since.'

'A clique! here in the backwoods,' laughed Mrs Wentworth. 'I should have thought where people, especially women, were so scarce, they would be thankful to come across a fellow-creature and use their poor tongues! How lonely you must have been, Tom, when the rain was pouring down in torrents in these flats, and the wind sweeping everything to landward!'

'It never occurred to me to feel lonely. You see I had Dolly, and she kept me pretty well

occupied. But I must say, since you and your friends came, I have felt intolerably lonely when I had to be up at "The Flats," for even Dolly has forsaken me.'

'We won't leave you here!' protested Mrs Wentworth. 'You must return to town with us.'

'Yes,' said her husband, 'or we will stay with him till some suitable person has been found to look after the place and cattle.'

'Stay as long as you can, both of you; for I'm afraid old Satan will take many a gallop over the sandy short cut, and make his sixteen miles to town and back in a day, especially if my wayward Dolly insists upon accompanying you.'

'Oh! she'll do that, you may be sure. But we shall look for you every Saturday to Monday, and as many times during the week as old Satan can stand the trip.'

'Who's "old Satan"?' inquired Josie.

'Oh! he's an individual whose acquaintance I've made during the last few days at "The Flats." He's not very handsome, being a rusty black, and he shows his teeth and rolls his

eyes when I go near him and try to make friends, which is decidedly uncomfortable.'

'He stands on four legs, I suppose?' said Charley, quietly.

'Of course. I don't know what Tom took a fancy to him for. His temper seems more ugly than he is.'

'He's an up-country horse; half hunter and half native. I must say he has a way of carrying his head and showing his teeth, which makes him look anything but amiable; though for swiftness and endurance, I never saw his equal, whilst his gait is as easy as sitting in a rocking-chair, and tires a person no more, especially if anything makes him angry; then he steps like a cat and flings his head about till his rider is covered with foam. A spur makes him perfectly furious; he will stand on his hind legs and refuse to move. He was doing that with an Indian rider when I first made his acquaintance. Another passed up a pint-and-a-half bottle of water, with which the rider struck him between the ears, breaking the bottle and spilling its contents over his head. This so astonished him he came

down, and didn't try standing up in the same way for some time. But whenever he has a fit of that kind the best way is to bring another horse alongside at a gallop; when he sees he has been passed, he gathers himself up and springs forward, and if you are not aware of him, he'll "jockey" off the rider from the other horse in passing. That is a trick the up-country Indians taught him, too.'

'I should like to ride him, Mr Templeton,' said Josie. 'Will you let me?'

Mother gave a quick glance at Mr Templeton, who caught it and, smiling in his quiet way, shook his head, and told her he wouldn't like to take the responsibility of putting a lady on him. 'Though,' he added, 'a lady did ride him, and on a Mexican saddle, too.'

'Do tell us about it,' said Charley, scenting a sensation.

'It was when I was hunting on the plateaus of the Rockies, I came upon a cattle ranch owned by a white man. His wife was a half-breed from the Red River, tall and lithe, very dark, but still handsome, and she was a splendid horsewoman. She didn't ride as you ladies do,

but, throwing a blanket upon a Mexican saddle, or over the bare back of the horse, it mattered little to her, she would spring from the ground upon its back, draw the loose ends of the blanket back, catching it firmly under her knees, would ride any horse that a man could, and some that many men would hesitate to mount. In this way she and her two elder daughters helped to round up the cattle and horses far more dexterously than the white lord and master could do; for he was a heavy man, and they always gave him a more reliable horse than theirs, and they knew the tempers and the different tricks of each, as a person does those of his intimate friends or relatives.

'When I arrived they were just bringing in a band of cattle and horses for the lower country, and the rather stylish son of a well-to-do city butcher was assisting in the operation. One of the horses had been very hard to lasso, and then no one could mount him. A stalwart young Indian at last succeeded, and tried to start him, but he bucked so—that is, you know, Dora, jumping stiff-legged, first hind and then fore, but still standing in the same place, till

the blood spurted from the nose, ears and eyes of the young man, and he was forcibly taken down.

'The elder daughter had stood watching all this, and she made a bet with the "city man" to ride that horse if he would ride it after her. He felt perfectly safe in accepting the challenge. Several men, Indian, white and mixed, tried to climb into the saddle, but the horse whirled in a circle, and only one Indian succeeded, when the creature stood up on his hind legs, and it was then the bottle of water was broken over his head.

'The young lady held a white handkerchief in her hand, which she had been twisting and twirling for some time. "Antone," she said to the Indian, who had been taken off the horse, and was rather sulky in consequence, "untie young Satan the moment I'm on his back." He ran forward as Miss Pauline did, and before we realised what had happened, she had bound her handkerchief over the horse's eyes, leaped into the saddle, Antone had cut Satan loose, and Miss Pauline was careering over the valley on the animal, which

was as much astonished as we were. She brought him back and he was retied before the handkerchief was removed.

'Now it was the city man's turn. He was a fine rider; besides, he was fully convinced that what Miss Pauline could do would scarcely be beyond him. So Antone was again commissioned to cut Satan loose. But the city man's bandage left one of the horse's eyes staring wildly out, and the moment he was cut loose he made for the lake, and plunging over the bank, left the discomfited, young man struggling in the water, whence, as Miss Pauline said, "They fished him out," amidst the delighted applause of all present. Satan swam out as soon as his burden was gone, and, with saddle and bridle on his mane, and tail erect, galloped off at mad speed, and soon disappeared in a hollow. Antone and another Indian followed him to secure the trappings. I made them an offer for the horse if they would bring him back, which they did; and amongst us we broke him in, but Antone taught him that jockeying trick, which I suppose he'll never forget.'

CHAPTER XV

THE men and boys were still engaged helping to get in the crops at 'The Flats.' The hay being all housed, they proceeded to harvest the oats; so we were still left very much to our own devices and Billy's ministrations.

Of course we had to set and clear tables and do any cooking that was necessary, but we were very glad of Billy for all the rough work.

Josie and I spent the morning in the cook tent making coffee cakes for the evening and some fruit pies for our own dinner; whilst Billy washed all the dishes, cut wood, piled up drift logs for the evening's camp-fire, fetched water and so on.

We were working rather silently for us when Billy took from an inner pocket a package very carefully wrapped in several layers of rag. We

watched to see what treasure would emerge, when he held up a pretty curl of hair, almost white, and side by side with it one of darker hue.

'What's that, Billy?' I asked.

'O, dis twin baby hair.' His English was fast coming back to him; he seemed almost to have forgotten it at first.

'Your hair and Josie's.'

'My hair and Josie's! How did you get it?'

'Long time ago. I cut it off one time.'

'But why?'

'You not salix?' (angry) he asked with an air of great deprecation.

'No,' said Josie, 'go on and tell us what you wanted it for, and why you kept it so long.'

'Not many twins Ind'ans have. Plenty grisly bears up Douglas Lake; dey come down de mountain, ketch fish. Grisly bears very bad, dey kill lots Ind'ans. Some time dey come down, de hair all over one inch long; round dey neck like big collar, five inch long, it stand out all round; den you see him come, you run very quick, dey's mad den and dey kill you sure. But s'pose you got twin child's hair, you take some

and blow it to dat bear, he not hurt you, twin child and grisly bear all de same, dey tillicums' (friends). 'Ind'ans say, bime by twin child die, den he grisly bear.'

'Well, I'm sure you're welcome to the hair, Billy, especially if it will help to save your life.'

Then he went on to tell us bear stories, but as he got excited he mixed up his English with Chinook and some tribal words, but in substance one story was: His wife's aunt was out in the woods getting berries; the poor old creature, being very lame, helped herself along by means of a good stout staff. She heard some dry sticks cracking in the bushes, and saw, not far from her, a grisly bear, getting berries too.

She was dreadfully frightened, and thought she would be killed in a few minutes, for the bear was looking angrily at her. She had on the remains of one of Billy's old felt hats, that is, it was minus the brim. She took it off, put it on the end of her staff, and when his bearship came for her open-mouthed, she thrust it down his throat as far as she could, and while he was

getting over his astonishment at the unusual reception accorded him, and was trying to get it out, she ran away as fast as she could.

'Did you ever meet a bear when you were alone, Billy, and had no rifle?'

'Oh, yes, I meet one bear, half-breed grisly he was. Papa grisly, mamma black; oh dey very cross. One time I go ketch trout. I was walk through a trail, and one dese bears, he stand right up 'gin one tree. I not did see him till I stand right in front him.' Here he took a piece of bone from his pocket about six inches long and two wide, sharpened at both ends. He said the Indians carried these with them if they had neither gun nor knife. When the bear lowered itself, and came towards him with its jaws wide open, he planted it fairly in its mouth near the root of the tongue. You must mind and place it straight up and down, or it will fall out, merely scratching the creature, and then you had better 'hyack clattawa.' He placed a very long accent on the 'hyack' to give it emphasis; ('hyack,' quick; 'clattawa,' to go). They are seldom able to remove it, and die from rage and starvation.

'You got away that time, Billy.'

'Oh, yes, dat times I get away; I go home; I not wait for any fish!' After a pause he asked, 'You see pant'er any times?'

'Yes,' returned Josie, 'I did—about two miles out of town, when I was riding alone on the Pitt River road. They all laughed at me, and said I had seen a deerhound, and taken it for a panther. It was a red brown, and whitish underneath.'

'Had he long tail?' inquired Billy, with interest.

'Yes, a long tail curled over his back when I first saw him, and he stood and watched me as I came along. I knew it was no good to turn back, for he could have caught me if he had a mind, and I expected to meet dad and Charley at every turn. So I kept the horse—he hadn't seen it—walking steadily on; then it put down its tail and went slowly into the bush. I caught up the skirt of my habit for fear it should leap out as I passed, and galloped by as hard as I could go. When dad and Charley came back with me I showed them the place, and they beat the bush for it; but

no one else saw it. I am sure it was a panther, for it was just like the one that is stuffed in the Public Library.' She threw a defiant look at me, for we had all thought her mistaken.

'You see him alright,' returned Billy, confidently. 'I see dem out dere plenty time. Dey stop in bush, not come on road much. Dat kind be brown, one kind in de mountain be not brown, he got spots, he not come down much. O long tail he got. He jump on Ind'an out de trees, he wind dat tail round de Ind'an's neck; choke him. Some time he down by river, he put dat tail in de water, he ketch fish; twenty, thirty pound sturgeon.'

'Do you think that's true, Billy?'

'I not see him, but Ind'ans say so.' He bustled away with his dishes for a while, then he chuckled to himself.

'What now, Billy? What are you laughing at?'

'Oh! yes, I laugh; s'pose I tell you, you not get mad?'

'Oh, no!' we said.

'All de Ind'ans up at Douglas are Cat'olics,

good Cat'olics. One time, white missionary man, some more church, he come up, and he say he like preach to de Ind'ans. One man comtux' (understood or knew) 'Englis'; so de minister he talk to dat man, and dat man he tell de Ind'ans what de preacher say.

'When all de Ind'ans come, de preacher stand up under big pine tree, he hold up he's arms dis a way'—and he held up his arms with the palms of his hands turned towards us —'den he say, "Tenase man couper hyas stick!" De Ind'an he tell de odders in our language, de preacher say, "Little boys dat live in de big trees."'

'I suppose he meant to say,' returned Josie, taking the minister's part, 'Children of the forest.'

'I not know,' said Billy, indifferently. 'But de Ind'ans look at one odder, and dey say, "We not little boys, and we live in de house, we not live in de bigs trees! Dat preacher man t'ink we birds?" Dey get salix. "Ugh! he potlam"' (drunk) 'dey say, and dey go 'way home, and leaf dat man stand under de big pine tree, and he not preach any more.'

'I should think not; but he meant well, Billy.'

'I not know what he mean, dat what he say,' and the matter-of-fact Billy proceeded to mend his fire. Our cooking was done, so we left him to open cockles for soup and went our ways to read and rest.

Dear! dear! dear! how the time did hang on our hands with dad and the boys away and no Mrs Wentworth in camp!

We sat round under our tent awning, waiting for the tide to come up sufficiently to give the little ones their dip and take our own; when, looking up from our lazy reading and lazier work, we saw quite a group of people approaching, Edna and Mary Cracow being the only ones we knew.

A tall, broad, fair man, a pretty little rather feeble-looking woman, evidently the wife of the big man, for he helped her carefully over the logs and through the sand, which was getting cut up by wagon wheels, and was almost as loose and difficult to walk upon as that near the shore.

There were several youths; and another fair

man, younger and very nice-looking, followed with two pairs of oars over his shoulders and the rowlocks in his hands.

Edna, in her stately way, introduced the strangers as Mr and Mrs Milton Bowes, Masters Jack and Washington Bowes, and Mr de Quincy. We duly seated them round upon our stump and drift-log 'sofas,' 'divans' and 'easy-chairs,' as we had named the different camp seats which dad and the boys had arranged for convenience under and near the awning, bringing out a 'rocker' for Mrs Milton Bowes by mammy. These ladies soon discovered their maladies had taken much the same form, and discussed in earnest whispers their several conditions, leaving us to entertain the others.

This we could do well enough, with the exception of the big man, who was very silent, but kept his eyes restlessly searching into everything, under and around every object, as if he expected to unearth some mystery.

I undertook to find out something about him and his object in coming to us; then, without taking any notice of what I had been saying, he introduced the subject of our China-

man, and the trouble we had had over him. 'Oh! we were so sorry any trouble of the kind should have occurred,' said Mrs Milton Bowes, breaking off suddenly from the recital of her bodily ills, 'but it really was not Mr Milton Bowes's fault at all.'

We were rather puzzled to know why it should be, when Mr Milton Bowes raised the lapel of his coat and showed the insignia of his office—'U. S. Customs.'

'You, Mrs Le Ford,' he said slowly and impressively, 'were formally charged with having smuggled a Chinaman into the United States; and that, you are aware, is such a serious offence against the constitution of our land of liberty, that we had to take notice of it. We knew you had him here, of course, for we always keep posted.'

I wondered if he thought there was anything else about our camp he wanted to get posted upon. Mary Cracow proposed we should all take a swim as soon as the water was high enough, and give their shoes a chance to dry, as they had only been able to bring their boat into the deepest lagoon or slough,

and had waded through the others to shore, leaving their brother with the boat to bring it in as the tide rose.

'The water is warmer here than on our side,' she said, addressing Mrs Milton Bowes, 'and perhaps you might venture in too.'

So Mrs Milton Bowes was persuaded to go in with mammy and the children. After they were duly in the water, Mr Milton Bowes made his appearance in very abbreviated bathing costume, saying he 'was afraid his wife might get nervous, as she suffered from heart disease, and he must look after her.' Poor mother hardly knew what to do; she had been so particular that we should take our dip with only the ladies of the camping parties; and here was this great, red lobster of a man swimming and diving, and showing off his aquatic powers as well as he could for the shallowness of the water, 'just to give my wife confidence, that's all, she's so awful nervous!'

He asked mammy to take the other hand of Mrs Milton Bowes and help him lead her out some distance, and there he recommenced his

gymnastics. Mammy then excused herself, and making her way to shore, wrapped her blanket cloak around her, hurried to the tepee and dressed herself.

We had dressed our young people by this time, and all us girls prepared for our swim. We went quite up on the English side, to be out of the way of Mr de Quincy and the young Bowes, when lo! we had scarcely gotten well wet before splash! came one, two, three swimmers; and there were all three young men showing off their gymnastic powers around us, and offering to give us a good lesson in swimming.

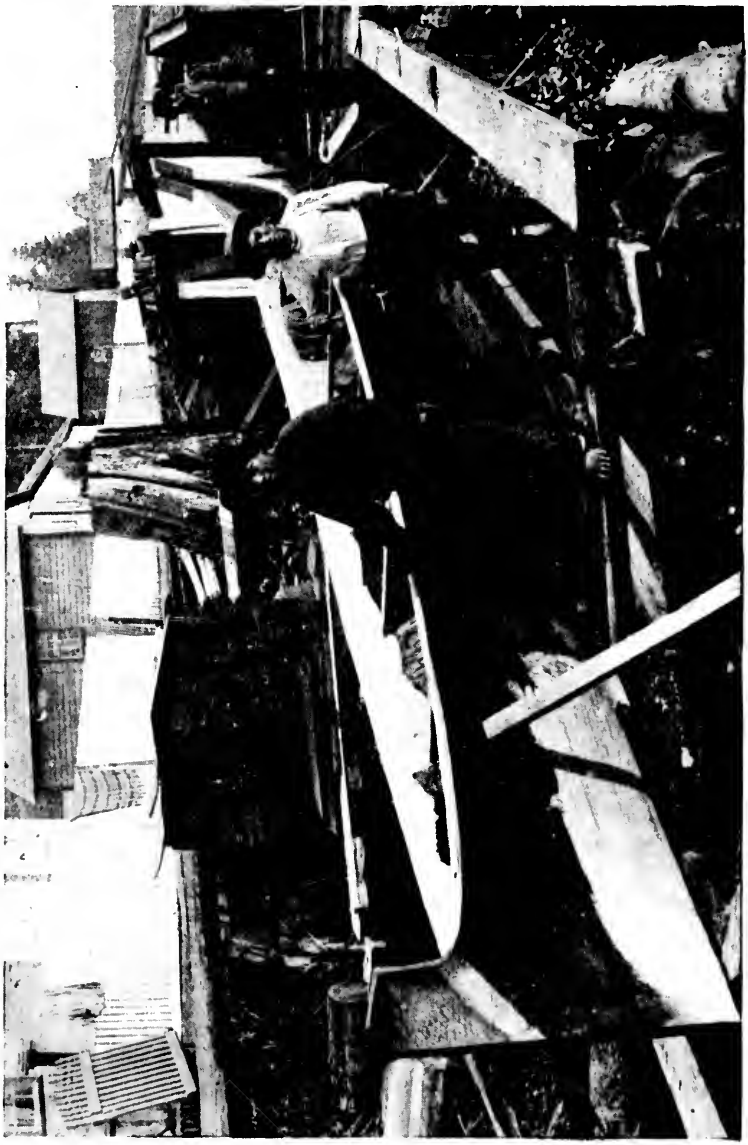
Mr de Quincy seemed quite surprised that we were not greatly flattered by his attentions. Edna, in her splendid stature and scornful grace, tried hard to offend him and make him go away; but he took it as a splendid joke on her part, as he said, 'We had taken so much trouble to get out of sight of the old folks.' He seemed to think we were quite a study in womankind, and stayed right by us. We kept out in deep water as long as possible; but finally we had to wade to shore,

don our cloaks, and escape with what grace we could to the tepee.

We had just served the tea when the young men put in their appearance, but, as it so often happens, if an extra number of people come in unexpectedly you are likely to be short of some essential. In this case poor Billy had overturned the milk and there was very little left. As we had no one to send we had decided to do with condensed, as more would be sent in from 'The Flats' when the boys came home in the evening. But neither Mr de Quincy nor Bobby liked condensed milk, and Mr de Quincy said he would take his tea without. Bobby sat next him with all that had been saved in his little cup, and each time Mr de Quincy's cup was replenished he helped himself to the little fellow's milk. Edna was boiling over with indignation and made signs to look at him.

'I sink you orful gweedy mans,' burst out Bobby at last; 'you dwinked all my milk.'

We didn't feel quite at ease with our visitors, and when Charley came driving over



INDIANS MAKING CANOE FROM TREE TRUNK.

the boundary with our double team I felt the climax was reached.

'Nice team that!' remarked Mr Milton Bowes, eyeing it critically. 'Just come from the Canadian side; I wonder where it's going.'

Of course it came right up to us; and Josie, rising and making a profound courtesy, said, 'Mr Milton Bowes, officer of the U.S. Customs, I make formal report to you of our team and goods brought in from the Canadian side, but only for our own use and consumption.'

He laughed rather grimly and watched Charley unload the week's provisions of bread, cake, pie and so on which he had been to Ladner's and received from town by the steamboat. A bundle of mail matter was laid upon a seat, and Mr Milton Bowes went and stood over it, giving it a slight push that he might the more easily read the addresses and note the post-marks. There was quite a lot of mail matter, and several very official-looking documents addressed to dad. 'Your father is in the employ of the Canadian Government, I see,' he remarked tentatively.

'Here, Bessie,' said Charley, handing out a two-gallon milk can. 'Mrs Wentworth sent you some milk; and she says they'll all be here for coffee to-night.' That was good news.

'Here, Mr Customs Officer, are contraband pies, cakes, bread and so on,' began Josie, 'made by a contraband Chinaman.'

'Sir!' put in Charley, in his quiet way, 'and here's a chicken pie that Uncle Sam and all our dear cousins would appreciate, I'm sure,' and he handed out the article in question very carefully.

'Come over to luncheon to-morrow,' said mammy, 'and help us eat it.'

Mr Milton Bowes said he would if not prevented by business. Then they made their adieux and departed.

'What are they prowling round here for, I wonder?' asked Charley, as soon as he joined us after seeing the ladies to their boat. 'There's something in the wind, I'd lay you anything. I shall go to the Cracow ranch to-morrow and try to find out. Will you go with me, Bess?'

I promised; then we had a hasty dinner and

prepared to receive our welcome guests for the evening.

'May I came in?' called a pleasant voice, and a lady from a neighbouring camp put in her head.

'Come along, of course,' said several voices.

'I only want to give a message; we have some young people from town to-morrow for just one night, and we want to give them a dance.'

'On the sand?' inquired Charley.

'The weeds and grass aren't so broken up by us, and I think we can manage very well. We want all your young people to come, Mrs Le Ford, and we would like to get the young ladies from Cracows', they're such nice girls; and you see all our visitors are young men.'

'I'll take your message in the morning,' said Charley, with more promptitude than he usually displayed.

'That's all I wanted,' said our visitor. 'Good-bye!' and away she went.

CHAPTER XVI

AFTER we had taken coffee, Charley and Frank decided to go fishing; they tried to get Mr Templeton to join them, but he said he would 'rather remain with the ladies.' There was no 'beating around the bush' with him; he always spoke out, whatever his opinions were. Undoubtedly he had often given offence by this directness of speech, for many of his neighbours were 'self-made men,' and given to the idea that their dollars should save them from contradiction, certainly from opposition of any kind. They had run in grooves of their own so many years, till, as dad said, 'They had worn them too deep even to climb out upon the plane of other people.'

As we sat sometimes chatting, sometimes listening to what the men said over their

cigars, sometimes silent, as people who are very familiar, and who understand each other pretty well feel at liberty to do, we were startled by the sudden appearance of the two boys, Charley white and shivering, and Frank looking perfectly dazed. They just beckoned to Josie and disappeared. Fortunately mother was looking in another direction and listening to what Mrs Wentworth was saying. She, so full of tact, saw something was wrong, and that we did not want the little mother to know. So she excused herself on the score of tiredness. Daddy, still unconscious that anything was amiss, went to the sleeping tent, and lighted the candle, which had been arranged by Charley upon the glass of an old clock face, swung from the ridge pole by very fine wire. This arrangement made no shadows upon our canvas walls, and the candle-holder being of glass allowed the light to fall below.

The boys went to their tepee, changed their wet clothes, and repaired to the cook tent, where Billy sat on his heels by a good fire. The kettle was boiling, and Josie

quickly made them a large cup of cocoa each. The rest of the party congregated in the cook tent, anxious to know what had happened. Then the boys told us of the dreadful tragedy which they had witnessed, and in which they had been actors.

They were quietly fishing, with that intense stillness filling the vastness around only broken by the casting of a line, the splash of a fish, or a few whispered words of their own, when they heard the rumble of wheels in the distance, which, coming nearer and nearer, resolved itself into a farm wagon filled with laughing girls; a man's voice being occasionally heard speaking to the horses.

He drove down to the beach, and then the girls disappeared; but you could tell where each group was preparing for a dip by the sounds of laughter and merry chattering which came from the 'bush.'

Soon they were splashing and jumping around in the water, making rings of phosphorescent light, which were plainly discernible, as the moon had not yet risen, though

the tide was coming in very fast. There had been 'a half tide' that evening, so the sands had remained under water.

'Look here! girls, don't go out too far, or you'll drop into the channel; one man can hardly be expected to scoop you all out,' called the voice of the man. Then again, a second or two later, 'Minnie! Where are you?' A merry laugh came from the bather who had ventured out the farthest. Instantly following the laugh a pair of white arms were thrown above the water, and then disappeared as their owner gave an agonised shriek.

The young man almost as quickly disappeared in the same spot, whilst the frightened girls stood huddled together, clinging to each other in speechless terror.

The seconds seemed minutes, the minutes like hours, still no one rose to the surface. Charley began to throw off his clothes, and Frank without a word rowed for the place. As they approached a figure burst from the group of girls and plunged in where the others had disappeared. The boys' boat was now

almost over the fateful spot, and Charley let himself over the side, still clinging to the boat, and with his usual coolness sparing himself for the final effort, when the figure rose to the surface, and he had just time to grasp the long plait of hair that floated towards him. Frank backed water slightly and, leaning over the side, reached down to the object she grasped desperately round the neck. It was the apparently lifeless body of the young man.

Charley had drawn the girl towards him with one hand, and she still had strength enough left to cling to the side of the boat, when he suggested it to her, whilst he held the young man, and Frank pulled gently out of the channel.

Frank said he remembered looking up and seeing the moon as it showed itself above the dark mountains, then down at the white faces above the water, which was still in darkness, and it made him shudder, for he felt as if he was rowing a string of corpses to shore.

The young girl pulled herself together with a great effort. 'She was very brave,' said Charley, with white and trembling lips, as he sipped his hot cocoa; 'she didn't faint or cry,

but went to work on the young man, who was her brother, and amongst us we brought him round.'

'"Minnie?" he inquired feebly as soon as he could speak.

'"Oh, Fred! I pulled hard at her too, but I couldn't get her up; I had to come up with you; I had no more strength left," she said, sobbing.

'He was fully conscious by this time, and, staggering to his feet, made for the channel, and was in before anyone realised what he was doing. Frank recovered himself first.' We all gave him a look of approval, and daddy, laying his hand on the lad's shoulder, said,—

'Oh! Frank's all right!' The tears came into the eyes of the tired, overwrought little fellow, and Charley continued,—

'Yes, he ran for the boat, and when I got in he seized the sturgeon line we had taken with us and began to fasten it firmly to one of my arms. I tried to shake him off, but he said, and his teeth were chattering, "If you are drowned, what will mammy say?" It was done while he spoke, and we pulled out once more. None of the girls had recovered their wits yet

except the sister, and she and Frank pulled whilst I got ready to jump.

'I distinctly felt the two bodies on the sandy bottom. The girl was tightly clasped in the arms of the young man, but I couldn't move them. Then I lost consciousness, and Frank pulled me to the surface.'

'Yes,' said Frank, 'a canoe came along with a couple of Indians in it, and I asked them to try and bring up the man and woman who were down there. One of them said he would if I'd give him two-and-a-half. I told him to try and he should have five dollars if he got them both. He dived, and the other helped to haul Charley ashore. Before Charley quite came round the Indian had swam out and told me 'a salalicum' (ghost) was holding them down, and he would have nothing to do with it. But I promised him ten dollars; I shall have to pay him, you know, dad,' he said, looking doubtfully at his father.

'He shall be paid,' returned dad; 'you could do nothing else, and you did right.' Frank seemed relieved, and continued, 'I promised him ten dollars if he'd go down and fetch them

up, or fasten a sturgeon line on them. He went and stuck a big sturgeon hook in the clothing of each of them, and after a good bit of gentle pulling they came to the surface. I was so frightened when the two white faces showed themselves close together that I let go my oars; but the young lady pulled ashore herself. By that time Charley was pretty much himself again.

'All the girls had dressed themselves except the sister, so we took the two bodies and laid them in the wagon. One Indian was sent for a doctor, and the other drove the team; the girls walking sadly by the side. The poor sister had only her wet bathing dress on, and Charley put his coat on her shoulders.

'We would have liked to see them home, but we were afraid mammy might get alarmed, and poor Charley was pretty well done out, so we got home as best we could.'

The tired boys were glad to seek their sleeping tent, but the rest of us stayed up quite late, too upset to think of sleep.

Next morning, as mammy took her early cup of tea, daddy told her how bravely her

sons had behaved. She was very thankful for their safe return, and said she would like to go and see the people herself, and find out if any assistance was needed. They took the double team, and Charley drove them round by the road.

It was a very melancholy affair; the young man had been out a little over a year, getting his ranch in order and a snug little house built. Then the aunt, who had brought up the brother and sister, came out with the young lady to whom her nephew had been engaged. This was only three weeks ago, when the marriage had taken place. Now, heart-broken, she said she would go right back to Toronto as soon as the inquest was over and take the bodies of the bride and bridegroom for interment near her. That her dear niece, who had accompanied her, had been spared was a matter of great thankfulness.

Charley, with a manliness we had scarcely given him credit for, made all necessary arrangements for them, staying right there till all was settled and the bereaved aunt started on her sad journey eastward. The poor girl

in her bridal white, the orange blossoms resting upon her still white brow, and the young husband in his wedding clothes were taken 'home,' and laid side by side, 'Till the trumpet sound.'

CHAPTER XVII

OUR provisions were running short, so Frank and I started for the Cannery Store to get a supply. Charley had to pass the Cracow ranch, so he could leave his promised message.

As we passed our neighbour's camp we saw the ladies busy making cakes, the men and boys rolling logs for an immense bonfire, reserving the larger ones for seats. They were bound to give the young people 'a good time.'

The tide was too high for us to walk along by the sands, so we took a path through the forest for part of the way, till hindered by the abrupt bluff, when we had to walk on the loose shingle and sand; and with the morning sun pouring down upon you it was a warm walk, and very tiring.

A spring bubbled out at the foot of the cliff, and here several Indians were at work hollowing out canoes. Patiently, chip by chip, using the white man's chisel and hammer, they work until sufficient has been cut away. Then they smooth it up inside and out, placing stout sticks across to brace it open as wide as possible. Building a fire, they turn the canoe upside down over it, and, as the heat expands it, they place other and longer sticks across, till by this simple process the canoe is made fully half as wide again. They then paint them, having first carefully filled every knot hole. The Northern Indians invariably fit in a high prow with the head of an animal or bird carved at its extremity, which represents the tribe to which the owner belongs.

As we proceeded we came upon sheds and shacks, tents and awnings of every conceivable shape, size and material. The women, mostly the elder squaws, were cutting, drying and smoking salmon, which they would carry into the interior, and up into the north as far as Neutka Sound. Under temporary sheds

covered with bark hung lines upon lines of fish, and sticks about three feet long, upon which clams were strung, were interspersed. These latter are considered a great delicacy by the interior Indians, who will barter valuable skins for them. A slow fire is built upon the ground in the centre of these open sheds, which sends out sufficient smoke to cure the fish and clams. No salt is used, and the smell is anything but pleasant during the process.

Children, half naked, were running, crying, laughing and playing everywhere, as children the world over do, civilised or savage. Those from the north revelling in the hot sun and the warm water, swimming and paddling round like aquatic animals.

A number of very large canoes, brought down by the northern tribes, were drawn high upon the beach and carefully covered from the sun by blankets, mats and green boughs; some of them capable of holding fifty men. We were standing by one which had only just been brought in, apparently, for it was yet uncovered, when a decently-dressed young

Indian came up to us and said in very good English, 'That canoe is very large!'

'Yes! very large; how many men will it hold?'

'Sixty, quite easy.'

'You speak very good English,' I said; 'where did you come from?'

'New Metlakatla. I know you. Don't you remember the Indian Paul? I dug your garden; and one time I hear you playing hymns on the organ. I came in and showed you my hymn-book with the music, and asked you to play one what I like very much?'

'Why, yes, Paul! I am very pleased to see you again,' and I shook hands very cordially with him. 'You must come and see mother. She has been sick, and we are camping near the boundary line for her to get the salt-water bathing. You moved to New Metlakatla with Mr Duncan, did you, Paul?'

'I am glad you remember me, but I m sorry the mother has been sick, and shall come to see her as soon as I can. The bathing will surely do her much good.' He spoke very slowly and distinctly, answering

each phrase of mine in order. 'Ye.! I went to New Metlakatla with Mr Duncan; but some of the Indians not feel at home there, and they go back. I am married now, but I left my wife and two children up North. Not good for Indian women, good Indian women, round a cannery.'

'Good-bye, Paul! Come and see us soon; we may not stay much longer.'

'What was he saying about Mettle-kettle?' asked Frank.

'Metlakatla! A missionary went up with his family and resided among the Indians of that place from twenty to twenty-five years. He taught them agriculture, weaving, house-building and many of the comforts and arts of civilisation, and their whole condition was materially improved. Then that part of the coast was included in a new diocese which was created, and the new bishop thought Mr Duncan had attended too much to the temporal welfare of the Indians, as far as I could understand, and not enough to dogma. Anyway, the majority of the tribe supported their old benefactor, and a religious feud was

the result, ending in the followers of the missionary accompanying him to a reserve on the American side. But, as Charley said, many of them don't feel at home there, and the climate is very severe, more so than their old home, so many have returned. Under Mr Duncan they had had a kind of industrial school system, with workshops, I think a sawmill, looms, and so on.'

'What was he saying about hymns?'

'I remember the incident so well; you were a very little fellow at the time. We had an Indian digging and housing the potatoes. Mammy sat in the dining-room darning stockings, and you know my little organ is there, and I was softly playing some "Moody and Sankey" hymn tunes. The door opened, and Paul walked in; he stood a minute or two and listened, then he drew up a chair behind me, sat down and began to sing, reading the words from a book of his own. "That is very pretty," he said, when I had played it through. "I not hear that one before." Then he took my book and turning to another page asked me if I could

play it, showing me his book at the same time, which had the full score. Not only that, he could read the music at sight and sing by it. Mammy and I were surprised at his reading the words, much more the music. We knew he was not a Roman Catholic Indian, or he would scarcely have known anything of revival hymn-books. Then he told us all about Mr Duncan's schools, his music classes during their long, cold winters, and all the good and practical work that was going so silently on in the far North. He thought the city Indians were very wicked, and he told us as soon as he could save money enough he was going back home.'

While I was telling Frank all this we were stumbling along over the rough shingle, and carefully watching our footsteps, for dead fish, cast from the traps, were lying in the sun, filling the air with putrefaction.

The beach widened out as we went to perhaps half a mile at low tide; at high water it reached the very foot of the cliff, covering the sand and shingle to a depth of several feet,

making it impossible to pass on foot, for the cliff rose perpendicularly, a wall of earth, huge boulders and gravel, to a height of some three hundred feet, without a blade of grass or the scrubbiest plant upon its great bare expanse. After passing this point, where the water was now within a few feet of the cliff, the beach rose higher, the mountain came down in a steep slope, but was covered by magnificent maples, with a few cedars here and there. Drawn up here were fishing-boats, small schooners and many craft of a nondescript pattern.

Mr Milton Bowes met us as we stepped upon the cannery wharf, and escorting us silently along, pointed down the open hold of a sloop which was elaborately fitted up with an arrangement of bottles of various kinds, colours and sizes. 'Seized!' he murmured, as he tapped the lapel of his coat which hid the fatal badge upon which was the inscription 'U.S. Customs.'

'What were they doing?' inquired Frank.

'Selling liquor to Indians,' he returned dryly, and betook himself off.

Frank and I went over the cannery, which was quite new, and very clean. At the outer

wharf were fishermen delivering their catch; tallymen counting them as they came up, in order to check the books kept by the fishermen. But very few fishermen are employed round the canneries, which use fish traps, their services not being required. Most of those waiting to deliver their fish to-day were Indians, and they were working by contract one of the tallymen told us.

In a very large building Indian women were washing and cutting the newly-caught fish, which was then conveyed in trucks, with open slatted bottoms, to its several baths of fresh and salt water, passed on to other Indian women and white boys, who placed the pieces neatly in the tins, weighed them, and again passed them on to Chinamen, who fitted the covers on deftly and quickly, when the cans were conveyed in trays to a line of Chinamen, who stood round the walls of the building, placed on a groove, over which an endless belt passed, which distributed them to these men, who soldered them and passed them on again to others, who collected them, and placed them in huge trays of iron, ready for the steaming process, which

was very carefully watched over by responsible white men, as if this part was carelessly performed the whole pack would be spoilt.

These trays were placed in the steam chests, where, under a certain amount of pressure, they remained for a specified time, when they were transferred to another steam chest, after which they were tested by a Chinaman, who punctured each can. If the steam and moisture flew up in a little stream it was all right, and the puncture was quickly soldered. If there was no response to the puncture the can of fish was thrown on one side; there had been a leak in it somewhere. The trays were then dipped in a strong bath of hot lye water, which cleansed them completely from grease or smell of fish. They were then set away to cool and wait the final bath of varnish before being labelled. These two latter processes, however, would wait until the rush of the pack was over, when the fish would be boxed for export.

But the overpowering smell of fish, fish, fish everywhere, the hissing of steam, and the

clang of machinery soon sent us about our own business at the cannery store.

When we came out we were met by Mr de Quincy, and almost directly after we stumbled across Mr and Mrs Milton Bowes in company with the courteous proprietor of the cannery, who invited us to his house for lunch. Here we met the rest of the Milton Bowes family, including a pretty little girl of ten, who seemed as loath to hear herself speak as her father was.

We had met the family of our host in town and felt quite at home with them. Indeed, before lunch was over the whole party, including some young ladies who were visiting there, decided to accompany us back for a dip in the warmer water near our camp.

It was quite likely our friendly neighbours in camp would invite them all to stay for the dance, in which case they would all take dinner with us, and I began to wonder as to the state of our larder.

I confided my doubts to Frank, who suggested we should go back to the cannery store and add to our purchase some canned corn beef, tongue,

pears and peaches. This we did, getting also a goodly-sized box of soda crackers.

'If you don't hurry up,' said Mr Milton Bowes, 'you'll have to wade ashore at your camp.'

'Are you going with us?'

'Yes. I've done enough for one day.'

As many as could crowd in were stowed away in the commodious U.S. Customs boat, which was taken charge of by Mr Milton Bowes and Mr de Quincy, who appeared to be expert oarsmen. A fishing-boat, redolent of its occupation, carried the rest.

As we came near camp two men ran down to a large fishing-boat which had not been there when we left. They rushed through the deeper water to their waists, and commenced hauling frantically at it, apparently intending to get it across the line before we reached them.

But the tide was running out and the sand was showing in bars, where the boat stuck, in spite of all their efforts.

'What are you fellows at?' inquired Mr Milton Bowes, sternly.

'Nothing, sir!'

'Looks likely!' he returned in his slow, dry way. 'Seems to me you're trying to get that boat to the other side!'

The men looked at each other but said never a word.

'Well! what is it?' as they continued to stare and say nothing.

'Isn't that a U.S. Customs boat?' asked one, pointing to the boat in which we were seated.

'Yes it is; but, —— it! do you think I go cruising after boats with a pack of helpless women and children along? What do you take me for? I ain't looking for campers' outfits!'

The men seemed greatly relieved; but our loaded boat, keel bottom as it was, had grounded in the slough between the sandbars, and we would have to wait at least half-an-hour before we could get to shore; even then we should have to wade in our shoes and stockings.

Mr Milton Bowes took in the situation. He looked at the boat by which the men were still standing, their hands upon its sides, as if to defend their property. They seemed to have an idea, too, for one said, 'Ours is a

flat-bottomed boat and we could get the ladies and children to shore dry shod if some of you will help us to get this boat back into the water.'

Out jumped Mr de Quincy, Frank and Jack, and the boat was soon floating in a slough which nearly reached the shore; anyway, the sand was dry beyond. Still there was some distance between the two boats. We looked at each other and felt somewhat uncomfortable. Mr Bowes waded up, his little wife stood on the seat and he picked her up in his arms with as much ease and tenderness as if she had been a baby.

I am somewhat 'chuncky,' as Charley calls it, in the uncomplimentary way one expects from near relatives, and I was afraid to trust myself to either of the lads, so I made up my mind to wade through rather than Mr de Quincy should carry me. I knew I should shudder if he laid his hand on me. I never shuddered if Mr Templeton helped me up or down from my horse, or his hand touched mine, and he was neither so young nor so handsome as Mr de Quincy, who was making

right towards me in his insolent, self-satisfied way, that made me tingle with irritation, when the nasal tones of Mr Milton Bowes's voice said at my elbow, 'Now, if you'll trust to me I'll contract to spurt you over the course.'

I stood up and was carried as easily as his wife had been. 'You got in ahead of me,' drawled Mr de Quincy.

'Can get in ahead of you every time,' Mr Milton Bowes returned, somewhat significantly. Mr de Quincy said nothing, but his look was eloquent.

It turned out that the large, flat-bottomed fishing-boat had brought some of the party of young men for our neighbours' camp round Point Roberts from New Westminster, which is at all times a risky trip. Sudden squalls or fogs are apt to arise, and then a good schooner has all she can do to make it, even with the best of management.

These young men had had a pretty rough time of it. Half their number had waded and swam ashore, and were now making their way across country, with only a compass to guide them; however, they arrived

in a somewhat torn and bedraggled condition during the afternoon, much to the relief of their friends, who feared some of them might not have reached the shore in safety.

As I had anticipated, our visitors were considered a welcome addition to the dance, and had been promptly invited to remain for it. Now, in a camping outfit people seldom overload themselves with crockery, so our guests had to use all sorts, sizes and descriptions of plate, dish, cup or glass that presented itself. Mr Milton Bowes almost hid his rubicund face every time he raised his china bowl to drink his tea; one of the young ladies from the Point ate a preserved peach very daintily from a meat dish, and so on. Everyone seemed to enjoy the helter-skelter meal, making the most of the ridiculous side in order to please the rest.

Billy was kept busily washing up. 'Dem peoples drinks plenty tea,' he remarked, as he made a third kettleful.

'There are plenty of people, Billy,' said Josie, who was getting a dish of crackers.

'Oh! yes, I not mind,' he returned obligingly.

'That contraband Chinaman of yours,' remarked Mr Milton Bowes, sententiously, as he held his plate for a second help of chicken pie, 'is a good hand at this kind of thing, Mrs Le Ford. When you get another consignment across the border I wish you'd let us know!'

'There is a certain flavour about contraband articles, you see, sir,' said Mr de Quincy, demurely.

The big man looked keenly at him, but Mr de Quincy was chasing a small piece of canned pear round a soup plate with a tablespoon, too much engrossed by the pursuit to pay any attention to the more insignificant affairs of life.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE moon would not rise till late, and the daylight was beginning to fade; our little ones were in bed, but we made no bonfire to-night, as we would not be 'At Home,' and mammy wished to retire early. Mr and Mrs Milton Bowes had already departed, with Jack and Mr de Quincy, to bring back the boat for the return of some of their party.

The fiddle was beginning to scrape, so we made an extra toilet with honeysuckles; and a bouquet which had been given us at the Point was divided up to increase our general splendour. Then we sallied forth in a body, and the ball commenced as soon as we arrived, for they had only been waiting for some more ladies.

The fiddler mounted on an old barrel turned on end and gave us the 'Original Lancers.'

He played with his eyes closed in ecstatic oblivion of his surroundings, and sang out the figures to the tune of whatever happened to make the figure. The more enthusiastic he became, the more he swayed from side to side, the louder he sang out the figures and the harder he stamped one foot to the time. This was all very well till he got to the fourth figure; when, after playing the first few bars, he stopped his swaying motion, his stamping foot, and opened his eyes in astonishment. He had forgotten the figure! He made several unsuccessful attempts, the dancers each time beginning over again, but each time coming to a sudden stop when he reached the same bar. At the fourth failure he stamped his foot in a towering rage and said something rather strong under his breath. The weather-worn barrel was not proof against so much ill-timed energy, its head dropped inside, and there was Sandy and his violin neatly boxed up. Some of the young men lifted it from over him, then they went to work and arranged a platform upon a wood wagon, and Sandy was soon playing away at a lively old-time

polka. Each time he tried the lancers the fourth figure slipped from his memory; so they agreed to leave out the offending figure and just go on with the fifth. No one thought of proposing to do it for him, as he had come all the way from Vancouver on purpose to play for his young friends, never dreaming anyone else could handle the violin if he gave it up, for he prided himself greatly upon his musical abilities, and many a mining camp and cattle ranch had resounded to his merry strains. He kept splendid time, playing Scotch reels, Irish jigs and old-fashioned country dances that did a person good to listen to.

I was sitting rather back, out of the glare of the camp fire, watching the effect of its leaping flames upon the dark pines and thick maples which formed a fitting background to the merry revellers, dancing away under difficulties, and extracting all the more fun out of it in consequence, when a voice near me said,—

'Wouldn't you like to have this waltz with me, Bessie?'

'No, I wouldn't, Mr de Quincy, or whatever your name may be,' I returned rudely, for I was annoyed at his easy familiarity; 'I prefer sitting here *alone*.'

'Oh, just as you like!' he returned, and to my relief went and asked someone else. I noticed he was no favourite, despite his handsome looks and fine figure.

'You shouldn't sit so far from the others alone, Miss Bessie,' said the voice of Mr Templeton, coming from out the darkness. Evidently I had not been alone.

'Do you know who that is, Mr Templeton? We can't make out if he is staying round on business of his own, if he belongs to Mr Milton Bowes's party, or if he is a detective watching both sides. Edna Cracow and her sister say he comes in at all sorts of unexpected times, and always with apparent openness of purpose, but he never can be betrayed into making any statement with regard to himself.'

'I think I saw him here several winters ago with a party presumably on a hunting expedition. They killed two or three fine

bears and shot some deer, leaving their camp, which was pitched in a very sheltered nook, alone for days together. Afterwards we heard that thirty-five thousand dollars' worth of opium had been smuggled over the border and successfully gotten away with. From examining the place after they broke up camp, it was seen where the sods had been carefully taken up and as carefully replaced. I think he's here on his own account, and that Mr Milton Bowes is watching your camp for contraband goods.'

'Our camp!' I exclaimed in indignation, 'and pretending to be so friendly. I wonder he's not afraid our salt will choke him!'

'Oh, that's nothing! He only considers it extra "smart." But, according to my way of thinking, he's just one camp out.'

'Not here?'

'Oh, no! in the other direction. But a person living on the border must learn to keep a still tongue. It is no business of ours to interfere. As Mr de Quincy is following the other one's false scent, he can't under-

stand if you people are friends or foes. He keeps up the detective idea, which has somehow gotten about, of course; he may be one, and Mr Milton Bowes isn't sure if he's being "shadowed" by his department.'

'But if Mr de Quincy is in with the smugglers, how is it he doesn't know their camp?'

'You see, Miss Bessie, he isn't in with either; and they are as careful to hide their work from him as from the U.S. Customs. When he finds out who is in this affair he'll go to them and tell them he knows all about their little transaction, and in his detective capacity he will give them up to justice, unless they divide up with him.'

'Not even "honour among thieves." Well, I always had a most unaccountable dislike of him.'

I said nothing more and resolved to keep my own counsel as to what had passed. Of course I would have to tell Josie, but then she was only the same as myself.

'I'm afraid, Miss Bessie, you won't dance with me if I ask you.'

'You didn't ask me!'

'May I have the pleasure?' he asked with all the courtesy of the ball-room, as he rose and stood before me. I took the proffered arm, and somehow that waltz was very delightful.

'I thought you said you wouldn't dance,' said Mr de Quincy, in his lazy, insolent manner.

'I said I wouldn't with you,' I returned somewhat unwisely. He turned with a very ugly expression upon his handsome countenance and faced Mr Templeton. The two men eyed each other steadily for a second or two.

Then Mr de Quincy, laughing insolently, remarked, 'Oh! that's it, is it? I sha'n't interfere with you!'

'It would be no good if you did,' I returned hastily, only thinking of the unaccountable dislike I felt for this handsome young man, and not considering it implied anything further. Before another word could be spoken Mr Templeton had turned away with me, and he treated me with great reserve for the rest of the evening. I felt rather miserable; but it was

twelve o'clock, and tea and coffee, sandwiches and cake were handed round in liberal supply. Then the party from the Point embarked for home, and the young men from the city sang with fine effect, as soon as they had pushed them off, 'Good-bye, ladies.'

Those in the boats took up the strain upon the water, answering back. But I was out of sorts with fine effects to-night, and under cover of the general good-byes I hurried to the camp and hid myself in the sleeping tent. I had gone down so many degrees in my own estimation I could not bear to see anyone. I told Josie all about it when she came in, and that relieved me greatly; but I was ill at ease.

Strange to say, Mr de Quincy disappeared as suddenly as he had come upon the scene, and to my relief we saw him no more.

CHAPTER XIX

'OH! Bessie! Josie! do wake up!' came in tones of alarm from behind mammy's curtain.

'All right, mammy,' called daddy's cheerful voice, 'it will soon be over.' He came in and lit the candle that the lightning might appear less vivid.

Josie and I turned sleepily as a perfect cannonade of thunder broke over our heads, followed by a sound like the heavy discharge of musketry. Of course we had never heard a heavy discharge of musketry, but it was all of one hundred times as much noise, and of the same description as when our Rifle Volunteers discharge their volleys at noon upon the Queen's birthday.

It was rather appalling out there, so near the

woods; the wind had risen to a perfect hurricane, and the short, choppy waves of the bay were lashed to fury.

We looked out of the tent; no boat could possibly live in such water. The sheet lightnings played among the dark forest trees, and the forked arrows of flame seemed to dart into the mountains, making momentary illuminations of peak and chasm, crag and crevice.

A long and terrific scream from the camp below made us shiver as the rain poured in torrents and sprayed through our tent although we had a stout weather sheet stretched above it.

We were all up and dressed, and daddy called, 'Cover up your beds, boys, and come in here or you'll get drenched.'

Charley came out of the darkness from below; he had been to investigate the cause of the scream. It seemed that one of our neighbours had been watching the lightning, as we had, but their tent was pitched under a magnificent maple, which stood out from the forest alone but lovely. We had often envied them its

grateful shade. Now it was rent and riven, and had fallen right across their 'general purpose' tent, as they called their store and cooking apartment. In falling, one immense limb had taken the sleeping tent with it, and a branch as big as an ordinary tree lay stretched along the aisle which divided their line of camp beds, the smaller branches literally binding the sleepers to their places.

The young lady who had risen to watch the grand effect of the lightning had at the same time received a shock which affected her eyesight; but a young doctor, who had been among the visitors of the night before, said it would not be permanent.

The ladies and children from the wrecked tent crowded into ours, and there we sat huddled together, waiting until the tempest should have exhausted itself, which it did as daylight was breaking, and we saw the sun rising in splendour over the mountain-tops, his light filtering through the dark and angry clouds below, while above the line of the tempest all was calm and bright.

The team from 'The Flats' arrived, our

own was harnessed up, some valises of dry clothing hastily put together, and we escaped to the solid shelter of a house. Meanwhile, our neighbours were very glad to take possession of our encampment, for, thanks to the knowledge gained by dad in his engineering expeditions, our tents remained as firm as ever; the rain had only tightened the numerous ropes, by which all was securely pinned to Mother Earth.

The heat of summer was over and mammy declared nothing would induce her to go into camp again. So we all stayed a few days with Mrs Wentworth; and as soon as our neighbours' camp was put in order, the boys were to break up ours and return the stuff to town.

I felt shy and uncomfortable with Mr Templeton, and begged mammy to let me go home ahead of the others and see that the house was ready and that the bottling and preserving of fruit for winter use was not being neglected.

Josie said she would go too, and we decided to ride over the road by way of the sands,

with Charley as escort. But when the time came for our departure, four horses were brought round to the front door. Mr Templeton helped Josie to mount first, Charley vaulted into his saddle, and away they scampered on ahead.

Mr Templeton excused himself for 'one moment'; there was something he wished to take with him. Mammy and Mrs Wentworth hovered about me with more than their usual solicitude. When I was mounted I wanted to catch up with the others.

'I thought you were a merciful young lady, Miss Bessie,' Mr Templeton said in his quizzical way. I looked inquiringly at him. 'You know you should take your horse easy for the first mile or two when you have a long distance to go, and then you can take him in at the end of your journey almost as fresh as when you started.'

'Josie and Charley seem to have forgotten that,' I returned uneasily. But he soon began to talk so pleasantly of English country life, and of his travels in distant lands, that I got quite at my ease.

When we crossed the Fraser on the steam ferry *Surrey*, an hour later than Josie and Charley, I wore on my hand the engagement ring he had returned to fetch; having made up his mind to settle the matter one way or the other on the trip to town. Had he been refused, he had left Dolly in the charge of Mrs Wentworth, intending again to go forth a wanderer. Daddy and mammy had given their consent should I be willing to accept him. I had been so quiet all through the to me, trying time, that they were uncertain as to the state of my feelings.

When the Wentworths returned to town, mammy and Mrs Wentworth had great consultations, and many mysterious garments were brought out and the patterns taken surreptitiously. They were, however, of very small clothes, which were hastily bundled out of the way whenever us girls made an unexpected visit to the sewing-room. We decided they were certainly not for Dolly.

On the twenty-sixth of October Josie and I sat on the bottom step of the stairs, our arms entwined around each other, contemplat-

ing two piles of trunks, valises and so on. One lot was addressed 'Mrs John Wilbert, Osooyoos'; the other, 'Mrs Thos. Templeton, "The Flats."' To-morrow was to be the double wedding.

THE END

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