

loth to rise and shake himself from the sleep of winter. Looking west from the gate of the little fort, the eye followed the river to its first curve, where dipping behind a thicket-lined shore, the great V-shaped channel became hidden from view.

Round this turn there suddenly appeared two dogs, then a train of dogs running light, and then an Indian following with rapid step. The signal was given, and the inmates of the fort flocked out upon the river bank. A glance along the river sufficed to assure me of the Untiring's safety; he led the way with upraised tail, some distance in advance of the harnessed dogs, apparently thinking that his presence in that position was of as much importance to the general welfare of the procession as though he had been some time-honoured city official in the leading ranks of a lord mayor's show.

I left St. John's as the month of April was drawing to a close, and by the 1st of May was well within the outer range of the Rocky Mountains.

Cerf Vola, released from all bondage, but still imbued with a belief that he was somehow or other furthering the progress of the party, performed prodigies of supererogatory toil in front of the horses.

Where the grand stream of the Peace River emerges from the eastern face of the mountains there is a steep and rugged hill, whose frontlet of sandstone rock commands a vast view of snow-clad peak on one side, and upon the other a range of interminable plain, so extensive that even in the mistless atmosphere of this

lofty land the eye is lost in distance. One clear afternoon in the end of April I stood upon this lofty summit, to scan the land I had left behind, and to try and pierce the mountain range which I was about to enter.

The ascent had been toilsome; but to the Untiring, who accompanied me, its effects were only visible in increased rapidity of respiration. I am not in a position to state what were his precise sentiments with regard to the magnificent panorama of hill and plain that lay on all sides around us, or whether his prolonged gaze back towards the vast plain over which we had travelled, and that suddenly suspended respiration which a dog indulges in during moments of deep thought, had any reference to several *caches* which he had formed at various times along the trail, when by chance the supply of moose meat had been unusually abundant, and the perplexing question had arisen to him of how to dispose of his surplus ration.

Many a time had I seen him depart slyly from camp with a large bone or lump of meat in his mouth into the recesses of the neighbouring forest, and, after an interval of some minutes, reappear again from a different direction, with a pre-occupied air, as though he had been engaged in deep researches into the nature and various botanical virtues of pine and birch trees.

He appeared perfectly oblivious, however, of the fact that his outward track was always traceable on the snow, and although the precise spot wherein lay

his *cache* was usually so trampled over by feet and pushed by nose as to be difficult to determine to the eye of man, still I have little doubt that all his craft of *cache*-making was utterly useless to delude for a moment any wolf or wolverine, even of the meanest mental capacity, who dogged or prowled our track.

Perhaps, as the Untiring now looked from this lofty standpoint over the immense waste of pine and prairie land, the vision of these never-to-be-revisited *caches* arose to his memory; for, doubtless, they had been made with a view to a return journey at some future period, and it is not at all unlikely that, on the summit of this outlying spur of the Rocky Mountains, the fact first dawned upon this dog that never more was he to see these northern wilds. Be that as it may, having caught sight, far below, of the smoke of our camp, he appeared all at once to determine that, as the old camps were irrevocably lost to him, there was nothing to be done but to make the most of the new ones; and he began a precipitate descent of the mountain in the direction of our halting-place for the coming night.

When, a couple of hours later on, I reached this camp, I found him watching the preparations for supper with a resigned and cheerful countenance.

On the 1st of May I launched a large canoe, hollowed from the trunk of a cotton-wood tree, on the swift waters of the Peace River, at the western or upper end of the cañon which the river forms as it breaks through the outer mountain barrier, and set

out to force up against the rapid stream deeper into the snow-clad hills. I had a crew of three men. *Cerf Vola* lay in the bottom of the canoe.

For some days our upward passage was attended by constant danger from the huge masses of ice, some of them tons in weight, that came whirling down the impetuous current; at other times we had to struggle hard beneath the shadow of impending cliffs of shore ice, whose sides, yielding to action of air and water, formed so many miniature avalanches always ready to slide down into the river.

It was a completely new life to the dog. He lay in the bottom of the canoe at my feet, unable to persuade himself by any process of dog thought that he had a share in the locomotion of the boat; he saw the shore drift slowly by, and whenever an opportunity offered he showed unmistakable symptoms of preference for the land; but on the whole he sat a quiet spectator of these new scenes, and under the combined influences of rest, genial atmosphere, and good food became rapidly rotund and philosophic.

As the days wore on, and the quick coming spring brought more signs of bird and beast upon the river-shore, it appeared to strike him that somehow or another he had a right to develop sporting characteristics. Is it not a similar idea which occurs to the retired man of business, who, when the season of his toil has passed, becomes a hunter of many semi-wild things on moor, or river-side, or mountain?

However that may be, the Untiring's success as a

sporting dog was not commensurate with his ambition. The partridge scarcely ceased their "drumming" to elude his pursuit, the wild duck looked at him as an impostor of the bear or beaver species, the geese walked in dignified indifference across the sand-bars as he approached their feeding grounds, and the blue grouse had the impertinence to fly into the nearest tree and look down with inquisitive calmness at his vociferated barkings. But one fine day there came a great piece of sport to the dog. It occurred in this way.

From our camp, on the north shore, I had set out to climb the steep grassy hills that rose one above the other until, gradually merging into higher mountains, they became part of the snows and rocks that dwelt for ever there. I had walked for some hours, and crossed a wide extent of ground, when suddenly there sounded in a neighbouring thicket of dry dead trees, the wrecks of a former fire, a noise as of some wild beast moving through the bushes. Looking in the direction from whence the noise came, I saw standing about ninety yards distant from me a large moose, who seemed from the manner in which he regarded me not to have fully made up his mind what I was. Quick as thought I threw open the barrel of my breechloader, withdrew from one barrel the cartridge case of grouse shot, and replaced it by one holding a round bullet, well backed by a heavy charge of powder. Then, raising the gun, I gave the moose the new charge. I heard the ball strike with that dull

thud which ever tells the ear that the eye has truly marked its distance ; and then, out from the thicket at the further side, I saw the huge ungainly animal trot with a heavy limp, and disappear beyond a neighbouring hill-crest. To dash through the thicket of *brûlé* and gaze down the valley beyond took me only a short time ; but from the crest no moose was visible, nor did the opposite ridge of hill up which he must go show anything of his presence. Down the hillside, however, the stones and grass bore many traces of his presence, showing that the bullet had taken effect ; and it was easy to follow the trail into the valley by the blood-stained willows, against which the deer had brushed his path.

While I still followed the trail the shades of evening began to close over the great hills. The camp by the river shore lay a long way off. True, it was all downhill ; but the gorges were steep and rough. It was better to head for camp ere the darkness had come fully down. Giving up the pursuit I struck into a narrow winding glen, and descending with rapid footstep, soon saw the glimmer of my camp fire below me in the dusk.

Recounting my story to Kalder, I found that trusty henchman only faintly sharing the sanguine view which I took regarding our chance of finding on the morrow the wounded moose. This doubt on his part arose, however, from the general disbelief entertained by all Indians and half-Indians in the power of a white man, unaided, to kill a moose—a disbelief

founded upon the practical proof of ages of experience. Mine, however, had been a solitary chance. I had come all at once upon a moose, without any of that long toil of stalk and stealth, of trail and track, of which alone the wild man is master.

Explaining all this to my henchman, I proposed that we should in the morning ascend the steep ridges again, and striking the trail at the point where I had left it off on the approach of night, follow it deeper into the hills. Accordingly, early next day I set out with Kalder. The Untiring was brought, to fairly test his claim to be considered a dog of sport, and after an hour's steep climb the little party reached the ground. Deep sunken into the soft clay of the valley where I had left it lay the trail of the moose; and ere Kalder's quick eye had followed it many yards, the blood-stained willows had set at rest his lingering doubts.

We followed the track through many rough and tangled places, and reached at last a spot where the moose had lain down to rest. Here the Untiring, who up to this period had contented himself with deep and long-drawn inhalations from the ground, suddenly broke from our restraining influences and precipitated himself into a neighbouring thicket. There was a loud rustling noise, a breaking of branches, followed by the reappearance of the dog of sport, and the disappearance of the moose at the other side of the thicket. It is painful to have to place upon record that so deep were the feelings of disgust with which Kalder listened to this annihilation of his hopes of

stealing unnoticed upon the moose, that neither his mother tongue of Cree nor his mixed father tongues of French and Scotch were at all voluminous or varied enough in their imprecatory powers to express his overburdened sentiments.

We now continued our rapid chase through tangled brakes and thorny thicket. At last, on the summit of a steep ridge, the quick eye of Kalder caught sight of the quarry looking back a moment at his pursuers; up the hill we pressed, over it and down the valley we tore, and at last by the edge of a small glen stood the moose, his long course ended.

What a time it was for *Cerf Vola!* He made *caches* in many places, he ate a great deal, then made a *cache* and returned to eat again. Finally, when the moment came to descend towards our camp, he had two large marrow-bones tied across his back, and waddled down the mountain a picture of perplexed satiety.

On again, up the great river into the heart of the mountains, until they rose before us in huge masses, on whose rent sides spring had already begun to build nests of bright green birch tops amid the dark masses of unchanging pines, and on whose splintered pinnacles of snow the sun marked the dial of the day with slow-revolving finger as he passed from east to west across their glorious summits. Mornings, mid-days, evenings—how filled with beauty they were! How saturated with the freshness of the spring seemed every particle of this old earth! From all things there came welling forth the hidden sweetness of

flowers not yet burst to life, of leaves upon whose early freshness summer had not yet set even a semblance of maturity, nature's first symptom of decay. Over the grey rocks, on the old pine-trees, up the great, gaunt hills, spring was creeping, scattering youth and perfume as it went. Even the shingly shallows of the river were filled with life; for tiny birds fluttered from stone to stone, dipping their heads into the cool water, and casting jets of silvery spray over their glistening wings.

Rare beauty of earth, when thus in hidden valleys thou claspest to thy bosom the season thou hast so long dreamt of—this spring of blue sky, of odorous winds, of golden sunshine! Man, toiling for gold or bread in distant cities, knows little of thy beauty or of thy freshness; but everything else living feels in its heart's core thy wondrous power. Around thy union flowers shed their fragrance, birds sing their sweetest, cold frost changes to silvery dew, rain becomes a bridal veil of gentlest shower, and as thou turnest from the sleep of winter to kiss the lips of returning spring, a thousand tongues of bird and brook pour forth over hill and valley a ceaseless song of gladness.

The middle of May had come. We had passed through the Rocky Mountains, quitted the main stream of the Peace River, and entered the impetuous torrent of the Ominica, to find ourselves brought at last to bay by the rapids and whirlpools of the Black Cañon. For three days we had waged a struggle, that began soon after daylight to end only at dusk, with the two

miles of foaming rapid which, caged in by the dark prison walls of the cañon, forbade our upward progress.

It seemed as though the steep walls of rock overhanging the torrent, and the mass of water pouring through the dark defile, had, amidst their own wild war, agreed to combine their rival forces against us, the new-comers, and to threaten our cotton-wood canoe with frequent destruction. From our camp at the upward end of the cañon we had descended daily to the toil of dragging the canoe over the rapids and along the rocky walls of the fissure. These rapids were like so many steps, one above the other, and at the foot of each step there was usually a back eddy in the current in which it had been possible to moor the boat after each day's labour. Many mishaps had befallen us, but each evening had witnessed some advance made, until at last nothing but the uppermost rapid, a fierce and angry-looking wave, lay between us and the quiet waters that stretched eastward of the cañon.

I know no work which tells more quickly against the nerve and spirit of man than such toil as it was now our lot to wage against rock and water in this deep and narrow fissure; for, when the dead things which we call water and rock become suddenly quickened into life, there is apparent to man a helplessness such as he feels before no other enemy. His strongest strength is weak in the grasp of the thousand horsepower of this torrent; his best gun, his truest rifle,

his craft of eye or arm, avail him nothing in conflict with this enemy. Instinctively the mind realises all this, and as the rapid dashes around him, and the rocks tremble, and the dark cañon walls echo with the reverberating roar of the sullen waters, the man who strives against this enemy feels cowed by a combat in which all the dead weight of enraged nature seems bent to crush him.

We had been working for some time along the western shore of the cañon, and had reached the last step of the ascent, when an event occurred which threatened to put a final period to my onward progress. It was nothing less than the breaking away of our boat as we were straining every nerve to drag her up the fall of water, and her disappearance from our gaze down the wild torrent of the cañon. When the last vestige of the canoe had vanished from us, as we stood crowding the point of rock which commanded a mile of the dark cañon, the full gravity of the situation burst wholly upon us. Our camp and all our supplies lay at the other side of the river, in charge of the Untiring. A rough raft, however, would carry us over in some shape or other, but at our camp we were full seventy miles distant from the point to which we were tending—the mining outpost of Germansen, on the Ominica.

Seventy miles is not a long way to walk on ordinary level or on mountain land, but seventy miles through the dense forest of north British Columbia is a distance sufficient to appal the stoutest pedestrian.

Fallen timber, deep water-courses, tangled thickets, almost perpendicular valleys, and three mountain streams swollen into rushing rivers by the thaw of snow, lay before us; and to carry on our backs through such a country provisions for twelve days, together with blankets, kettles, axes, and all the paraphernalia of camp life in the wilderness, was an undertaking so serious as to make even the hardy Kalder and the scarcely less daring Jacques doubtful of the result. To one member of the party alone would the journey have appeared easy of execution. The Untiring would no doubt have joyfully reverted to the use of his own stout legs in preference to all our work of pole, paddle, or towing-line; even his ten days' provisions would have been a welcome load to him, for it would have been perfectly feasible to stow them, not upon his back, but in his stomach. But to us, who possessed neither his carrying capacity nor his easy method of passing obstacles of tree or water, the task of crossing these seventy miles would have been widely different. It was therefore with feelings of keen delight that I listened next morning to the Frenchman's voice hailing us from across the river that his search had been successful (he had gone down the river bank in the hope of finding the canoe stranded on some of the many islands in the stream), and that our boat lay athwart a small island some five miles below the mouth of the cañon.

We set to work at once upon our side of the river to build a raft at the lower end of the cañon; the raft

finished, we embarked and pushed out into the stream. Cerf Vola, who had spent the last few days in blissful repose in our camp, was now brought forth, and crouching low between two logs, seemed to fully realise the necessity of keeping quiet as the unwieldy craft swayed and jerked from side to side in its rapid descent of the river.

We reached the island, found our lost boat, made a hearty dinner off the moose meat that lay uninjured in the bottom, baled out the craft, dried in the warm sun the things that had got wet, and set out again for the stubborn cañon. After so many reverses and so much good fortune, surely we must conquer this last obstacle. But the time lost had been precious; the hourly increasing heat of the mid-day sun was causing the river to rise with rapidity, and the vast volume of water now rushing through the pent chasm of the cañon was indeed formidable to look at. I have told the story of our failure on the following day to cross above the central rapid; of how, carried like a cork down that central rapid of the cañon, we had escaped destruction by a hair-breadth; of how, holding discussion at the foot of the fall, we had finally determined to abandon the cañon altogether, and seek by a southern branch of the Peace River an escape from this wilderness of rock and forest, into the southern lands of British Columbia; and how, when this resolve had been taken, we had broken up our camp and carried back to the canoe all the baggage, to set out with heavy hearts upon what seemed

a hopeless journey. Issuing from the mouth of the cañon, strange objects on the shore caught our sight.

Of all the strange sights in the wilderness there is nothing so strange as man—strange not only to the wild things, but to man himself. Nor is it difficult to comprehend why it should be so. If a bear were to escape from a menagerie and perambulate a crowded street, he would doubtless be vastly astonished at the cabs, and the men, and the omnibuses; but it is by no means improbable that he would be still more vastly astonished if he were to meet another bear perambulating there too. So is it when we reverse the cases. When one has lived long in the solitude, a moose or a buffalo gladdens the eye; but if one wants excitement it is fully experienced when the vision of the human animal strikes the wanderer's sight. There was no man now on the south shore of the Ominica, but there were traces of man. There was a camp, and it was the camp of a white man—a glance told that; coloured blankets, a huge pair of miner's boots, some bags of flour (greatest luxury of the wilds), a couple of fresh beaver-skins, the bodies of two young beavers. We put in at once to shore, and each member of the crew, following the bent of his particular genius, went straight to the item that had most interest for him. Kalder attached himself to the beaver-skins, the English miner to the flour, Jacques made for the miner's boots, and the Untiring prostrated himself before the beavers in an attitude of profound expectation.

Jacques was the first to speak.

"It's Pete Toy," he said, after a pause, during which he had been steadfastly regarding the large nails in the soles. "There's nary another foot on the Ominica that could fill a boot like that," he added, flinging down the immense seven-leaguers in intense admiration. "He's left his canoe above the cañon," he went on, "and he's going to drop her down empty when he's done portaging his load here."

Jacques was right; all this wealth of bacon, beans, beaver, boot, and blanket, belonged to Pete Toy, the best-known miner that ever drove shovel into sand-bar on all the wide rivers of Columbia, from the Big Bend of the Fraser to the uttermost tributary of the Liard. And soon came Pete himself upon the scene, carrying another load of good things through the forest to his camp below the cañon from his canoe above it. Jacques and he were old friends, and we were soon all good ones.

But Pete Toy, once of Cornwall, now of Columbia, was not a man to make friendship a business of empty words and hungry questions. The social rule that lays down the law of not speaking with one's mouth full was changed in his mind to another rule more fitted to the wilderness, namely, that a man should not speak with his stomach empty; and while he plied his questions as to our strange presence in this land, he plied too all his tact of cook and waiter to lay before us the delicacies of his provision bags—

to give us, in fact, the first good meal we had had for many months.

Then came the time for talk. I heard from Pete many an item of interest regarding river and mountain in the unknown country to the north, all gathered during the long years he had lived and roamed among the rivers of this mountain land; for no Indian was a better hand at craft of canoe or toil of snow-shoe than this great Cornish miner, who had long shaken the dust of civilisation from his feet, nor left behind with it his kind and generous nature. I heard too of his early life in far-away Cornwall, and of his hopes in the future to see again the home he had quitted twenty years before.

“Yes,” he said, “many a night when I sit alone before the fire in my hut down at the Forks of the Peace and Parsnip rivers, I see the old place and the old couple again.”

“And you’re going back to England?” he said to me, when the time of parting came; “you’re really going to see the old land! Maybe you’d go to Cornwall, too? Well, if you should meet an old couple of the name of Toy down there, just say to them that you saw their son Pete, him as left them twenty years ago, out on the Ominica, and that they were as fresh in his mind as the day he saw them last.”

I had with me then but few things of any use to any man; nothing that could measure the respect which I, who knew the dangers of the life he followed, held him in.

The man who thinks you can offer this class of gold-miner gold knows little of such natures; but I took from my stock a coat that had often kept me warm in the bitter days and nights of the past winter, and asked him to accept it.

“As payment for the darned thing I gave you?” he asked, his face flushing at the thought.

“No, as a token of your meeting a single stranger in the wilderness, and of your being kind to him—that’s all.”

Poor Pete Toy! we parted at the cañon mouth, he to take our boat that could not go up, we to take his that he feared to bring down, the rush of water. We carried all our goods to the west end of the Black Cañon, loaded them in the new canoe, and went our way.

Just one year later, in this same fresh month of May, a solitary canoe was found floating bottom upwards in the ever-seething eddies below the Black Cañon; there was no trace of man or camp on forest, shore, or river. Never again was Pete Toy seen. His lonely hut at the Forks stands locked and tenantless, and only when the gloomy cañon tells its secrets, and the treacherous whirlpools of the Ominica give up their dead, will the last fight fought by this dauntless heart with untamed nature be ever known.

He had literally laid his feast for us upon the site of his own death scene. The pines that stand at the gateway of the Black Cañon are old and stately trees.

For hundreds of years they have watched the wild rush of water pour through that narrow passage, and it may be that their unseen eyes, looking so far back into the past, have caught the weird power of the old seers of pine-clad Scandinavia, and see in misty outline the coming time.

Beneath their shade that evening camped Pete Toy, his mind still running upon the home thoughts our presence had evoked. Perhaps, while later on he slept by the scene of that long sleep so soon to come, the old trees swaying in the night wind bent down to gently whisper "Never" into the home-dream of his memory.

A JOURNEY OF A DOG AND A MAN FROM CARIBOO TO CALIFORNIA.

I.

IT was summer in the forest and yet Quesnelle was not amiable. Its mood was even gloomy. Like many other communities in the world, that of Quesnelle existed solely upon gold; but the fact of their lives being dependent upon the precious metal was, perhaps, more thoroughly brought home to the everyday denizens of Quesnelle than it is to those of many more important and world-famous cities.

Standing on the high bank which overhung the broad, swift-rolling Frazer, and looking full into the face of Quesnelle, even a stranger could quickly realise the fact of the city's being out of sorts. Fully half of its wooden houses showed unmistakable signs of un-occupation; the boards of verandahs were loose and broken; grass grew vigorously before the doorways; broken windows, or windows which would have been windows if old doors had not been nailed across them,

stared blankly at one along the front of the single street which constituted the city. Even the two or three saloons in respective possession of Mr. William Davron, native of Ireland; Mr. Steve Knightly, native of New Brunswick; and Mr. Hank Fake, native of one of the New England States, had about them individually and collectively an air of perfect repose and meditative loneliness quite out of keeping with the festive character usually pervading such establishments.

Yes; although it was summer in the forest, and earth and air seemed filled with the freshness of leaf and the perfume of flower; although birds sang and streams rippled, Quesnelle took small heed of such things, looking buried in a "mid-winter of discontent." So it is all the world over, in other cities, big and little, besides Quesnelle. Golden sunshine, scent of early summer, freshness of first leaf, and perfume of June rose are dead things to the gold-hunter in a Californian or Columbian mining city, quite as much as they are to the pleasure-seeker in the gayest of Europe's capitals. It is not only "on the desert air" that nature wastes her sweetness; her most lavish extravagance is that which is spent upon man when gold and pleasure mark the goal towards which he toils.

The morning had worn to mid-day. The sun hung full over the broad channel of the Frazer, and yet Quesnelle showed no symptoms of rousing itself from the apathy of the earlier forenoon. Once or twice,

indeed, Mr. William Davron came forth from his saloon towards the high river bank, and leisurely scanned the farther shore of the majestic river, and the red dusty track which led from it, curving up the steep outer hill until it was lost in the great green forest. But on these occasions Mr. Davron beheld nothing to call forth from his usually loquacious lips anything more expressive of his emotions than a wreath of blue grey smoke from a very indifferent cigar, and he had re-entered his saloon for the third time ere there occurred aught on the farther shore to justify his continued survey of that portion of the landscape.

But at last, when there was no watcher on the high bank, there did appear on the farther side of the river some sign of life and movement. Down the hill along the light streak of curving pathway, which showed plainly here and there among the green underbush of the forest clearing, which sprang up when the older giants had been levelled, there arose a cloud of dust which trailed away behind into a finer vapour. At the head of the cloud appeared a small group of horsemen, moving at a sharp canter along the steep incline. The road wound in curves along the hillside, sometimes dipping out of sight and reappearing again, until it at last reached the level valley at the base; and it was difficult to tell the exact number of the party until the nearer and more level land had been attained, so frequently did the little group become lost to view behind the clumps of brushwood.

But, as the horsemen came cantering up to the farther shore of the river, their numbers and possible condition in life became the subject of much comment among the little group of citizens, who, called suddenly from their wooden houses by the news of "Strangers a-coming," had assembled on the high bank in front of Quesnelle.

"Blow me, if I can make out much of 'em!" emphatically observed Mr. Davron, as he dropped from his eye the hand which had held a much-used binocular to that optic. "Thar's Rufus an' his Injun among them; an' thar's a boy from the camp—for he's got camp fixins with him; but thar's a long-legged chap an' a big dog thar that beats me blind altogether. The man is in leather, as though he came from across the mountains, an' the dog is a coyote or a wolf, with a tail just stretched over his back like a darned chip-monk. Blow me, if I know what he is!"

Now a man who has a binocular to his eye is more or less a person of authority among other men who do not possess that article; but Mr. Davron maintained always a certain degree of authority among the inhabitants of Quesnelle, and was considered by them to be, with or without a binocular, a very far-seeing person indeed, whose opinion should not be lightly gainsaid in any matter concerning man or beast.

It is easy to imagine, then, that when Mr. Davron declared in curt and forcible language his utter inability to resolve the nebulous character of the

party on the opposite shore, his hearers should have experienced considerable excitement. Strangers from the north were, at this season of the year, rare exceptions.

Beyond Quesnelle, towards the north, there lay a huge wilderness—pine-forest, lake, mountain, rushing river—a vast expanse of untamed nature, where the wind and the torrent revelled in loneliness, and made music night and day in pine-branch and rock-rapid. In this great solitude stretching to the north Quesnelle was an advanced post of civilisation, an outlying picket of that vast army of man which is ever engaged upon the conquest of the wilderness.

It was here at Quesnelle that the ways of civilised wheel-travel ended, and the rude work of pack-saddle began. Here was the last hotel, the last group of houses, the last post-office—all rude and rough and simple in their ways, but still tangible proofs of the reality of civilised man existing as a community.

Beyond the Frazer River, on the other hand, the wilderness reigned supreme. There the traveller carried his blanket bed, ate his dinner upon the ground, slept at night under his tent, swam his horse across the brooks and rivers, and conformed to the ways of the wilds in all things. So far it would seem as though both armies had halted here at this broad river and looked across the swift waters, the one afraid to advance deeper into the wilds, the other loth to retire from such a vantage point. And so it was.

During nearly fourteen years the city of Quesnelle

had stood on the east shore of the Frazer, without gaining one inch of territory from its savage antagonist; nay, even there were symptoms apparent to a close observer that seemed to reverse the usual experience of such things, and to foreshadow a retreat on the part of civilisation from the advanced post which it had taken up. Of these symptoms we have already spoken. Grass was in the street; wooden boards hung over the windows; soon, perhaps, the trees would spring again from that earth which ever rejoices in a chance of relapsing into savagery, despite all man's complacent ideas of the improvement of his husbandry. Little by little the hold which Quesnelle had placed upon the forest empire seemed to be loosening; bit by bit each spring seemed to win back something of the lost dominion. The reason was easy to find. Quesnelle lived upon a fact which was rapidly becoming a fiction. That fact was a gold mine, lying in the midst of mountains some fifty miles east of where the city stood.

The story of this mine had been a curious one. Not that it differed from the stories of a hundred other gold mines scattered over the vast continent of West America, in aught save in the excessive richness and abundance of the find, which made the name of Cariboo a magic sound to every miner along the Pacific slope. Here, at Cariboo, the original find had been, as elsewhere, the result of stray attempts at following up the sand-bar workings of the channel of the Frazer along the smaller affluents of the main

river. But when once the precious metal had been struck along the rocky ledges of the creeks of Cariboo, the news went forth to the south of such a wondrous yield of gold that thousands and tens of thousands hurried to the scene.

That scene lay a long way off from even a remote civilisation. Four hundred miles farther south the Frazer River entered the sea in a deep inlet but little known to aught save a few adventurous fur-traders, who, for more than half a century, had contrived to keep to themselves the secrets of the wild and savage but most picturesque land which to-day bears the name of British Columbia. Many rugged mountain chains crossed the country at either side of the deep channel of the Frazer. At several points these mountains seemed to have flung themselves boldly across the impetuous river, which, in turn, had eaten its way deep into the very hearts of the hills, until rock and rapid, cliff and cataract, lay buried from human vision far down in gloomy cañons, from which the wild din of ceaseless strife came floating up along the tops of jagged pine-trees, whose heads, stretching out from splintered ledge and rocky cleft, craned far over the abyss.

But men who seek for gold are not to be kept back by obstacles of this kind. They came with canoes that could only ascend from the sea to the rapids; they came with pack-mules and saddle-horses that had to scramble over mountains and swim torrents; men trudged on foot, carrying on their bent backs

pick and shovel, axe and tent. Weak men came, who, if the gold had lain within a day's march of the sea, had not physical strength to make a common living by their toil; but the real gold-miner was there in a vast majority. That man, so different from all other men—made from a hundred varying nationalities, but still uniform in his type, whether his cradle had been rocked in an Irish cabin, or his mother had swung him as an infant from the saddle peak of a Mexican mustang—reckless, daring, generous, free of purse and ready with life—the most desperate soldier ever sent forth by civilisation to conquer savagery.

In this wooden "city" called Quesnelle, on the east bank of the Frazer River, these men first planted their outpost settlement, for here the road to that rich mine called Cariboo quitted the banks of the Frazer River and struck inland into the hills.

On the wonders of Cariboo it is needless here to enlarge. They lie outside the real purpose of our story, and they would well merit a separate paper for themselves; for how could justice be done in the scant measure of a chance paragraph to that hero among miners who in one season dug from the ledges of the little creek two mule loads of solid gold? or that other hero who, at the bar of the principal saloon of this same city of Quesnelle, was so dissatisfied with his personal appearance as it was reflected in the large mirror at the back of the "mint juleps" and the "brandy smashes" and other innumerable slings, fixins, and cocktails, that he indignantly sent a large

handful of gold twenty-dollar eagles flying into the offending reflector, and laconically requested the bar manager to take the reckoning and retain the change? Or again, how could we tell the story of that hapless youth who upon arrival at the creek set his stockings, like nets, in the stream, under the belief that in the morning he would find them filled with gold nuggets?

Besides, all these are things of a long dead past compared with the time at which our story opens. Cariboo still held rich store of precious metals, but it lay deep down in the white quartz reef, many hundred feet below the surface, where machinery alone could reach it, and where even the dauntless spirit of toil of the individual miner was powerless to carry him.

The "placer" diggings had, in fact, been worked out, and only capital working through companies could now reach the gold of Cariboo.

But the individual miner was not the man to accept quietly the fact that Cariboo had, in his own language, become "played out," without some attempt at seeking fresh fields and pastures new in the vast solitudes of rock and forest lying to the north and west of his favourite find.

One by one all the countless creeks and streams that flow from the height of land between the headwaters of the Frazer and the Peace Rivers were diligently examined by small parties of adventurers, who sometimes spent a whole summer season in thus exploring the wild and savage solitude that lay locked among that labyrinth of hills, where the misty peaks of the

Bald Mountains touch upon one side the coast or Cascade Range, and on the other almost join hands with the rugged masses of the Rocky Mountains. Time after time these wandering "prospectors" returned to the outskirts of civilisation from a fruitless search; but either the next season found them again ready to dare some new enterprise, or fresh men were there to take their places in the arduous and unprofitable toil. At last a tangible success seemed to reward these persistent efforts. A party of explorers discovered in the bed of a small stream, which fell into the Ominica River, on the north side of the Bald Mountains, gold in considerable quantity. Quickly ran the news of this new find along the Pacific shore of North America. The restless stream of gold-seekers began to flow towards the spot; wild and rough as was the path thither, hundreds of men succeeded in pushing through. The summer season was a short one in this northern latitude. Caught by the frost in their return journey, some of the adventurers paid with their lives the penalty of their rashness; but another summer found a still larger crowd hurrying to the Ominica. Then the tide began to ebb, the gold was getting scarce in the gravel ledges. Ominica, like its richer predecessor, Cariboo, was getting "played out"; the rush grew fainter and fainter, and the city of Quesnelle, which had flared once more into a thriving state upon the windfall of this second find, began to sink again into despondency and discontent.

It was to this northern camp in the Ominica that

the trail of which we have just spoken led; and as it was the early summer season when men sought these northern wilds, the advent of strangers coming to Quesnelle along the trail from the north was an event sufficient to cause the inhabitants of the now declining city considerable excitement, and many were the speculations among the group on the river side as to the strange man and stranger dog described by Mr. Davron. Meanwhile the rapid rate at which the party on the opposite shore travelled had brought them to the bank of the river.

Dismounting from their horses, they had soon taken their places in a small "dug-out" canoe, which seemed but ill suited to carry so many men across the broad river now rolling along in the full majesty of its early summer level, bearing to the Pacific the vast harvests which thousands of snowy hills had gathered from the skies during the long months of the preceding winter. As the little boat gained the centre of the river, the group of watchers on the shore no longer looked to Mr. Davron's binocular for information; each one strove for himself to unravel the mysterious natures of the man in skins and the dog with the bushy tail; but it was difficult to make much of them in the crowded state in which they lay huddled together, the dog apparently stretched across the man for the safer trimming of the tiny craft.

The canoe touched the shore, and the people it carried began to disembark. First came the big dog. He appeared in no way to realise the fact that he was

at last approaching a centre of civilisation. The wooden houses in a row, the three saloons, the group of citizens on the river-bank, all these varied adjuncts of civilisation caused him no emotion. He did not appear even to notice the surprised looks with which the inhabitants regarded him, but rapidly ascending the shingle bank he precipitated himself with great violence towards a very small dog, who, perceiving that he was about to be attacked by an antagonist of strange mien and powerful proportions, fled howling in an opposite direction.

Then, seemingly satisfied with this assertion of superiority, the large animal returned to the river-shore, and took up a position on the bank overlooking the disembarkation, with the tip of his tail so elevated that it would appear as though that appendage had become thoroughly imbued with a lofty contempt of civilisation and its ways.

Meanwhile the disembarkation of the men in the boat went on, and soon the entire party stood grouped upon the left bank of the river, some in animated conversation with the citizens, others standing aloof in the restraint of strangers only just arrived.

But in such places as Quesnelle the forms of introduction are not based upon the rigid rules of older organised communities. Ere many minutes had elapsed, dog and man had taken their places among the broken miners, the miners who had yet to be broken, among the store-keepers, bar-keepers,

hotel-keepers, and the sundry other householders and citizens. Ensnconced in the hotel—a large wooden building, that consisted of one immense room, and a number of small adjoining dens; a building which in the early days of Quesnelle had attained to very remarkable celebrity as a “hurdy-house,” gambling saloon, and general demoralisation domicile, but which in the degenerate days of our story had sunken to very respectable limits—the dog and his master soon made acquaintance with many worthy representatives of the saloon and mining interest in the extreme north of the Pacific slope. Many were the curious comments bestowed upon the strange dog, and varied were the animals who were supposed to have had an influence direct or remote upon the contour of his head, the bushiness of his tail, or the woolly nature of his coat. The bear, the wolf, the coyote, were all credited with a relationship more or less remarkable, as the speaker’s opinion led to each or to all of these quadrupeds as sharers in the ancestry of this honest old hauling dog, who now, his long toil over, had settled down to the simple *rôle* of friend and travelling companion. But while, with legs high poised upon the iron stove in the centre of the big room, many miners thus discussed the merits of the new animal, and conjectured his probable descent from a variety of wild and savage beasts, the object of their solicitude began to display certain tendencies which have always been associated with the civilised dog in all countries and among all

peoples. He showed a decided preference for the kitchen over any other apartment in the hotel; he developed a spirit of marked antagonism to, and an uncalled for ferocity against, a large black cat; he became so enamoured of a Chinaman, who fulfilled the functions of cook in the establishment, that it was matter of fear lest the American portion of the community might entertain towards him, by reason of that friendship, those feelings of acute detestation which, from the high moral standpoint of republican equality and brotherhood towards all men, they have so frequently manifested against hard-working Chinese of every class. He showed symptoms of recommencing a study of poultry, a predilection for which he had years before exhibited in a now distant sphere. It was no unusual pastime for him to spend hours lying in front of a hen-coop, absorbed in the contemplation of the habits and customs of fowls in general, and of a large rooster in particular. Nor was it only in his inward, or mental nature, that this dog seemed to be impressed with the social distinctions and civilised customs with which he now found himself brought into contact. His outward form also underwent a change. He grew visibly larger. Under the influence of the genial summer warmth he began to dispense with quantities of the long hair and thick wool in which, on the approach of the previous winter, he had so completely muffled himself.

At night he sojourned underneath his owner's bed, in one of the small wooden dens called rooms already

mentioned, which was situated directly over the hotel kitchen ; and from the extraordinary manner in which he became aware of what was transpiring beneath in all matters connected with meals, cooking, and culinary prospects generally, there was reason to suppose that he could see as far through a deal board as the majority of mortals. The dog, in fact, was having an easy, idle time of it, and he was making the most of it. There was ample reason why he should do so. Six months earlier he had started from the shores of Lake Winnepeg, and his own stout legs had carried him to this Frazer River across two thousand miles of snow-clad wilderness. All that long distance had lain within the realm yet unconquered from the forest and the prairie, and as here at Quesnelle the Frazer marked the boundaries of the rival powers, so here at Quesnelle the two rovers of the wilds, dog and man, passed out of the solitude and entered once more the regions of civilised life.

It will be our lot to follow their wanderings along the Pacific shore of North America, through lands which, if they do not contain anything that is absolutely new, are still none of them old enough to have become familiar, even in name, to the ear of the great outside world. Lands of tall and stately pine forests, of broad and swift-rushing rivers, of meadows backed by lofty peaks, whose crests hold aloft into blue mid-summer skies the snow cast upon them by many a winter's storm.

Here at Quesnelle we are in the centre of British

Columbia. Our course will lie nearly due south, along the water system of the Frazer to its mouth at New Westminster, then over the boundary line into the territory of Washington. Southward still, over the Columbia river into Oregon; then up the valley of the beautiful Willamette until the Siskyou range rises before us, and the Madrono begins to perfume the soft air of the Californian night. Over the Siskyou, and down into the valley where sparkling Sacramento has its cradle, and thence around the base of solitary Shasta into the sunlight of California. It is the 8th of June; there lie one thousand miles before us ere the Golden Gate of San Francisco is gained.

The man's baggage was not large—a small hand-bag held it all. Here, at Quesnelle, he parted from many old friends. An iron cup and saucer, sacred to the memories of hot delicious tea-drinks in icy bivouacs; a copper kettle, black with the smoke of a thousand camp fires, and dented with blow of tree stump and sled upset; blankets burnt and scorched by pine-wood sparks on many a freezing night in far-away Athabasca—all these tokens of the silent tract were given away to other wanderers, whose steps were about to lead back again into the northern solitude. "Come, old dog," said the man, "it is time to start." The man shouldered his pack, the dog shook out his bushy tail to the wind, and the travellers began their new journey.

II.

THE first sixty miles lay down the rapid rolling Frazer, now at the full tide of its early summer volume. Swiftly along the majestic river sped a small steamer, the current doubling the rate of speed, until the shores flitted past at railroad pace in the shadows of the June twilight.

Deep down in a gigantic fissure the river lay, twelve hundred feet below the summit of the rolling plateau on either side ; so steep the western cliff that darkness began to gather over the water, while yet the upper level caught the sunset's glow from across the wide Chilcotin plains, and pine-trees on the edge stood clearly out against the sky—solitary sentinels, keeping watch over the darkening channel.

It was almost night when the little boat drew underneath the high overhanging eastern shore, and made fast to a rude wooden staging. A few wooden houses stood on a narrow ledge of low ground between the cliff and the river—the stream named the houses—and at Soda Creek that night dog and man found lodging and entertainment.

The summer dawn was creeping down the great hill

to the east next morning as Mr. Jack Hamilton took the reins of his six-horse coach, and pulled his team together to begin the long ascent that led from the wooden hotel up the east shore of the Frazer. An hour's slow work, and the coach stood twelve hundred feet above the river on the summit of the plateau.

A fresh, fair summer morning, with summer mists rising from dewy hollows, and summer scents coming out from pine woods, and summer flowers along the smooth unfenced road that wound away over hill and valley, by glade and ridge, through wood and open, away over the mountain plateau of central British Columbia, three thousand feet above the sea level.

On the box seat sat the man, and in the boot beneath the seat sat the dog. A free pass or ticket had been presented to the dog by the coach agent at Quesnelle, but the proverb which bears testimony to the difference between taking a horse to the water and making him drink therein was strikingly exemplified in the matter of this dog and the boot of the box seat. It was one thing to have a free pass for the boot, and another thing to induce the dog to put a foot into this boot. Many expedients were tried, but they were all attended with difficulty. To poise the bulky form of the Esquimaux upon the fore-wheel of the coach, preparatory to lifting him still higher, was no easy matter, but it was simple work compared to that of lifting him six feet further into his seat.

Fortunately Mr. Jack Hamilton proved a stage driver of a most obliging disposition. Ever ready to

lend his neighbours a hand, he did so on this occasion by hauling the dog chain from above. Thus propelled from below by his owner, and hauled from above by the driver, the dog was placed securely in his seat by an intermediate process much resembling hanging.

The American stage coach on the Pacific slope is a long flat-roofed vehicle, carrying outside passengers only on the box seat. At the back of the coach there is a framework for holding baggage, which forms a kind of intermediate step between the roof and the ground. Sometimes it became possible to utilise this baggage platform as a means of hauling the reluctant animal into his place ; but whether the ascent was made through Mr. Jack Hamilton kindly consenting to play the part of Calcraft, or whether the end was attained by other devices, the result was the same, namely, a fixed dislike and persistent reluctance on the part of the dog to the occupation of the boot.

Ever from between his owner's legs he looked ruefully down at the road, as though he would infinitely have preferred toiling along on his own account. No doubt his look accurately told his thoughts ; but six horses, changing every twenty miles, would soon have left him far behind ; and although, given his own time, the seventy miles of the coach's daily run would have been covered by the dog on foot, still he would have taken all the day and half the night to do it.

The great waggon road which connects the mining

regions of Cariboo with the navigable portion of the lower Frazer, is a wonderful result of enterprise undertaken in the early days of Columbian prosperity. Throughout its long course of three hundred miles it crosses a wild and rugged land, pierces the great range of the Cascade Mountains, is carried along the edge of immense precipices overhanging the cañons of the Frazer River, until, emerging at the village of Yale, it lands its travellers at the gateway of the Pacific.

Along this great road we now held our way, from the first streak of a still frosty dawn until the sun was beginning to get low over the hilltops to the west.

A vast region this British Columbia—hill, lake, river, and mountain succeeding each other day after day; pine forests full of odour, and sighing with breezes that had already waved through nameless regions of forest. At times the coach wound slowly up some curving incline through varied woods of fir and maple, until gaining a ridge summit bare of trees, the eye of the traveller on the box seat could roam over many a far away mile of forest-tops, and farther still catch the jagged line of snowy peaks that marked the mountain land where Frazer, and Columbia, and Thompson had their close-linked sources. And once there opened out close to the road a strange freak of nature—a great cleft in the earth surface, a huge chasm as abrupt as though a superhuman sword had buried itself deep in the earth and cut asunder

the crust of the world. The coach road had to make a sharp detour to avoid this fissure. Pulling up at the south side, where the road ran close to the edge of the chasm, Mr. Jack Hamilton informed his passengers that they might alight from the coach for a closer survey of this scene.

It was worthy of a halt. A few paces from the roadway the earth dipped suddenly down to a great depth; trees clustered close to the chasm's edge, but the sides were far too steep for growth of any kind, and the layers of red and dark rock alternated with each other in horizontal streaks that made the farther side look as though it had been painted with the favourite lines of some rude Indian decoration.

As far as this great rent in the earth was visible, looking towards the east, it seemed to widen and deepen as it went; but there was little time for examination, for Mr. Jack Hamilton and his six horses were impatient to be moving, and the coach and its freight were soon rolling swiftly south to the city of Clinton.

Clinton stood in a broad valley, under a bright, June sun. An affluent of the Bonaparte, here near its source, flowed through the village city over beds of glistening shingle; but a recent flood had washed away its gravelly banks and strewn the single street with wreck of wooden house and *débris* of stone and sand, making it no easy matter for the coach to work its way to the door of the hotel, over the great piles of rubbish.

At last the heavy vehicle pulled up at the door, which was literally packed with figures. Two large mule trains had arrived at Clinton on their way up-country from the sea, and mule drivers, packmen, freighters, and miners thronged the little street. The dark-faced Mexican with broad sombrero was there, the yellow-skinned Chinaman with hair descending from the poll, the sallow Yankee with hair tuft sprouting from the chin; extremes of old and new world craft and cunning here met with the cordiality of a common hatred. The miner, diffident and shy, but with the diffidence of determination and the shyness bred by long intervals of solitude, was here, too, on his upward road to try his luck at some northern digging. Eagerly this flood-tide met the ebb-stream of our coach-load and asked for news of former friend or comrade now delving at Germansen or Ominica, at Cariboo or Cottonwood. Every one seemed to know everybody. The distances might be vast, the country might be rugged, the trails difficult to travel, but all the same there was not a Pete or a Dave, a Steve or a Bill, in farthest camp along the affluents of the Peace River, whose name was not a household word in the hotel at Clinton.

Despite its vast area and its rugged surface, British Columbia, so far as settlement and civilisation were concerned, was nothing but a long waggon road with a gold mine at one end and a seaport at the other. One or two smaller offshoots, branching away to mines more or less played out, had this great waggon road,

but they were at long intervals apart, and were suitable only for the saddle and the pack-horse.

Up and down this road travelled every year the entire population ; or if there remained at Soda Creek or at Quesnelle a few of the less fortunate gold-seekers, whose finds did not permit their wintering so far south as Victoria, the capital, nevertheless their more fortunate friends seemed still to hold them in lively remembrance, and to have known Pete at the Ominica was to have a claim upon the acquaintance of Dave at Clinton. "The boys ain't a bad lot," remarked Mr. Hamilton to his box fare, as, holding his horses well in hand, he rattled briskly down the incline that led to Clinton. "There's some of 'em as wouldn't wash two cents the bucket, an' there's more that has the metal thick enough on the bed-rock of their natures."

Mr. Hamilton was right. These "boys" called gold-miners are the cream of the working men. They are the natural successors of that race of fur-hunters and trappers who, fifty years ago, made Missouri their base for the exploration of that vast region which then lay in pathless solitude to the waves of the Pacific Ocean. Reckless in their modes of hunting and trapping, these men quickly destroyed or drove away the wild animals that roved the plains ; but when the furs were gone the gold came in, and where one had tried the wild life of the trapper, a hundred flocked to work the pick and shovel in the wild glens and valleys of the Pacific slope.

In the bar-room of the hotel at Clinton, the box-

fare traveller and the dog sat and watched the coming and going of all these units of Western life. The long June evening was beginning to grow monotonous; the stove, the many spittoons, the bar-keeper, the brightly coloured stimulants, had been studied individually and collectively; the art decorations had been closely examined, and had ceased to afford gratification to the eye. An engraving of the Federal General Hooker, "Fighting Joe," as he was affectionately termed, whose brief term of command was chiefly made illustrious by an order of the day in which he congratulated himself upon being called to the head of "the finest army on the planet," an order which was almost immediately followed by a most ignominious defeat—"Fighting Joe" now looked fiercely from above the bar, in close proximity to another print in which a dog was represented stretched upon his back, while beneath an inscription informed the drinking public that "poor Trust" was not only dead, but that bad pay had killed him.

Deeper in the glasses and the lemons and the juleps, there was observable to a closer scrutiny a photograph of a frightened-looking volunteer soldier, who mournfully regarded a large sabre to which fate had apparently hopelessly secured him. All these things had been duly conned over and apathetically dismissed, when an event occurred which gave immediate relief to the *ennui* of the community. The figure of a man appeared suddenly at the open doorway. "Bismarck has got out!" he exclaimed in

hasty accents; and then in more forcible language than it is possible to repeat, he continued, "Gone, clane gone, I tell ye!" Had it been possible for any of those lately arrived by the coach to have accepted in quiescence this announcement of the great chancellor's flight or freedom, such equanimity must have soon disappeared before the fierce excitement which at once became manifest in the persons of the older inhabitants. The bar-keeper instantly suspended his operations in manipulating the coloured stimulants, and acting either by virtue of his high office as bar-keeper, or of some collateral right of special constable and justice of the peace, he exclaimed, "Bismarck is out, boys! Twenty-five dollars to the man who catches him!"

This liberal offer, following closely on the heels of the exciting news just received, caused a wild rush of the assembled citizens to the doorway, and the dog and man following in the wake of the throng, soon found themselves taking a keen interest in the pursuit of the chancellor.

It may have been that the capture was regarded by the citizens as a public duty, or it may have been that, in the minds of many, a lingering hope yet dwelt that twenty-five dollars would go some little way towards reanimating the prostrate form of Trust, so far as that faithful creature had reference to their individual accounts for drink and stimulants supplied in the bar-keeper's ledger. Such hypothesis would at least be doubtful.

At any rate, volunteers for the office of "running in" the chancellor were as numerous as though the drinking-score had been in a Southern German or Hanoverian inn, and the absconding native had been the chancellor himself; for alas! the fugitive was the great conspirator only in name.

The Clinton Bismarck was in fact a Chilcotin Indian, who, for some infraction of Columbian law, had been incarcerated in a neighbouring log-hut.

It appeared that the conditions of prison discipline had been of a cheap and novel kind. Bismarck was allowed to take exercise and air upon one stipulation, that he would perform the duties of jailer and turn-key upon himself, and that, moreover, he would employ his hours of exercise in repairing the public roads of Clinton. For some time he had regularly responded to this arrangement by letting himself out, watching himself when he was out, and ceasing to superintend himself only when he had again locked himself in. But unfortunately for the permanent success of this simple and inexpensive mode of prison discipline, Bismarck, as we have seen, failed to comply with the latter portion of the programme, and on the day of the arrival of the coach he turned his face to his native hills and his back upon Clinton.

The wide semicircle of hills surrounding Clinton to the north and west looked very beautiful as the long shadows of the June evening fell from the lofty "sugar" pines that dotted their swelling sides, and

marked lengthening lines upon many a mile of silent peaceful landscape.

“Poor Bismarck!” said the box-seat passenger to himself, as he looked from the motley group of citizens to the lonely hills. “May the pine-brush be thy bed to-night.”

When the coach rolled away a little after daybreak next morning, leaving Clinton lying in the mists of the Bonaparte, the Chilcotin’s cage was yet empty, and the dog Trust lay still upon his back.

Rolling along a high ridge of land which overlooked the valley of the Bonaparte River, the coach held its southern way towards the great mountain mass through whose centre the Frazer River cleaves its course to the sea. No height of hilltop, no depth of valley seemed able to set at rest in the brain of the dog the idea that his proper function was to haul and not to be hauled; indeed, judging from the persistent manner in which he continued to regard the road and not the country through which it led, it might have been apparent that he meditated a descent from the boot whenever opportunity might offer; but unfortunately, a word of prohibition was deemed sufficient preventive in view of the distance that intervened between the boot and the ground.

All at once, however, without any premonitory symptoms, he thrust himself suddenly from the boot and precipitated his great body outward into space. So far as the mere fact of getting out of the boot was concerned, the success of this attempt was complete.

In very much less time than the narrative of this exploit has taken, the dog had reached the ground, but countermarching his body in the descent, his head, when that descent was accomplished, was where his tail should have been—next the wheels. The coach was a heavy one, it carried its full complement of passengers. To suppose that one of its wheels could roll over any portion of the dog's body, and leave that portion intact, would have been to suppose an apparent impossibility. Mr. Hamilton, handling his six horses with dexterity, stopped the coach ere it had run its length, but not before the near fore-wheel had jerked over the outstretched paw of the lately landed dog. But the stout leg that had tramped through the long journey of the past winter had in its sinews and muscles able to bear without breaking the ponderous load that had now rolled over its wrist, and when the man had reached the ground and taken hold of the damaged leg, which the dog held high in air, the loud howl of agony sank quickly to a lower key. So it is with all true-natured dogs when hurt has come to them, if the maimed or broken limb be but held by a human hand; the cry soon sinks to a whimper under the touch which tells him that human sympathy has joined hands with him in his suffering.

Reinstated in the boot, and made secure from a repetition of sensation headers, the dog passed through the remainder of his Columbian coach journey without incident of danger; but the great cañons of the Thompson and Frazer rivers, which the waggon road

pierces in the last seventy miles of its course, and the stupendous masses of rock frowning over the narrow ledge upon which the track is carried, apparently failed to remove from his mind the sense of injustice under which he deemed himself suffering in not being allowed to add his dog might to the locomotion of the coach ; and still with mournful eye he looked steadily out from his seat upon the letter bags, a wiser, a sadder, but an unconvinced animal.

In a deep and narrow valley, close to the junction of the Thompson with the Frazer River, stands the little town of Lytton, once a famous point when the big sand-bars of the Frazer held their thousands of miners, now "brooding in the ruins of its life," a dreary wooden village fast lapsing into decay ; for the sand-bars have long ceased to yield gold, and Mariner's and Forster's and Fargo and Boston bars no more hold their camps and shanties.

Melancholy enough looked Lytton as the coach drew up by the hotel door, having run its eighty-three miles in ten hours. The hotel had some peculiarities of construction that made it different from any hostelry which the box fare had ever sojourned at. It was a long, low, wooden building, containing many small dens built over a clear rushing stream of water. The wooden floor was old and in places broken, and through the shrivelled planks the water could be seen as it rippled along, filling the den with pleasant murmur ; but these peculiarities were only observable to the box fare when, late in the evening, he had returned

from a ramble to find all his fellow-passengers retired for the night, and the hotel-keeper waiting his arrival with a light in one hand and a large black bottle in the other. A steady flow of language more or less irreverent, and an unsteady method of pursuing a line as he walked in front of the box fare along the occupied dens, clearly indicated that the hotel proprietor had at least taken the cork out of his bottle ; but it was only upon arrival in the den which was to hold the dog and the man until morning that the proprietor allowed his feelings their fullest flow, and evinced a desire to carry a spirit of animated discussion far into the night. Questions connected with the division of political power in Lytton (about twelve houses showed signs of permanent occupation), matters bearing upon finance, Indian statistics, and consolidation of the colony with the United States, were touched upon in such a thoroughly exhaustive manner that the dog was soon sound asleep, and the box fare looked drowsily from his trestle-bed at the garrulous proprietor, who, seated on a vacant bed, continued to pour forth stimulants for himself and statistics for his sleepy guest. At length the black bottle became silent, the hotel-keeper shuffled off to his den, and nothing broke the stillness of the night save the ripple of running water under the thin pine boards of the crazy building, and the long-drawn respirations of the dog under the trestle-bed.

Soon again the daylight broke. In the matter of getting up, dogs have decidedly the better of their

masters. Look at a man at the moment of his waking, and nine times out of ten you see a poor creature gaping, puzzled, and perplexed—not quite certain whether he is in the middle of last week or the beginning of the next; but a dog rises from sleep, stretches himself on the points of his toes, wags his tail, and is instantly at home with the new morning. Out from underneath the trestle-bed, fresh and ready for the road, stepped the dog as daybreak struggled in through the tiny den window, while with many a lingering wish for one hour more, the master prepared himself for the journey. This day was to be the last of the coach travel, for at the village of Yale steam would again take up the running and carry the coach load to the sea.

So the coach rolled away from Lytton, and winding up a curving ascent, entered the cañons of the Cascades.

Gloomy spots are these cañons of the Cascades on the coach road to the sea. A narrow ledge cut out of the rock, smooth as a table edge, holds in mid-air the heavy coach and its six-horse team; no fence, no parapet breaks the sheer descent into the horrid chasm; six hundred feet beneath the river roars in unseen tumult, and above the rugged mountain topples black against the sky.

No creeping pace is this at which these horses round these dizzy ledges, no hugging of the rock, but full and free the leaders gallop at the curves, facing boldly to the very verge of the precipice ere they

sweep round these yawning "points." Eight miles in the hour along the smooth rock cuttings Mr. Jack Hamilton steers his team, with foot hard set on brake as the big coach thunders down some slope, and the pine-tops beneath seem to be flying along the cañon edge. The box fare feels inclined to lean away from the edge, so close at hand, but he feels too that Mr. Hamilton has an eye on him as well as on his team, and he takes it as naturally as though a lifetime of nightmares had made him thoroughly conversant with the whole science of ledge galloping. Mr. Hamilton even finds time to enlarge upon the past history of the road, and among his anecdotes there figures one which tells how once a coach did go over the precipice. "And there wasn't," he adds, "no, there wasn't," he continues, "as much of horse, or driver, or passenger, or coach, ever picked up as a coroner could get a fee on."

But if it was nervous work driving when the coast was clear, much worse did it seem when a waggon with eight or ten pairs of mules had to be passed on the narrow ledge.

At such times the law of the road gave Mr. Hamilton the outside place, and from the tire of his outer wheels to the edge of the cliff scarce eight inches would intervene, yet was there no leading of leaders by men on foot. Gently by the perilous edge the coach would move until clear of the obstacle, and then away along the ledge again.

The bad places had all been safely passed, Yale lay