AN ADVENTURE IN ALASKA

By Bruce Cotten

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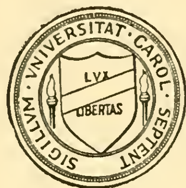

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AN ADVENTURE IN ALASKA

DURING THE GOLD EXCITEMENT OF 1897 - 1898

(A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE)

By
Bruce Cotten.

BALTIMORE.
1922.

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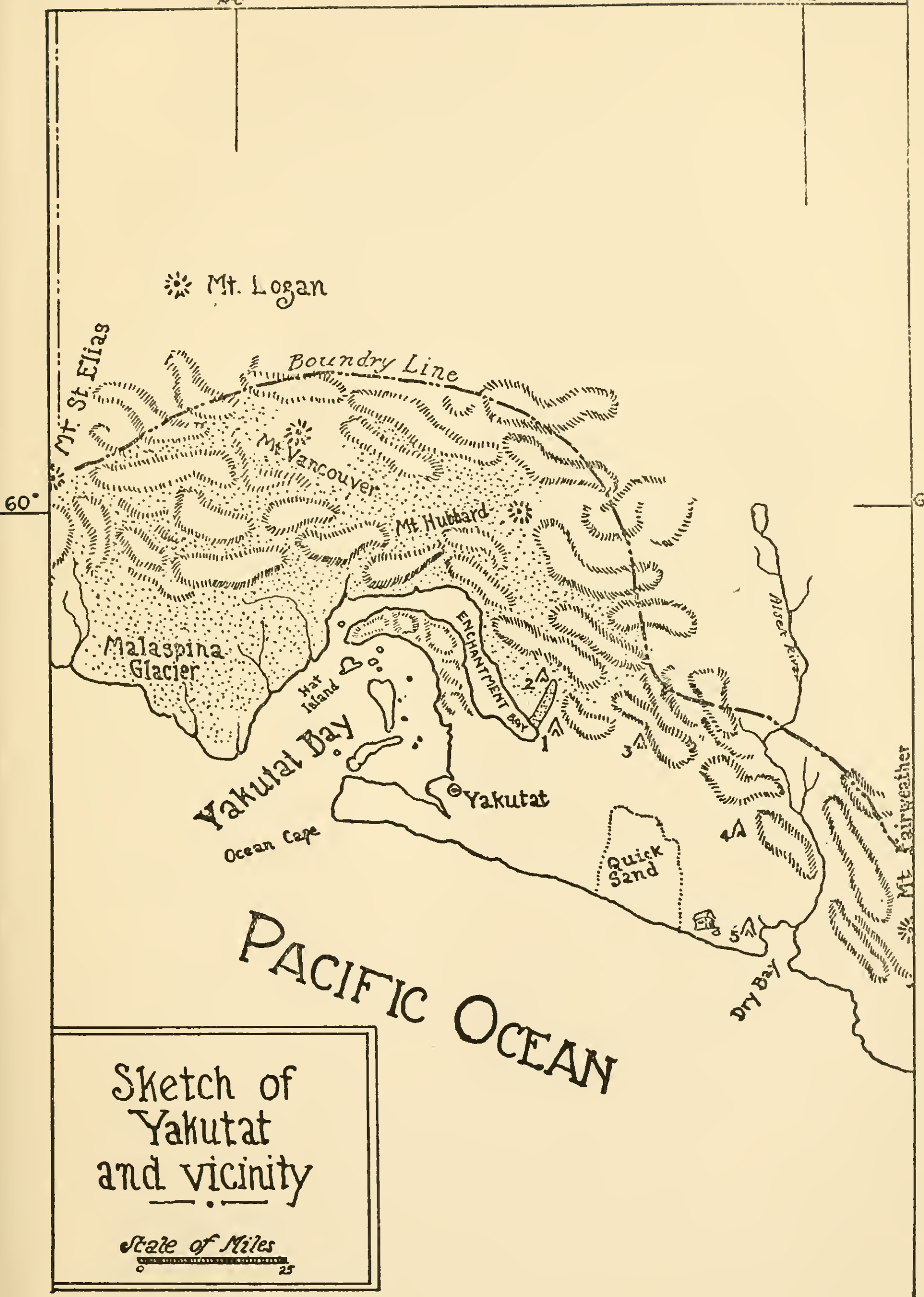

Mt. Logan
Mt. St Elias
Boundry Line
Mt. Vancouver
Mt. Hubbard
60°
Malaspina Glacier
Hat Island
Enchantment Bay
Yakutat Bay
Yakutat
Ocean Cape
Alsek River
Quick Sand
Mt. Fairweather
Dry Bay
Pacific Ocean
Sketch of Yakutat and vicinity
Scale of Miles
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25

Cylburn
Baltimore - Maryland.

March 14, 1922.

Col. and Mrs. Robert R. Cotten,
Cottendale, N. C.

My dear Father and Mother:—

You have both several times expressed to me a wish that I would, sometime, write up for you some of my experiences which you think in some cases have been unusual.

You have especially desired that I should tell of three particular events—my trip to Alasks in 1897, my experiences in China during the Boxer War of 1900, and my two years in Luzon during the Tagalog Insurrection, 1901-1902.

As my trip to Alaska was the first of these occurrences, naturally it should be first related, leaving the other two to follow when time and circumstances permit.

Recently I found a manuscript and some extensive notes of this Alaska trip, made immediately upon my return and finished later while I was stationed at Fort Flagler in 1904. These I have gone over and put together in this little book.

It is written in a conversational way, rather in the American language than the English, I should say, and of course, makes no pretence to any literary merit.

Whatever it is, it is a true and intimate relation, and I take great pleasure in presenting it to you, for your amusement and entertainment, and for the entertainment of such of our friends as may be interested.

Your devoted son,

Burr Cotten.

399189

TO MY WIFE, WHO, AFTER ALL, WAS HERSELF THE LITTLE NUGGET AND GREAT POSSESSION THAT THIS AND MY OTHER EFFORTS WERE LEADING TO.

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CHAPTER I.

From Cottendale to Seattle.

In May, 1897, the Alaska Commercial Company's steamship Portland arrived at Seattle from St. Michael's, Alaska, and, proceeding to her dock, unloaded, among other things from her cargo, one ton of gold nuggets.

This remarkable consignment belonged to some half dozen individuals who reported the discovery of a wonderfully rich, new placer country known as the Klondike. Such a cargo from a hitherto unknown land would at any time have caused a tremendous excitement. There were, however, some additional reasons and temporary conditions which greatly increased the excitement and interest that followed.

In the first place, all the great commercial and real estate interest in the Northwest were at that time suffering very severe depression, and this discovery, with all its accompanying glamor, was immediately heralded and attractively advertised with the hope that in this discovery impending ruin would be stayed.

In the second place, there was universal business depression throughout the country, especially in the agricultural States, so that the discovery was announced at a time when public attention was particularly receptive and many thousands were either dissatisfied with or entirely out of their usual occupations.

The excitement and rush that followed was really one of the greatest in the history of the world, though the Spanish-American War, following as it did in a few

months, diverted public interest, and the Klondike rush will not be so well remembered in history as the days of '49 in California or the later excitement in Australia. Some idea of the magnitude of the movement can be gathered, however, from the statement that 25,000 farmers in Iowa alone quitted the plow shaft and betook themselves in search of the bag of gold that in this case hung at the end of the aurora borealis.

Almost as many went from several other central States, and altogether it is conservative to estimate that 350,000 people left their homes between the months of June and December and turned their faces to the midnight sun. These people, almost without exception, had no knowledge whatever of mining, or conception of the conditions they would have to encounter. A surprisingly large percentage were farmers, who had sold or mortgaged their farms for the purpose of undertaking this adventure, and this class were particularly unfortunate and unsuccessful, for they had left real homes behind, had no understanding whatever of what they were trying to do and are as a class most difficult to adjust to radical changes. Thousands got no further than San Francisco, Seattle or Portland, where they became stranded through different causes, very many through the operations of confidence men. Other thousands got as far as Juneau, Diea or Skagway. Very many were turned back at the Canadian custom house because they did not possess the requisite amount of provisions to go on to the interior.

These people would then offer their supplies and outfits for sale, so that for some time all supplies and articles of equipment could be bought on the trail below and above

Lake Bennette for a small fraction of their cost in Seattle. A new town—Skagway—was established at the foot of the White Pass, and in a few months had a population of 25,000.

There were still other thousands who scattered themselves in all the bays and inlets on the coast, particularly in Prince William's Sound, Cook's Inlet, Bristol Bay, Norton and Kotzebue Sounds. It is curious to note that some of these places are fully a thousand miles from the Klondike. Think of a man stampeding to Texas or Mexico upon the announcement of a gold strike at Cripple Creek! Yet that is, in distance and effect, exactly what many hundreds did. I remember distinctly that in Seattle in those early days the names Klondike and Alaska were synonymous; they meant one and the same thing to the would-be gold hunter, and he entirely failed to note that the Klondike was not even in Alaska at all, and that Alaska itself is a country of huge proportions, being three times the size of France and greatly exceeding in area all the thirteen original States combined.

A person remarking to a friend in Seattle today that he is going to Alaska would probably be asked "outside or in," by which would be meant "are you going to the interior or will you remain on the coast?" Alaska "inside" and Alaska "outside" are indeed two very different countries, as different as North Carolina and Newfoundland, and as far apart in places.

There were no such terms in the days of the rush, for no one knew anything at all about Alaska, either "inside" or "out," even the government maps being merely outlines of the coast and entirely inaccurate.

This indifference or ignorance of the geography of the great Northwest is still very prevalent, and the story goes that one of our Postmaster-Generals in recent years caused a letter to be written to the Postmaster at Dawson City, inquiring why certain reports had not been rendered as required by Department regulations. The Postmaster replied that the regulation in question had indeed been received, but since his office was fully one hundred miles within British territory, he had thought it more advisable to make his reports to Ottawa.

It is difficult to explain how I came to be attracted to and finally drawn into this motley mass that was surging toward the north. There are periods, I presume, in every person's life when they are possessed by some mysterious force that compels them to some certain action, though that action may not be well reasoned and is often the opposite of what we would ordinarily expect that particular person to do. Certainly in my own life I have had several such experiences when I have determined upon courses apparently not based upon good reasoning, but have been compelled to them notwithstanding.

This is the force, I presume, that some criminologists claim is responsible for most of our criminals. However that may be, in my case at least, it has never taken that form, but has served rather as stepping-stones, so to speak, to my present high state of contentment and happiness.

When the riches of the Klondike were first heralded to the world, I was at Cottendale, my father's plantation home in North Carolina. This home was as pleasant and as happy, I presume, as could be found. We were a close

and devoted family, not rich, but possessing every essential of life and happiness. Our community, though rural, was wholesome and conservative. Some sleepy remnants of ante-bellum days still lingered on the countryside; many old slaves were in a way companions of my boyhood days and constant reminders of the vanished pomps of yesterday. Older people sometimes spoke of Yankee raids and Reconstruction, but these things had been settled, I supposed, though it was some years before I understood how father had lost that war, so big and strong and right he seemed to me. In short, my surroundings had always been comfortable and sweet, and there was nothing further desired, perhaps, unless it was opportunity for some more active future than anything here afforded.

Anyway, it is certain that I was deeply restive at that time. I was just of age, and the first great change had to take place in my affairs. Most fortunately, my father and mother seemed, in some mysterious way, to know this, without understanding it, perhaps, any more than I did. They knew then that it takes a boy a long time to become a man, and they knew also many other things obscure to me for some years yet. This was indeed fortunate, for a crisis was at hand within me. They seemed to know this, too, and certainly they knew how to meet it.

I became completely obsessed with the idea of going to the Klondike, though, so far as I was able to learn, no single other person in that entire country was in any way impressed as I was. All seemed to regard my intention as a singular idea and somewhat dangerous lark, which in reality of course it was. The difficulty of properly financing myself upon such an undertaking was indeed

real, and I offered to organize myself into a kind of stock company and permit a few friends to take stock in the adventure. This flotation, however, was not a success, and I started with a very small capital indeed, though unincumbered by any fear of stockholders' meetings or crooked manipulation of myself while away.

I left about the first of October for Seattle. My ultimate destination was the Klondike, which I knew was somewhere in the vicinity of Alaska. I had never seen a gold mine, or a mine of any description in my life, not even a miner; in fact, gold dust and brass filings all looked alike to me.

The sum total of my knowledge of life was indeed small and far too provincial to be of any service in an undertaking of this nature. And let me say here that it was my rearing, environs and background that were both my weakness and strength at that time. They had in no way prepared me for the sort of world that I was about to meet, yet in this same process they had laid a foundation of something that saved me absolutely in the end. The first I was painfully conscious of early in this struggle; the second I was not conscious of until some years afterwards. It is well to remember this in connection with some positions in which I am found later on in this paper.

I went west by way of Nashville, Tenn., where I stopped for a day or two and visited a Centennial then going on. I found here in my hotel a young lady who had often visited my sister at Cottendale. She was the last of the old crowd that I saw for eight years to come, and my heart was sad and very, very full when I said good-bye.

I spent a night in St. Louis, part of a day at Colorado Springs, and, passing over the Rockies, skirted the shores of the great Salt Lake. I was fully mindful of the greatness of the trip, the first that I had ever taken; was astonished at the plains and amazed at the great Rocky Mountains.

I met and conversed with many curious people, and had traveled from St. Louis in an emigrant car. These cars, I believe, are not used in the West now; at least I have not seen one for many years. They were provided with cooking stoves in one end whereon passengers could prepare their food, and the chairs were great tilting things, much like barber chairs, which when tilted served as beds by night.

From Ogden I went by way of the Oregon Short Line through Portland and on to Seattle, having made the entire trip for about $70.

At some place in Missouri two young men, brothers, boarded my train. They were going to Seattle, and from there to Whatcom, where an uncle lived. They were about my age, and were mechanics. They were respectable young fellows, and we made the trip together. In some way they had heard of the Globe Hotel in Seattle, so we decided to go there. This proved quite fortunate, for the Globe was just the place we should have been. It proved to be a rather large and roomy place on First Avenue. It was not by any means a fashionable hotel, but it was clean and well run for what it was, and was conducted by a German (Krous) and his wife, who were so kind to me and took such an interest in me that I have a regard for them to this day, Kaiser and Crown Prince notwithstanding.

Living in Seattle was amazingly cheap in those days. I got a good room here for $2.50 per week, and in many places a good meal could be had for 50 cents.

This seemed strange to me, seeing that the town was crowded and packed with people, but Seattle then knew something that I did not know for some time to come. That was that this crowd, in the venacular of the street, was "dead broke." Nine-tenths of these people who were incessantly talking of their millions would come around quietly and borrow a "two-bit" piece.

I found Seattle a seething mass of excited humanity. Everybody was either already a millionaire or expected to be one right away. As for myself, I do not recall at this writing exactly how much I considered myself worth at that time; however, I know I felt very comfortable and well off so far as my future financial condition was concerned.

It is impossible for one who has never participated in a rush of this kind to understand how completely the excitement can possess you. It amounts to a frenzy; it is epidemic and sweeps over a community like the measles. It respects neither age, experience or wisdom, but is a form of reciprocal insanity which completely upsets the throne of reason, and you follow at the heels of the jackass of folly as complacently as if you had always belonged there.

There were here young girls of good raising from the East, old women in bloomers, ministers of the Gospel, gamblers, criminals and gentlemen adventurers of every nationality. The streets were crowded night and day,

and a multitude almost fought for transportation on the docks and at the ticket offices.

Every conceivable form of floating craft had been impressed for this service, and some indeed that had been condemned and idle for years. Once I saw a man on the dock push his cane far up into the rotten side of a ship that was about to sail. This ship sailed with more than a hundred aboard, and was never heard of again. A number of other incidents of this kind could be cited.

Very many novel and absurd devices for packing and traveling, chemicals that would keep you warm in winter and free from mosquitoes in summer, were sold in large quantities by street peddlers and afterwards scattered on all the trails of the north.

And then there was, too, always on hand the man who had been all over that country before, and who, for the price of a drink, was anxious to take you aside and give you valuable and very confidential information. Clairvoyants and other classes of future readers were doing a thriving business. The town was simply teeming with schemers and confidence men of every description and degree of crookedness and dissipation.

Dogs were in great demand, and I remember seeing a carload brought in from the East, and they were of every known species, yet undoubtedly disposed of at good profit.

All this made life very curious in Seattle in those days. Most of this crowd were very rough and a bankrupt lot, who had in some way got themselves thus far and were now, like myself, hoping by hook or crook to find some means to continue on. Many of them lived in a very precarious and uncertain way, mostly in saloons and gam-

bling dens that were very plentiful and never closed night or day, Sundays included.

Seattle was what you call a wide-open town, which means that it had been made safe for every conceivable form of crookedness, vice and crime. These conditions, in some respects, were indeed indescribable.

Such an assemblage under such conditions will probably never occur again, and the opportunity for the study of crowd psychology was marvelous. However, I was too young and inexperienced at the time to be conscious of this side of the picture, and too absorbed myself in being a part of it.

I had letters to a number of well-known people in Seattle, but as these were social, I decided not to present myself, since my abode and most of my associates were of a kind calculated to embarrass, I thought, rather than please any people I had access to in this way.

Nevertheless, I met a few respectable people, among them a Mr. and Mrs. Francisco, who were on their honeymoon. She was the daughter of an Episcopal clergyman, and through her I met Mr. and Mrs. Charles McAllester and their charming young daughter, Grace. These people I afterwards got to know well, and they have always been my devoted friends. Grace was indeed lovely, and would have been an ideal heroine for this story. But this is the tale of a failure, and in these heroines do not enter. She is a married woman now and the mother of several grown children, I believe.

Another person that I saw much of at that time was old Mr. Wikeoff, one of those sweet old derelicts that you often meet in life, just drifting around with the cur-

rent, living no one knows how, but always with the boys and hopeful still. His faith in me never wavered, and I wrote him often for years, until one day no answer came.

Quite by accident I met Mr. Gilbert Kidder of Wilmington, North Carolina. Mr. Kidder was much older than I was and a gentleman of refined taste and ideas. He was shocked to find me living at the Globe Hotel, and more shocked still when I told him that I was going north with some of that yellow, smelly mob that seethed around us.

He endeavored to dissuade me, and even threatened to telegraph my mother, but finding me determined he became quite interested and did everything he could for my pleasure, taking me to see people in the evening, among them many that I have known well since.

It is a long way along the social scale from Mr. Kidder to Jesse Lang, the next character I must introduce here. Mr. Kidder and Jesse Lang would have mutually repelled each other on sight. They were of different clay, yet both my friends.

Very shortly after my arrival in Seattle I met, or rather ran into, as we did in those days, Jesse Lang. He was at my hotel. Jesse was a Tar Heel from Buncombe County. That was enough to make us close friends under the circumstances. Otherwise Jess was a powerful fellow, of plain stock, about 36 years of age, and a bartender by trade. With him was a Pole named Romeo, which I assume to be Romesesky Americanized. Romeo was about 55 years of age. He told me that his people were of splendid class in Poland, but that his entire family, father, mother, sisters and brothers, along with their

village, had been exiled to Siberia back in the sixties, and that he had never heard a word from any of them since. He himself had escaped this fate by being at school in France at the time. He had come to America as a young man, had served five years in the army and had for many years now been a bartender in Ashville, North Carolina.

These two men had been attracted to Seattle exactly as I had, and, like myself, were now looking for some opportunity to go on to the magnetic North. Naturally we were drawn together under these circumstances, and a kind of "triple entente" sprang up between us which seemed very excellent to me, especially whenever I looked at Jesse's great back, his powerful arms and his 225 pounds of solid weight. Such an ally, I thought, might be very good, and so it was.

Poor Jess, he was ever faithful to the "entente," but his trip to the north seemed to unbalance him, and he committed suicide in Butte, Montana, during the fall of 1898.

One day Jess came to me and said that he thought that he had found the thing that we wanted, and asked me to go with him to see the head man. He took me to see a man called George Stinson. Stinson was very mysterious about the matter, would tell us very little about it, except in a vague way; that his party was to leave soon; that they wanted just three more men; that they were going up on their own boat, and that the affair was being backed by the Standard Oil Company—this latter very confidentially, after Jess had paid for the drinks, for we were in a saloon. Indeed, the entire business of Seattle, in

those days, seemed to be conducted in saloons, and only very minor details considered far from the bar. He promised to come in the morning and take us to see the real boss, whose name he said was Rennick. Jess and I decided that if we could go with this party we would do so. The name Standard Oil sounded very good and substantial to me, besides it was getting very late and we had to do something shortly.

The next morning Stinson took us to the Great Northern Hotel and into a luxurious room, wherein sat the man known as George Rennick. This man's appearance and manner was the most peculiar and bewildering that I have ever seen, and he had a curious effect upon me. He was dressed in a suit of orange-colored "mackinaw,"* blue shirt and boots. His hat, which he did not remove, was a slouchy cross between that of a Mexican cowboy and a Montana rancher. A bottle of whiskey sat on the table, and a few gold nuggets lay carelessly by. But more of him later. Rennick looked us over keenly, asked no questions and then, talking very rapidly, said, as nearly as I can recall: "Yes, you will do. There is only one thing—keep your damn mouths shut and ask no questions. Sign this contract and get to hell out of here. George will explain to you. Hurry up!"

I was completely dumfounded, and had no resistance of any kind in me. We all signed and got out, not even having a copy for ourselves.

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* Mackinaw—A heavy, thick, plaid material, the design of which is large and striking; in a local, U. S. sense, a blanket or short double-breasted coat.

Stinson, who from now on will be referred to as George, then explained that we had signed a contract to go to Alaska for a period of two years, the company to pay all expenses of every description, and in addition thereto we were to be allowed the sum of $1 per day, which could accumulate in one of the banks here or would be paid to any relative desired monthly. George was careful to explain here that this was done because one member of the party was married and his wife had some need of support while he was away; otherwise, of course, the company would not have bothered about paying a paltry dollar a day to a lot of men who would so soon be well off in their own right. But having to do it for one, it was best to treat all alike, even in small things of this kind.

In addition to this, the contract gave us a one-half ownership in all claims staked and all metal brought out. I will say here that this contract was, I think, a very fair one, and was honestly lived up to by the company besides. Before leaving Seattle I called upon a Mr. Gray, who was president of a national bank on Second Avenue, and he assured me that the money was there and would be paid as directed monthly.

Shortly after this we were taken with the other men of the party to an outfitter and told to purchase anything at all that we wanted for the trip. This we did in a very lavish way, getting far more than we could use and everything of the best quality. Certainly the company, whoever they were, spent a considerable sum in this matter, for our provisions also were most plentiful and excellent in quality, besides being especially packed. No

party ever left better equipped or more completely outfitted than we were.

We also visited the steam schooner Augusta, lying in the harbor, which had been purchased by the company for the purpose of taking us up. She was a trim-looking little ship of 70 tons burden, and her forecastle was being made ready to receive us aboard.

I have now arrived at a stage in this narrative where the reader, in order to at all understand the movements that follow, must know a number of things that were entirely unknown to me at that time. That is, the reader must know now, how and why this party was organized. Otherwise, the narrative would be entirely unintelligible, I fear, in places; besides, the organization of this party is in itself a most interesting study. The work of a master mind, the mind of a man so clever in crookedness that you are dazzled by his performance and so admire his cleverness that you forget that he is a crook.

CHAPTER II.

The Organization of the Party.

The prime mover and master mind in the organization of this party of which I was now a member was a Mr. Homer Pennick. I have never seen this Mr. Pennick, but during my stay in Alaska and upon my return I learned much of him and his extraordinary career. Whatever can be said against Mr. Pennick, it is admitted by all that he is no ordinary crook, and I have failed to discover a single individual who seemed to harbor the slightest bitterness or ill-will toward him. Gen. W. G. Le Duc of Minnesota is said to have known more about him than anyone else, and I regret that I could not have seen General Le Duc before his death and told him of this experience, for General Le Duc was a friend of my family and was sometimes at Cottendale when I was a young man, and was himself a man of very extraordinary knowledge and experiences in life.

However, Mr. Pennick is remembered by a large number of other prominent men in this country, who pronounce him the most talented confidence man that ever operated on this continent. His genius in crookedness amounted to greatness, it is said, and even after you know this, it is difficult to withhold your confidence and respect.

He is described as a faultlessly groomed man with irresistible manners, whose occupation has always been separating American millionaires from some of their hard-

earned cash, for be it remembered that Pennick always went for big game. The man with a few thousand was always safe in his hands, and he is ever ready to help a fellow who is down on his luck.

The last I heard of him he was said to be residing on a beautiful estate on the Rhine, where he could enjoy that quiet and freedom of action that might be to some degree interfered with here.

It seems that Mr. Pennick first came into some notoriety back in the seventies. At that time there was quite a prosperous little mining district around Port Arthur, on the Canadian side of Lake Superior. Mr. Pennick came into this district and purchased from the Canadian Government some 24,000 acres of land, paying therefor $1 per acre. He had this land surveyed and laid off into sections and had some maps and blueprints prepared. He then smuggled in eleven barrels of tin ore from England, and salted it down on this property. The following year he sent out a prospecting party, who returned with magnificent specimens of tin ore. With this ore, his maps and deeds for the property he organized a company in New York City and sold some $800,000 worth of stock. Early the next summer the stock owners, for some reason, became suspicious and sent out an exploring party on their own responsibility. The whole fraud was then exposed, even the empty barrels from the Cornwall Tin Mines found and brought down to New York. It is not known exactly how Mr. Pennick got out of this affair. It is known that he was in prison for awhile, and some say he bribed a judge. Anyway, he shortly after-

wards appeared in the mining districts of the West, where he became known as the most successful swindler in the trade.

After being connected with various big and shady transactions, he finally, by accident it is said, got control of one of the best properties in Colorado. This was a mine called the Robert E. Lee, and this he sold to an English syndicate for something like a million dollars. We next hear of him as a plunger on the Chicago Exchange, where he became bankrupt in a short time. He then returned to the mining business, but, being too well known in the West now for success along his lines, he went to Cook's Inlet, in Alaska, a district which had for years been yielding placer gold in modest quantities. Here he selected a site for a town which he named Homer for himself, and staked off a certain amount of the adjoining country as mining claims.

It seems that he was here when he heard of the discovery of the Klondike. He at once started out, and on the way down met the man who was to be his assistant and partner in carrying out some of his future operations. This man was George Rennick, the same that I saw first at the Great Northern Hotel, and whose dispatch in business matters had so amazed me.

Rennick was himself a swindler of some note, having served a term in a Federal prison for his connection with a mining swindle known as "The Little Bear's Nest." Rennick was a much commoner type of criminal than Pennick. Nothing was too small for him to steal or too dirty for his undertaking. He was a man of extraordinary cunning and knowledge of human nature, but his

most valuable qualities to Pennick were his manners, appearance and dress, which were exactly what the Eastern imagination had pictured that of a prosperous Klondiker to be. This pair, having arrived in Seattle on the same steamer, at once began to lay plans for a wholesale robbery of Eastern people. Pennick's genius was for working big game and his power lay in his ability to meet and interest big financiers in his enterprises. He used Rennick just as he chose, gave him so much of the spoils as he cared to, and permitted him to fleece and blackmail any small fish that happened to be drawn into the net.

The first move was to borrow $20,000 worth of gold nuggets. This they succeeded in doing from a prominent banker in Seattle, whose name I withhold because of the respect and friendship I in after years had for his wife and daughter. In a few days this remarkable pair were registered at the Palmer House, in Chicago. Rennick was dressed as a Klondiker—blue shirt, slouch hat and mackinaw. He said he had just come out from the Klondike, had been working very hard and had just come over to see the town and have a little fun. He spent money very freely, and on opportune occasions would show a few handfuls of nuggets. He was quite reluctant in talking about Alaska, but he let the boys know that he had a hole in the ground up there somewhere which he was in the habit of visiting after his profligate trips east.

In the meantime, Pennick, who was elegantly dressed and entertaining lavishly, was pointing him out and introducing him as a Klondiker who had just come out from the interior with a fortune. He said that he had taken

him down to San Francisco, where they had wined him and dined him, but had been unable to get anything out of him as to what or where his properties were. Being convinced, however, that this man had something very splendid, he had brought him over to Chicago to see if a company could not be organized that would make it profitable to all concerned.

After much persuasion and work in each case on the part of Pennick and others, this poor, ignorant Klondiker Rennick was finally persuaded to sell certain interests in his claims in Alaska. A number of companies were organized here, in each case Rennick receiving from $5,000 to $20,000 in cash upon the passing of the papers. Philadelphia, being a good town, was worked in the same way, as well as several other places, and some big silk manufacturers at Paterson, New Jersey, to my own knowledge, can bear witness that that town also was not overlooked.

Finally, New York was reached and the whole thing repeated there even on a larger scale. Among the companies large and small that were organized in New York there was one at 26 Broadway. This being the headquarters of the Standard Oil Company, illustrates in a way the ability of Mr. Pennick to reach and interest the most important financiers.

This company was backed and undertaken, as I afterwards understood from Mr. Edwards, by three perfectly legitimate business men who were connected officially with the Standard Oil Company. It was a private undertaking of these gentlemen, however, and was in no way whatever connected with the affairs of the Standard

Oil Company. In this particular case Rennick received five $1,000 bills before any of the papers were signed. He then signed a paper obligating himself to take into Alaska a party of ten men, prospectors, and to stake them on "pay dirt." As to the exact geographic position of this "pay dirt" Mr. Rennick said nothing. Indeed, it was especially stipulated that he would not be required to do so. It might be in the totem pole forest of Wrangle, or it might be a few thousand miles around the corner at the mouth of the frozen Mackenzie. However, this did not matter. "Pay dirt" was what was wanted, and you could not expect a man to disclose the exact whereabouts of so much wealth for a pittance like $5,000.

Everything was very speedily and satisfactorily arranged. A Mr. Edwards was selected to represent the company. He and Rennick were at once to go to Seattle and organize the party. Rennick was to have complete control until the party was properly located, according to his contract; then Mr. Edwards, the representative of the company, was to take charge.

This Mr. Edwards was a cool, calculating man, a good New York type. He was about fifty years of age, had some considerable mechanical knowledge, and had been connected, I believe, with The Acme Works in Brooklyn. He had spent a year or two in South America for the Standard Oil people and was in this matter receiving a salary of $5,000 a year, in addition to some interest he had in the undertaking. Edwards was a man of splendid determination and stuck to Rennick like a leech, so that Rennick could not shake him and finally had to go to Seattle with him, much as he disliked to do so.

Mr. Edwards and Rennick had arrived in Seattle some weeks before myself, where Rennick at once began to invent all manner of excuses for delay and for forcing further money out of the company. Something had been done, however, in the way of organization. A steam schooner had been purchased in Astoria, Oregon, and brought around to Seattle, and some members of the party also had been engaged.

After Rennick had exhausted his ingenuity in delaying the party, he pretended at last to be ill and procured a doctor to say that he must at once go to Hot Springs, Arkansas. In order to make this more certainly work, he was pronounced to have contracted a loathsome disease which was sure to disqualify him for so intimate personal association as this trip required. He insisted, however, that he had a partner who was just as familiar with that "pay dirt" as he himself was; that he did not then know where his partner was, but was expecting him in Seattle every day, and as soon as he came he would have him take his place and go with Edwards, carrying out his (Rennick's) part of the contract.

As some thousands of dollars had already been spent and the tale seemed very plausible, especially as Rennick had often referred to this partner in New York and other places, there was nothing for Edwards to do but to wait.

In the meantime, Rennick began a search among the cosmopolitan mass of bums and blacklegs then in Seattle for some man that he could pass off for his partner. The man that he finally introduced as his partner was named George Stinson, and how he came to be his partner I will let Stinson himself relate in his own way.

Four years after these occurrences I was driving one afternoon on the Lunetta in the City of Manila. I saw Stinson on the sidewalk. I recognized him instantly. There was no mistaking him—the same red beard and small blue eyes, the same massive form and wobbling gate. I sprang from the "Carremetta" and going toward him called him by his first name—George. He turned around and seeing me in the uniform of an artillery officer saluted and said: "I beg your pardon, sir. I thought you spoke to me." He then recognized me, and seemed to be pleased at seeing me again. I asked him to drive with me, which he did.

We went to the Hotel Oriente and had a long chat. I told him that I would like to know his part of that Alaska trip of ours; that the trip was a thing of the past now, and could not in any way hurt or concern anyone. In that peculiarly positive and short-sentenced manner of his he very readily told me his connection with the trip, and I reproduce his words here as nearly verbatim as possible, I having written them down immediately afterwards in my quarters at Fort Santiago:

> "I never saw Rennick until he came to see me in Seattle about two weeks before I met you. I am a sailor most of my life, though I have prospected some, too, most everywhere, in Africa, South America and in Australia, in the United States, too, and about ten years ago I was Prospecting down here on this island in Benquet Province. For the last several years I have gone in whaling ships, and, as you know, I am familiar with the coast from California up to the Arctic. I know, too, most all the Indian tribes and many of the squaw men and traders along the coast. Well, I came down to Seattle that year after spending the winter in the Arctic Ocean near Cape Barrow. I had about $500, but I

spent this in two or three weeks. I thought I would go to the Klondike, but this fellow Rennick came to me when I was about broke. He said that he had a good thing up in Alaska and wanted a man to take a party up there for him. I thought he was on the square; he loaned me a hundred dollars and asked me to wait a few days. I saw him every day, and after a few days he took me to a room and told me his plans. He said that he had signed a contract in New York to take a party up to Alaska and stake them, but that he was sick and could not go; besides, they had treated him very badly, and he was going to shake them. He said he could fix it so that I could make some money out of it, and after a few days it was agreed that I was to represent myself as his partner. He gave me $500, and I was to work Edwards for whatever I could get before we started. He thought Edwards would stand for $2,000. If Edwards ponied up, I was to take the party to the most inaccessible place I could find, somewhere where they could neither get in or out. It was important that Edwards be placed somewhere for the winter where he could not communicate with his friends.

"That was my part—to keep Edwards and you fellows from civilization until the following spring. This would enable Rennick to carry on his plans in Seattle during the winter and spring, when a big rush would certainly take place. All these things were very carefully gone over and understood by Rennick and myself, and after a few days we were ready to spring it on Edwards.

"It was arranged that Rennick was to go to Edward's room at the Great Northern Hotel and engage him in a rather despondent conversation over the non-appearance of his partner. After a little while I was to appear. Rennick was to recognize me as his old partner, whom he had been expecting for some days and after a greeting the whole thing was to be sprung.

"Well, I went to the Great Northern and sat down

in a chair. I saw Rennick come through and go into the elevator. If he did not return in ten minutes, I was to follow. After ten minutes I went up and knocked on Edwards' door. The door was opened and Rennick jumped up and, grabbing me by the hand, said: 'You damn old scoundrel! Where in the hell have you been? I have been looking for you everywhere.' After we had exchanged greetings I told him I had just come out and had been down in San Francisco for a few weeks. He then introduced me to Edwards. We all sat down, and Rennick asked some questions about the mines, how were the claims on Wild Goose Creek panning, had I gone over to Dead Horse Canyon before I left, and some other questions about fictitious places.

"It was certainly funny. He then said, 'Well, George, you have got to go right back,' and then told me about Edwards' party, how he himself had to go to Hot Springs, and all that bunk. I kind of laughed this off, and told him that I could not think of going back to Alaska now. After a few days, when both Rennick and myself were satisfied that Edwards was completely deceived, I consented to take the party off his hands, provided Edwards would pay me $2,000 cash. This rather staggered Edwards, and after some telegraphing to New York I accepted $1,500, which Edwards paid me at once. I think you know the balance, Cotten, and how well I carried out my agreement with Rennick. Rennick robbed me before I left Seattle, and I hope he is in hell by now. I did not know where to take you fellows, besides it was not too late for you to get out if we went up at once, so we invented that yarn about the schooner which you remember we wasted so much time in hunting. Well, when we got to Sitka I saw Steve McGee and told him this business. Steve said that Yakutat was the place to lose the damn scoundrels. So I went to Yakutat. That was a hard winter on me. I was afraid you fellows would hang me. I was not afraid of you, but I thought Jess or Brooks might kill me."

George would tell me nothing as to how the party finally broke up, except in a general way that they had all got out, he believed, and I purposely avoided asking him what had become of our dogs. Stinson then told me that he had been prospecting up in Benguet Province, but had gone broke and asked me if I could not see Captain Harding, the Chief of Police of Manila, and have him appointed on the Municipal Police Force. I knew Jack Harding, having been a non-commissioned officer with him in the same regiment. However, I also knew Stinson, and I could not possibly recommend him for a position of this kind. I knew him too well for that, and could not inflict him on the small Chinese merchants and other helpless people who might be on his post. As Manila was at that time, George would have made such a position much more profitable than prospecting.

Thus it was that Stinson came to be in charge of this party. If Rennick has searched the world over he could not have found a man better fitted to carry out this part of the plan.

Stinson was the most perplexing study I have ever found in human nature. At times it would seem that he just missed being a fine man. He had a splendid practical knowledge of the world, some considerable education and fine natural abilities.

But with all this he was the most debased, cruel and inhuman creature I have ever known. He had, I believe, some considerable criminal record, including murder, and his passions and habits were the most violent and uncontrolled imaginable. He had, too, a most extraordinary cunning, and was a very dangerous man with it all, because he knew no fear.

CHAPTER III.

From Seattle to Sitka.

Thus it is seen that we had no prospects whatever from the beginning. We were merely to be ditched and abandoned in some inaccessible place a thousand miles from civilization and left to die or get out the best we could.

The men that Rennick and Stinson selected to compose this party were all chosen on account of their lack of experience, their simplicity of mind and because they appeared little likely to cause future trouble. I seemed to fulfill these requirements without difficulty.

They were, for the most part, very rough and undesirable companions, Lang and Romeo being, to some extent, exceptions in this respect. Lang remained with the party to the end, and shortly after returning to the States committed suicide, as has been stated. Romeo came out with me, as will appear later.

Jack Rhyne was a young Irishman, much nearer my own age than the others, and came from the Barbary Coast of San Francisco. He was what is called a waterfront tough and barroom loafer, though not a very vicious type. He had a fine wit and could be attractive in a way. I met him several years afterwards on Market Street, in San Francisco. He was a sign painter then, and told me that Jimmy Landon, another member of our party, had contracted the habit of going prospecting in other people's pockets, and in consequence thereof was at that time a member of the city street builders' association, that

uniformed organization that used to be distinguished by a very large ball and chain worn on the ankles. This Jimmy was a very disgusting little person, and I hardly know how to class him, since his kind is rarely found except in the slums proper.

Tom Bull had spent his entire life as a woodsman and hunter, and in this field he had certain expert knowledge of a crude nature that would have delighted Mr. Roosevelt. However, had Mr. Roosevelt lived with him as intimately as I did for several months, he would have seen a larger side of him not so interesting or attractive. Tom had taken up a ranch near Cape Flatery, where he lived entirely by hunting, and his nearest neighbor was a man named Wells, who was from my native county in North Carolina. Tom was a widower, and from his own description of his married life and his treatment of his wife I should say that he was also a murderer.

Brooks was a lumberjack from Minnesota, quiet and very ignorant. He was also suspicious and moody, and spent all his spare time whittling on a stick with a pocket knife. He was a type that has since been organized into the I. W. W.'s, and, excepting George, was the most treacherous and dangerous man in the party. Two other members of the party deserted us before we really got under way, so we numbered only eight instead of ten, as intended. One of these deserters was a mild-appearing man who had spent his life prospecting with a Burro in the deserts of Arizona; the other was a Swede and a sailor, I believe.

The organization of our party had excited considerable interest in Seattle—the supposed backing of the Stand-

ard Oil Company, the excellency of our equipment, the special boat and, above all, perhaps, the mystery of our destination, this latter secret being all the easier guarded because no one at all knew at that time where we were going, George himself having not yet decided. The papers had given us considerable notice, and on the day of our departure six or seven hundred people assembled to see us off, the crowd being greatly augmented, I suppose, by the presence of a brass band that had been sent down by one of the outfitting establishments.

All of my newly made friends were on hand and wished me much success. My last act of gallantry was to remove my new silk necktie and present it to sweet Grace McAllester, for I would need it no more in the land of the Polar Bear. It was a loud and rough crowd that stood about to see us off, and several would-be stowaways had to be thrown ashore. We had proceeded only a few hundred yards from the dock when a fight took place on the ship that came near developing into a free-for-all fight between the crew and several members of our party. It seems that George and Tom, who were quite drunk at this time, made an entirely unprovoked attack upon the cook, who called to his assistance a sailor. Both sides were well battered up before the matter was quieted, and to make matters worse, some of our dogs just at that time got loose on deck and began to chew each other up in a vigorous way, so that the deck was for some minutes very animated and excited by brute man and brute dog, each trying to destroy his own particular kind.

We stopped at the beautiful little city of Port Townsend, which is the clearance port of Puget Sound, and

here two members of the party quietly stole away and were seen no more. This place is beautifully situated almost at the foot of the Olympic Mountains, and here I afterwards spent two very happy years as an army officer. We passed from here across the straits and entered what is known as the inside passage. This passage may properly be said to commence at Olympia, Washington, and, extending for about 1,300 miles, terminates in what is known as The Lynn Cannel, Alaska.

From a scenic standpoint, it is one of the most beautiful waterways in the world, and in formation and appearance is very similar to the "fjords" of Norway, only here there are no habitations. It is simply a network of islands and waterways. It narrows in places to a few hundred feet, then widens and branches in all directions. You find your way abruptly stopped by a gigantic mountain, and just when you are sure that there is no way through, a hole appears to the right or left; you wonder will the ship pass through—yes, it is just large enough, and you enter a bay or a fine estuary.

Occasionally you get a glimpse of the open sea through some pass or a hole in the wall, but you hasten back to your covered way and continue on in the shadows and under the hills.

Some of the mountains are black and covered with giant forests, while others are tall and mirror their dazzling white tops in your path. Here a mighty waterfall pours over a precipice, and there a little white glacier sparkles far up in the valley. No habitation of man is on these shores; it is lonely, and an awful stillness is on the face of the earth.

We traveled through this mystic way for several days, and made our first stop at a place called Bella-Bella. This was a place of no importance, being an Indian village of about twenty huts and the station of a Hudson Bay trader. We purchased some "uclous" (dried fish) for our dogs here and proceeded at once.

Our ship turned out to be very comfortable and a good sea boat, but her machinery was old and out of repair, so that when we had to depend upon steam alone, which was practically all the time, we were very slow, not being able to do better than five knots an hour.

We were all by now quite well acquainted and were quartered in the forecastle along with the ship's cook and three sailors. We slept on rough wooden berths in our own blankets, and slept exceedingly well at that. Edwards was quartered aft with the ship's officers, and we saw nothing whatever of him during the voyage, and it was not until after we landed that we got at all acquainted with him.

The captain, who took orders only from George, appeared to know these waters perfectly. He was said to have been the most successful smuggler of Chinese and opium on the coast, which is the finest possible compliment to his ability as a navigator and a scamp.

We visited a number of "out-of-the-way" inlets and bays in search of a mysterious schooner that was supposed to belong to Mr. Rennick, and for which George had some very important orders, this being a device designed to delay us en route so that we would not arrive somewhere too early to be held in over the winter.

In this way we visited old Metlakhatla, which deserves

more than a passing notice. Here we found a regularly laid-out town with well-constructed two-story houses, a very handsome and large church, a salmon cannery, a sash and door factory, a sawmill and brickyard. Yet there was not a single human being in all this town, or within fifty miles of it. The place had been absolutely abandoned since 1887. No man, woman or child greets you as you walk through these silent streets; all is quiet, dead and sad at old Metlakhatla.

Here was once the home of quite a large tribe of Chimesyan Indians. They were said to have been the most fierce and warlike of all the Northwestern tribes, and at times were cannibals. In 1857 a Rev. Mr. Duncan, a Scotch missionary, went among them and in a few months the entire tribe joined him almost *en masse*. Mr. Duncan labored with splendid judgment for their material and spiritual advancement, and with very pronounced success, especially when compared with the rather sorry achievements of missionaries in general on this continent.

Our missionaries do not seem to be selected on account of any particular fitness for the work undertaken, but rather for entire unfitness to do anything at home.

Mr. Duncan's idea was not to teach them religion alone, but to instruct them in crafts and occupations which would make of them a self-supporting and self-respecting community. With this idea in mind, he went back to England and perfected himself in such things as blacksmithing, rope making, carpentering and brickmaking. He learned to construct and operate a sawmill, and even learned the gamut on each of twenty band instruments in order that he could teach them music and organize a

band. His success was splendid, and by 1886 these Indians were living upon a very high plain of civilization in the town which I have just described as abandoned. About this time Mr. Duncan became greatly annoyed by threats of the Canadian Government to put these Indians on a reservation status, as well as by a narrow ecclesiasticism which was endeavoring to force the high church services upon him. He finally went to Washington and procured from Mr. Cleveland Annette Island, a fine, rich island in southeastern Alaska. Here he took the entire tribe in 1887.

The migration was made in canoes, the colony taking with them such of their property as was readily removable. A new town was established named Metlakhatla, after the old, and here, under the Stars and Stripes, they have prospered exceedingly, and are a most unique and interesting community.

We next stopped at Port Simpson. This is the most northerly port on the Pacific side of the English possessions. The inland passage here opens into a fine roadstead as large as Hampton Roads, which, in turn, opens directly into the high sea. This place is now the thriving little city of Rupert, and is destined to become one of the important cities of the West. It is six hundred miles nearer Hongkong and Yokohama than Seattle or any American port, and with the railroad connections with Winnepeg which it now has, is bound to become a city of great importance.

The American Territory of Alaska extends to within sight of Rupert, a fact that is very irritating to the Canadians, and two islands adjudged American territory

by a decision of the German Emperor are so located as to command the entrance to the harbor. This especially causes the Canadians concern.

Port Simpson, on this my first visit, was a very small place, containing a mission and a Hudson Bay Post. The Hudson Bay Company was the agency by which the whole of this country was saved to the British. What the East Indian Company did in India, the Hudson Bay Company repeated in North America in a somewhat smaller way. The history of the British Northwest for two hundred years is the history of the Hudson Bay Company, and now that we are to leave English territory it is well to speak of it for a moment as one of the great agencies that have given to this whole country its present characteristics and atmosphere of life.

The Hudson Bay Company was chartered by Charles II in 1670, and is therefore the oldest concern now doing business in America. The charter was granted to certain persons, who styled themselves "Gentlemen adventurers with Prince Rupert at their head." The charter conveyed the sole right to "trade with the natives, to establish law and impose penalties, to erect forts, maintain ships of war and to make peace or war with any prince or people not Christian."

After the English obtained control of Canada the company spread rapidly across the continent and became a powerful monopoly. It saved the whole of western Canada to the English and made a hard fight for "The Oregon," that magnificent domain now known as Washington and Oregon.

They established a strong fort and trading post on the

site whereon is now situated the Military Post of Vancouver Barracks on the Columbia River, and would have no doubt established the English in control of this entire country but for Old Whitman's wagon.

Perhaps no apparently trivial occurrence since the loss of the proverbial horseshoe nail has had so important results as the fact that old Whitman's wagon was a good one. The Hudson Bay people were well established in this magnificent domain on the Columbia, when one day a very peculiar cracking and bumping noise was heard far up the valley and across the river. This was old Whitman's wagon, the first wagon that ever crossed the Rocky Mountains, and it arrived on the Columbia River May 21st, 1836.

The Hudson Bay people were not slow to realize the full import of this accomplishment. It was not old Whitman that they objected to—he was only an old frontiersman—but in the wagon they saw their undoing. If one wagon could drive from Indiana to Oregon, why not two, and if two, why not a thousand, and that is just what happened. A thousand followed in old Whitman's wake, and The Oregon was saved to the Union.

Whitman himself, after making a trip to Washington to protest against the proposed trading of Oregon for a cod fishing privilege in Newfoundland, was massacred by Indians, but his old wagon is in the State Museum at Portland and its image is on the great seal of the State of Oregon.

The "Gentlemen with Prince Rupert at their head" thus having been blocked in the south by old Whitman's wagon were also checked to the north by the Russian-

American Fur Company, which, like itself, was a powerful monopoly. The influence of the English company on the Pacific, therefore, extended from Oregon to Alaska. Over this country they exerted a tremendous influence, many effects of which are apparent even to the present day. They devised and introduced a dialect called Chanooke, which is today spoken almost entirely by all the Indians on the coast from Cook's Inlet to the Columbia River. This dialect consists only of about 200 words and is quite easy to learn. It is sometimes referred to as the Court Language of the Northwest. Many white people speak it more or less, and a number of prominent people in Seattle and elsewhere take great pride in the purity of their Chanooke. It is a combination of several Indian dialects, with an occasional English and French word corrupted and woven in. It has recently, strangely enough, given to the English language a word that will probably remain. That is "hooch," which is derived from the Chanooke word "Hoochenue," which is an intoxicating drink illegally made by the Indians.

To the north the Hudson Bay Company was met by the Russian-American Fur Company, with whom they waged fierce war for almost a hundred years. The Russians first reached America by way of the Aleutian Islands, which, like a line of stepping-stones, extend from the American coast almost to Siberia. The Russian trade was at first carried on by independent bands of roving sea dogs. These bands of adventurers often engaged in desperate wars among themselves, and the loss of life among the natives and Russians alike during this period was very large. Finally, in 1780, a merchant, Gregor

Shelikof, organized a company of some financial strength, which in 1799 was chartered by Catherine II as the Russian-American Fur Company. This company was particularly fortunate in the selection of its first governor, George Baronoff, who was a man of tremendous organizing power and very great administrative ability. Baronoff moved the seat of his government further south and founded the city of Sitka.

He also established the strong Fort of Wrangle, still further south, and made deadly war on the Hudson Bay Company. Under his administration and that of his successor, Captain Hayunusta, the company became rich and powerful, and undertook many bold enterprises, among them the annexation of Hawaii and a war on Japan.

The company also established a colony in California at a place called New Albion, on the Russian River. This colony was established for the purpose of raising supplies for the town of Sitka, but was not very successful in this respect. The principal difficulty seems to have been in the personnel selected to conduct this enterprise, who, being for the most part Aleutian Indians and half-breeds transported from Alaska, had no particular taste for agricultural pursuits, but rather betook themselves off in a body on long hunting trips when they should have been attending to their grain and cattle.

They did quite a business here, however, in the manufacture of plows and other utensils which they sold to the lazy Spanish ranchers who lived to the south. This colony was abandoned and sold in 1844 to a Swiss named Sutter, the same who five years afterwards was so prominently connected with the first discovery of gold in Cali-

fornia. In 1899 I camped for a month on the Russian River, and there are still many evidences of this Russian occupation.

Thus is was that these powerful monopolies fought among themselves for greed and power and for the skins of little animals until civilization came and put an end to it. Nor must it be forgotten that into these affairs there also came the far-reaching hand of John Jacob Astor, a man with a vision and a genius, too, all his own.

These ships and traders of Astor's were a different type from the Russians and from the English,and prospered rather by their shrewdness than by force and by the attractiveness of their New England goods. Though the English drove Astor out of Astoria in 1812, he was still able to maintain his fleet in the Pacific, and was an important factor in the Northwest and in Southeastern Alaska for fifty years or more.

From Port Simpson we passed into Alaskan waters and stopped at Mary Island. There is nothing here but the custom house, but here we had the misfortune of losing our big seven hundred pound anchor. This was the fault of the mate, who ordered it let go without seeing that the cable was made fast, so the anchor, cable and all went to the bottom of the bay. The mate, however, passed the blame on to the sailor who let go, and gave him a dreadful beating, accompanied by great explosions of oaths.

We next stopped at New Metlakhatla, where some of us called upon the venerable Mr. Duncan, and then passed on to Ketchakan. This place is on Prince of Wales

Island, a very rich island, forty miles by one hundred and forty miles long and destined some day to be well populated. We spent a day and night at this place, and visited the Indian huts and the one white man that lived there. There were many very handsome totem poles here, especially across the narrow strait in front of the settlement. These totems are usually the trunks of trees, carved to represent fish, animals or birds, placed one above the other. Very much that is confusing and contradictory has been written about them and some writers profess to have discovered a great variety of meanings and causes for their construction. They are usually found at the graves of the dead, but are sometimes at the entrance of huts, and even at times on the inside. They represent the "totem" or family to which the owner belongs, and the animal is the ancestor or progenitor from which the family is descended. Some of them are very extraordinary looking, and often stand from twenty to forty feet high.

I was again at Ketchakan in 1904 and found a prosperous little town of 800 white people. It is now a considerable city, and will undoubtedly continue to grow. As yet fishing is the principal industry, and last year there was shipped from here twenty million pounds of halibut.

From here we passed on to Shecan, a small Indian village also on Prince of Wales Island. Here I saw the only really pretty Indian maiden that I have ever seen. She had been a cripple from childhood and was entirely unable to walk.

From here we proceeded without further stop to Sitka, which was then the capital of Alaska.

CHAPTER IV.

Sitka and Yakutat.

As you approach Sitka the oriental dome of the Greek Cathedral, the court house, Marine Barracks and other Government buildings, all coming in view at once, you get the impression that it is a much larger place than it really is.

As the administrative seat and centre of Russian culture in America, Sitka has a most interesting history. It was a place of much importance a hundred years ago. From here the Russian did a considerable trade with China and with the Spaniards to the south, and most of the bells in the old missions of California were cast in this little city on Baronoff Island. However, long before the time of my visit it had much declined in importance, but was still by far the most interesting place in all Alaska.

If you have ever been penned up on a little coastwise schooner for twenty days and are a reasonably decent person, it is not hard to guess what your first performance was upon going ashore. I accordingly made inquiry at once as to where those celebrated Russian baths were that I had heard so much about in connection with Sitka. This inquiry was the more diligently made by reason of the prospects that this would be my winter's bath, which was in fact true, though I do not know that any other member of the party profited by this last opportunity. Indeed, later when speaking of this matter in the woods, George seriously maintained that bathing was a symptom

of degeneracy; that it took certain oils and animal matter out of the skin, very necessary for vigor and endurance; that the Roman Empire never commenced to decline until luxurious baths were provided and the people became addicted to this altogether useless and destructive custom. However that may be, I took this bath in Sitka, and have never felt that I was in any way injured. In fact, I liked it so well that I actually took another one in June of the following year.

These baths in Sitka are connected with private residences, especially with the residences of the Colonial Citizens, so-called, who are a class of half-breeds left in America by the Russians. These people and their descendants are found in small numbers at several places on the coast, especially at Cook's Inlet. The bath that I used on this occasion and afterwards in June consisted of two small rooms, and was entirely separated from the residence. One room is a dressing room, and in here you also finish the bath with a tub of water. In the floor of the second room is built a large rock furnace, which is heated by logs of wood from the outside. When this is sufficiently hot you throw basins of water upon it until the room becomes packed with steam, and in this way you get a very crude but quite a good steam bath.

In Sitka there is a Presbyterian Mission which maintains a large school for Indian girls. What to do with these girls when they finish school is a problem not yet solved, and their fate is often a tragic one in that rough country. Here, too, is the Shelton Jackson Museum, with a fine collection of Alaskan curios. The ruins of Baronoff's Castle are still to be seen, and I noticed sev-

eral pieces of ancient artillery that formerly mounted its parapets. There is a very attractive park and driveway, or rather walk, I should say, for there is only one horse on the island, and that turned out upon investigation to be a government mule.

On the beach in front of the Mission is pointed out a large boulder, whereon it is said the beautiful Countess ———, spouse of the last Russian Governor, sat and wept when she heard that Alaska had in reality been ceded to the United States. Strangely enough, this rock is called "The Blarney Stone," and good Americans are supposed to kick it as they pass, which is rather an ugly and ungallant custom, I must say.

Sitka otherwise has two small hotels, a court house and Federal prison. There is also the Greek Orthodox Cathedral and several very large and ancient log buildings, curious and interesting in style. The Greek Orthodox Cathedral is a most interesting building, and has, besides a wealth of jeweled "icons," some ancient Russian lamps, very valuable, and several paintings, one of which I was told the late Mr. J. P. Morgan offered $25,000 for. Nor must I fail to note Mt. Edgecombe, which is an extinct volcano of extraordinary beauty, that adds much to the view around Sitka.

During the Russian control Indians were not permitted to reside within the city proper, so there grew up and developed alongside an exclusive Indian quarter, which is, I think, one of the most unique and picturesque spots in America. Baranoff Island is itself a large and valuable island, and besides being well watered and timbered, has a very mild climate. It is also well stocked

with deer, and is the most northerly point in the world where this splendid little animal is found.

The first evening I was here several men came running past me down the street in a great hurry, almost running over me in their haste. I turned and followed at a lively pace, thinking that something exciting was transpiring. Much to my surprise, I discovered that these men were prisoners running to get in jail. Sitka, being on an island, the prisoners are turned out during the day, and if they are not back by 9 o'clock they are locked out, which is, in that climate, a very serious thing in winter. So it happens that in Sitka about 9 o'clock in the evening a number of people excuse themselves and hasten to get in jail.

One morning George announced that he had discovered a large anchor in an old wreck that lay across the bay; that it was the property of Governor Brady, and that he was going to borrow it if possible to take the place of the one we had lost at Mary Island. I volunteered to go with him and call upon his Excellency the Governor of all Alaska. We both primped ourselves up somewhat for this occasion, and I shall always remember my feelings as I stepped ashore that morning. I was dressed, for the first time, in my real Alaska clothing. A suit of orange-colored mackinaw, blouse belted and buttoned to the throat in military style. My moose skin moccasins came to the ankles, and were ornamented around the top with heavy red stitching. Heavy German socks came up on the outside of the trousers almost to the knees; a fur cap and gauntlets completed the outfit, and I was careful to let the cuffs and collar of my dark blue shirt protrude

in a careless, *à la Rennick* manner. Certainly no one would ever take me for a tenderfoot now.

It is curious what a terror this word tenderfoot has to young men of the East when they first arrive in the West. They affect many airs designed to give the impression that they are at home, and generally make themselves appear much rougher and more uncivilized than they really are in an effort to avoid its application.

We called at the Governor's residence and were told that he was down at the mill. We went to the mill nearby, and found His Excellency dressed in a blue suit of overalls and shoveling snow from a pile of lumber. This rather surprised me, for I had not thought of that as a dignified dress or seemly exercise for the Governor of so great a Territory.

The Governor received us most kindly and not only consented to loan us the anchor, but actually went along himself and helped us remove it to the ship, which was no small undertaking.

I don't think the Governor ever saw such a dandy as I was that morning. He kept eyeing me, and finally walked over to me and asked what part of the South I was from. This completely staggered me, for I had supposed myself quite effectively disguised. When I told him North Carolina, he said, "I knew you were a long way from home."

While in Sitka, as has been stated before, George met an acquaintance, Steve McGee, and it was Steve who selected the place where we were to be interned for the winter, George up until now having made no decision at all as to where he would take us. This Steve was a squaw

man, and had for a year or two lived in Yakutat, where he had made a living by washing the beach sands in different places around the bay. I might explain here that there are a number of such men scattered along the coast of Alaska who are able with a pan during the summer to take out enough gold dust from the sands on the beach to support themselves in idleness during the winter. These men are always squaw men, and often live in little schooners, in which they float from place to place. Steve, however, had a little house in Yakutat, and his squaw was a graduate of the Mission School at Sitka.

Steve, as of course can be understood, was an outcast from society, and was very much like George in his taste and desires in life. He joined us at Sitka, and during the following spring went up on the Valdez glacier, where he shot a woman and was himself promptly hanged by a band of infuriated miners.

We left Sitka November 24th, and that night George volunteered us the first information we had as to where we were going. He produced a small map of Alaska and pointed out a spot between the headwaters of the Copper and Alsek rivers. Here, he said, was the promised land. He explained that from Yakutat his route extended over a dead glacier into the Alsek Valley, thence up the frozen stream to the property in question. George was very friendly and communicative that night, and we all went to bed in high spirits and very confident of our success. Jack and I even began to make some plans as to how we ought to live now in this changed state.

The next morning we were off what is known as the Fairweather Sealing Grounds, this being the locality

where the Russians used to make their greatest catch of seals and sea otter in the early days before the discovery of the wonderful Seal Islands by Prelylon in 1786. A strong gale was blowing, and our little ship labored heavily all day. The coast line had taken on a much more decided Arctic appearance, and the Fairweather range of mountains remained on our starboard side all day, Mt. Fairweather itself, 15,000 feet high, standing out like a giant statue and glorious in a new mantle of dazzling snow.

On the morning of the third day we entered Yakutat Bay, which is a very large and comfortable harbor, with numerous islands and smaller bays, and after rounding a second cape came up to the town of Yakutat, some two hundred and fifty miles from Sitka.

Here we lay for several days, while George perfected his plans for our internment. Finally he decided to go up to the head of the glacier over which we were to cross and to examine the locality himself before putting us ashore, which seemed wise, since George had never been in that locality before. He explained that he wanted to select the best place to unload our supplies, and especially wanted to see the condition of the glacier and if any crevasses had appeared on its surface since he crossed it last. He made this trip in a whaleboat, and was accompanied by Tom and Steve. While George is away on this trip I will describe Yakutat and its locality, for in this vicinity transpired most of the unrelated portion of this narrative.

Few people, I suppose, have ever heard of Yakutat; certainly I never did until George mentioned it the night

after leaving Sitka. If a person has to be buried alive, there is no more majestic place in the world for that purpose than here. Across the bay and in front of the town, though some fifteen miles away, is the great Malaspina Glacier, the largest glacier on the American continent. It contains about two hundred and fifty square miles of solid ice, and is larger in area than the land surface of the State of Rhode Island.

A glacier is one of the great wonders of nature, and a large portion of the topography and present geographic arrangements of this world can be traced to their work. To us ordinary people ice is a solid; to the scientists, however, it is a fluid, and to this fact is due the action of glaciers in grinding down great mountain systems and building up great areas of bench lands. Here in these mountains you can actually see them at work. The Malaspina glacier is fed by an extensive network of tributaries or glacier arms that extend through all the valleys for many miles. The pressure of these immense volumes accelerates the flow, which is irregular and affected by many things, so that a bench glacier like the Malaspina may be flowing in many directions at the same time, forming at times ranges of hills and valleys on its own surface of great extent. This motion is often accompanied by deep subterranean rumblings and noises, and sometimes by violent breaks and great noises on the surface that are terrifying and sound like artillery practice.

When a glacier or one of its branches becomes deprived through some change in topography or climate of its source of supply, it is said to be dead—that is, inactive. Such a glacier then slowly melts away and recedes in the

direction of its summit or active part. As it recedes or melts away it drops whatever it contains in its bosom, and this path, if above the surface of the water, becomes what is known as a moraine. These moraines are immensely curious as well as of great interest to geologists. On the north side of the Malaspina stands Mt. St. Elias, 18,100 feet high, and, at the time I was there, it was supposed to be the highest point in America. However, a more recent survey has given that honor to Mt. McKinley, which is more than 20,000 feet high.

St. Elias is shaped much like a sharp pyramid, only it has a great piece broken out of it near the top. As to who broke it, I cannot for a certainty say, but the Indians say that Tanhow, a turbulent spirit that once lived thereabouts, broke it out and threw it at his wife. I should say that it was a dangerous thing to throw even at one's wife, for that little handful must have been several thousand acres. Tanhow is also held to be responsible for a number of other freakish things that are seen in this locality.

St. Elias is, of course, always covered with snow, is dazzling white, and in clear weather can be seen for two hundred and fifty miles at sea.

Extending east from St. Elias is the St. Elias range of mountains, which extends to Fairweather. It consists of a number of ranges, parallel to each other, and contains many fine peaks, such as Mt. Vancouver, 15.000 feet high, and Mt. Hobbard, 10,000 feet high. This is the frame in which Yakutat sits, the town itself being on the bench land that extends along the coast, and is surrounded by dense forests of spruce fir and hemlock.

Yakutat has never been a place of any importance, though now I believe one of the largest canneries in the country is there. The Indians of this locality were always of very low order and almost entirely fish eaters. The Russians found them troublesome and not worth while to subdue. In 1802 the Russian garrison of one hundred men was massacred, and about the same time a large party of Russians traveling in three hundred canoes was attacked off Yakutat Bay and destroyed to a man. The Russians then destroyed the place and abandoned it after erecting a great cross over the graves of their comrades, which can be seen to this day as you enter the harbor.

Yakutat, as I found it, consisted of about fifty shacks and buildings, very irregularly placed along the beach. The natives number, I believe, about 250 and are quite far from being civilized.

Though there has been a Swedish Mission here for about ten years, these Indians still tie up their witches, keep certain of their young girls in sweat boxes and practise all manner of barbarities, some hideous and revolting. They still cling mostly to their own laws and customs, are a poor lot physically, very superstitious and all covered with insects. The first night we were here I was awakened in the early morn by the screams and cries of many children. I was so disturbed and curious that I slipped on some clothes and went on deck. It was barely dawn, but I could discern through the light many children bathing and splashing in the water along the shore. Their screams were dreadful, and I wondered what they were doing there, for the thermometer was about ten de-

grees above zero. I learned that it is customary to often subject the small children to this treatment, the men driving them into the water with sticks and standing on the shore to see that they remained out for an allotted time, the idea being to toughen them to hardships and exposure, thus making stronger men and women of them. As can be imagined, the result is many deaths from pneumonia and other pulmonary troubles. Their houses are mostly made of slabs or poles. In the centre of the dirt floor is a wood fire, the smoke of which is supposed to go out an opening in the top. This, however, is only a supposition, for the smoke never goes out this opening, but all remains below to torture you, and often you cannot recognize a person quite near you for the smoke.

The occupants sleep and eat around this fire on piles of skins or filthy rags, while the floor is littered with bones and garbage of every description. These houses are called "bribaris," and some of them are very large.

One evening a "potlatch" was given in honor of our arrival. A "potlatch" is an entertainment, the word also being used in other sense, as "to give" or "compliment." This particular affair was given in quite a large hut or "bribary," and was attended, I suppose, by all the belles and matrons of the place. Certainly a goodly number arrived, and all seemed to have one or more "papoose," tightly bandaged up in rags, which they carelessly tossed in a heap in one corner of the room, like so many bundles of trash and all on top of each other. I wondered how they could breathe.

These little things, however, never uttered a sound during the entertainment. A girl with a stick was stationed

over them to prevent any being devoured by dogs, a shocking horror not infrequently occurring, I was told.

"Papoose" deposited, the squaws then mingled very freely with the men, and some kind of a mournful dance was started.

There was nothing whatever attractive about any of this, so I left early, being, in fact, afraid to sit down or to touch anything at all.

These Indians are expert fishermen, and dig out the most beautiful canoes on the coast. This seems to be their only real art, for their totems are much inferior to what I saw at Sitka and Ketchekan. They commit all manner of crimes among themselves, and while I was there a young Indian killed his father without any provocation whatever, and, cutting his stomach open, filled it with rocks and sank the body in a lake. For this he had most of his canoes and blankets taken from him and had to work for the chief for a length of time.

The chief, who is called King George, does not appear much superior to his subjects, but his son, who is called the Duke of York, seems to be a very strong and athletic man.

King George, who is recognized by our government and receives an annuity of $120 a year, was once taken to Portland at the expense of the government and forced to witness the hanging of some of his subjects who had committed some barbarous murders, the idea being that it would have a wholesome effect upon him and the others of his tribe if he actually saw what the "Great Boston Con"* in Washington would do when angry. George

*American white man.

never tires of telling strangers of this trip. The hanging apparently did not impress him at all, but what interested him most was an elevator, and I was told that it was almost impossible to get him out of one.

Among other happenings on this marvelous trip George was made the subject of a cruel joke. He was told to take down the receiver of a telephone and put it to his ear, that he could talk to the old chief who had been dead for many years. He did so, and so well did the person at the other end act his part that the scene became most pathetic, and I was told that those present were really overcome at George's earnestness and the effect it had upon him.

Of the white people here, we found a Swedish Mission conducted by a Mr. Johnson and his wife, assisted by a young Swedish woman. There are also two other white men who reside here, both traders. One, a Mr. Beasley, I saw very little of, but the other, Mr. Johnson, I saw a good deal of at this time, and upon my return here in the spring. Mr. Johnson was a very jovial and big-hearted fellow and had the capacity of making you laugh and keeping you in good spirits all the time. He had been here for about twenty years, and of course knew all about this place, but to my surprise knew nothing whatever about the surrounding country.

There was also here at this time a Mr. and Mrs. Krowley, who were on their honeymoon. Mrs. Krowley was about fifty years of age, an aggressive, self-opinionated, stupid person, possessed of almost everything that men dislike in women—of the poison ivy rather than the clinging vine stock. She had been directed here by a clairvoyant,

who had imparted to her the exact spot near Mt. St. Elias where her fortune awaited her. Her husband, a most insignificant little mouse of a man, had been required to sell his belongings and trail along with her. With them was a man named Brooks, a Missouri farmhand, who had drifted into Yakutat in some way and, being stranded, had taken up with this pair. The three had been working some of the beach sands around the bay, hoping in this way to secure enough to go up to where Mrs. Krowley's fortune lay. In this, however, they had not been successful, and were all now practically stranded.

We took our dogs ashore here and gave them some exercise, and thereby was precipitated one of the greatest dog fights I suppose that ever occurred. They were no sooner turned loose on the beach than the Indian dogs came down upon them in swarms and attacked them savagely. I am sure that more than a hundred Indian dogs participated in this fight. Our dogs were very strong, especially two mastiffs and a St. Bernard. These were equal to any number of the little, half-starved Indian dogs, that appeared to be mostly fox. For some time the battle raged terribly, and the whole village was aroused by the uproar and turned out in an effort to put a stop to it. At times some of our dogs would be entirely covered up by the Indian dogs, and would look like a big ball of mad dogs rolling along the beach. After some time we separated them and, securing our dogs, took them back to the ship. The casualties among the Indian dogs were large. The Indians demanded pay for these dead dogs, which we refused, and the matter caused some bad feeling between the Indians and ourselves. In every Indian vil-

lage there is a swarm of half-starved dogs. These dogs belong to no one, but if you kill one, an owner soon appears and demands pay. Our own dogs suffered very little in this battle, and the large ones not at all.

There is one other thing that I must refer to in connection with Yakutat—that is the vast quantities of fish that are to be found and taken in these waters. It is practically impossible to exaggerate the quantity of salmon, smelts and herring that can be taken during the season. This is not only true of Yakutat Bay, but of all the bays and streams of the north Pacific. In the little lagoons and inlets at certain stages of the tide they can be raked out with a rake, just as many as you desire, and they form a very important part of the food of the bear and fox, who have no trouble in catching them. Several times Jack and I went over to the little lagoon near Yakutat when the tide was low and raked out in a minute as many as we wished. We also saw numbers of Indian dogs catching them and devouring them on the beach.

CHAPTER V.

In the Woods.

Upon George's return, he reported everything in fine condition; the glacier had been visited and found entirely free from crevasses. Accordingly, we got under way and proceeded up Enchantment Bay. This is a "fjord" or arm of the sea that extends up into the mountains and foothills for about forty miles. It empties into Yakutat Bay over by the Malaspina, and, while it is forty or fifty miles long, it bends in a direction so that its head is only about twenty-five miles overland from Yakutat. It is one of the hundreds of similar bays or canals, as they are called, that are characteristic of this entire coast, and also of the coast of Norway. Enchantment Bay is a gem and lovely beyond description. It is from one-quarter to one-half mile in width, with occasional small islands or rocks, and with banks so high and vertical that there are no landing places. On the left bank ascending glaciers break in occasionally. The banks and mountains on each side are so steep and the place so narrow that we had hardly any light at this season of the year, and the entire day was like twilight, which gave everything a curious but lovely appearance.

At night we tied up to some trees that hung over a cliff, for no steamer had ever been in this place before. We were the first that ever burst upon that silent sea, and had to proceed with caution.

About noon of the second day we arrived at the head of

the bay, where the banks are low and comfortable for landing. Here we unloaded our supplies in the forest and on the banks of a giant moraine. We were assisted in this by a number of Indians brought along from Yakutat for that purpose, among whom I recall was "His Grace," the Duke of York.

The Augusta then turned her heels, gave us three loud whistles and started on her long trip back to Seattle. It was a queer feeling that came over us then, at least over me, for this little ship was our last tie to civilization and the great world behind. All, I suppose, sent letters back by the Augusta, and certainly George made a report to Rennick as to the progress of the matter and enclosed a rough chart of Enchantment Bay and the environs of our tomb. We retained, from the Augusta, a good boat and two pairs of oars for the benefit of the corps and for use on the River Styx perhaps, should the ferryman be indisposed or be otherwise engaged.

We at once started to arrange our camp, which we did very speedily. We had three tents, one for ourselves, one for the kitchen and one for the dogs. Romeo was appointed cook, and an excellent one he was, too, having been a cook in the Army. Tents pitched and stoves up, we then covered the floor with hemlock bows. On these we placed our sleeping bags and blankets in two rows, feet to the centre.

We were entirely comfortable, and had an abundance of everything. Indeed, we had so much food and so many extra tools of every description that we very soon took no pains to economize in anything.

Edwards was now one of us, and placed his sleeping

bag opposite George. George, however, was entirely in charge, and Edwards, in a way, a guest until George performed Rennick's part of the contract and located us on that "pay dirt." However, Edwards worked just as any of us, though I understood he was not required to do so. He proved to be one of the best workers in the camp.

As soon as the Augusta was out of sight, George seemed to lose his energy. We spent several days making ourselves more comfortable, and explored a bit of the forest that surrounded us, in which no white man had ever been before. Finally George went forward and selected a sight for our second camp. This camp was about five miles away, and was at the foot of a glacier. In order to reach it, however, we had to cross the moraine, which added immensely to our labor.

We all worked like slaves on this move, and after some trouble succeeded in breaking in our dogs to harness very well indeed; and it is surprising what they can do. Since then I have loved dogs better than men, I fear; certainly better than some of the men I was with.

The companionship of dogs is one of the finest things given to man, and my dog Prince certainly excelled this man George in all the finer traits of character, and was in truth much more of a Christian and gentleman besides.

We found our ten tons of supplies such an immense burden and the trail over the moraine so very rough that it was after Christmas before we had entirely moved up to the Glacier camp. Here we spent most of January, entirely inactive. We had become suspicious and were now finally convinced while here that George, for some reason, was playing a part. We could not understand it,

but it was quite plain that George had no real intention of taking us forward and knew nothing whatever about the country.

The party, too, was by now quite plainly divided into groups or alliances that made our situation more hopeless, besides very unpleasant and dangerous as well. From the beginning Romeo, Jess and I stood together, not in an aggressive way, but plain enough to be seen. Tom had attached himself to George, and we all knew that he could be depended upon to do George's bidding in anything.

Brooks remained neutral, alone and sullen, with more friendship for Jess, we thought, than for any other member of the party. Jimmy appeared also to be neutral, but, being entirely worthless and without decision of any kind, could not be depended upon. Edwards was entirely neutral, held himself somewhat aloof from all of us, as was proper under the circumstances. He was indeed in a most difficult and trying position—in fact, in a position of real danger, and he conducted himself like a man all through.

Jack had shown a fondness for me, but, having had some words with George shortly after we landed, he walked off and abandoned the party. He endeavored to reach Yakutat overland, but became lost and snow-blind in the forest, as we learned afterwards, and would have perished but for the fact that some Indians on a hunting trip chanced upon him and took him in. He recovered and was taken down to San Francisco on a little fishing schooner that happened to come in to secure some water. If he had remained with the party, he would have belonged to my group.

George made every effort to break into our "entente." He would talk to us individually and cunningly, try to arouse us against Edwards or against each other. It did not work, and this alignment remained throughout the winter, and very well it did, for otherwise there would have been murder in our camp that winter. As it was, the situation was dangerous enough; everyone realized that. No one spoke or said a word about any member of the party, especially nothing was said about our prospects or where we were going. Nothing had been agreed to on this point, but it was in the atmosphere and everyone felt it as distinctly as they could see the mountains around us. Any trouble started in that camp would have been most serious. We had at least three of the most desperate and dangerous men that could be found—men that thought nothing of murder, and we were hundreds of miles from any civilization or law of any kind. This was perfectly well understood by all of us, and it was felt to be an excellent time to mind your own business, "speak with a soft voice and carry a big stick."

I have always believed that if George could have attached Jess or Brooks to himself, Edwards would have certainly been "accidentally" killed, or would have mysteriously disappeared, and I am sure that nothing but this nice balance of power prevented some such horrible tragedy. In fact, George even approached me, in a vague way, about the advisability of something of this kind happening to Edwards. Thank God, young as I was, he instantly saw my resentment and concern. I never mentioned this to a soul, for the situation would not have stood any discussion at all. Edwards, too, I am quite

sure, understood and felt his situation accurately, and in anything like fair play would have rendered a good account of himself. He knew, too, that the slightest interference or assumption of authority on his part would have caused an immediate explosion.

There was one other thing that I thought at the time had some effect on this ticklish situation, and, trifling as it may appear, there were some indications that Brooks, at least, was affected by it. This seemed to have been caused by my having been seen with Mr. Kidder several times in Seattle. Mr. Kidder was a strikingly handsome and distinguished-looking man; he was "biled shirt" all over to these men, and the impression prevailed that I was not at all what I pretended to be. The inference was that I was a son of a millionaire, or of some notable, out on a lark, and if anything ugly happened, there would be no limit of means and influence available to show the thing up. I do not know to what extent this idea prevailed, but I do know it was there, and that Jess, without speaking to me, encouraged it, and that I, under the circumstances, was too modest for anything.

Under these conditions, the atmosphere in the tent was always charged. Sometimes for days George would lie on his blankets and speak not a word to anyone. At such times he was a most dreadful-looking person. At other times he would talk very friendly, and sometimes we all would talk amiably together, but never about the object of our trip.

On one occasion, I recall, we were all talking in the tent in one of our friendly moods. George was telling us about Alaska, the Indians, the animal life and the

great resources, and, though he knew nothing whatever about these things, neither did we, so he did not mind talking. Finally I asked him if there were any toads in Alaska. No, there were no toads in Alaska. None whatever. Queen Charlotte Island was the highest point on the coast where anything at all like a toad had ever been found, and these were in fact not toads at all, but a curious kind of rock frog. Just then I raised the foot of my sleeping bag, and out jumped a fine big toad frog. Everybody laughed, even George, and this was the only laugh heard in that camp during that long, long winter. George never knew that I had been thawing out that toad and feeding him for a week in order to get him in good hopping trim.

Returning to Camp No. 2, this was the most uncomfortable camp we had. It was pitched on a thinly wooded gravel bed, exactly at the foot of a great mountain and at the head of the moraine I have mentioned. The face of a huge glacier was about two hundred yards away. For three weeks the wind blew a violent gale, so violent and cold as it came from the glacier that nothing could be done. We were confined entirely to camp during this time, and often had to turn out at night and restrap our tent down.

On the first quiet day George, Edwards and I went out to explore the glacier over which we were to pass. Be it remembered that this glacier was supposed to run over the mountains here and to lead into the valley of the Alsek River, and George himself was supposed to have crossed over this glacier the previous fall. This, however, it was best not to recall for reasons before stated.

This glacier was a dead glacier. Its face was smooth and a steep slope of about three hundred feet high and one-half mile wide. The ice was of many colors, which was caused, I supposed, by the different elements it had been in contact with and by the various degrees of pressure it had been subjected to during the thousands of years it had been frozen.

Once over the face, the ascent was more gradual and good for sleds. There were no crevasses either, but many gentle slopes and hollows. The mountains on each side were entirely barren of vegetation of any description.

We proceeded on about eight miles around a bend and came to the summit, which was about three thousand feet above sea level. Here this glacier merged with others and spread to the east and west and joined with still others as far as you could see. But it did not extend in the direction of the Alsek, for in the way stood a great mountain range and beyond them other ranges, close up, as far as the eye could see. Among them all was a great network of glaciers, all active and very different in appearance from the little one we had ascended.

The surface of these glaciers was indescribably rough and impossible to travel on. One glance was enough to convince us that there was no passing here. Steve had selected well. We would never cross this range of mountains, that much was perfectly sure. They never had been crossed, and have not to this day, I suppose, and they were certainly impassable to us with our equipment and morale.

The scene on this glacier was wonderful beyond description, and dreadful, too. Nothing was suggestive of

the world that we know, and I had a frightful feeling that something inhuman and supernatural was about.

Upon our return from the glacier it became understood in some way that the glacier was impassable, though no one ever mentioned it. George went into a sulk for some days and the whole party became morose. The atmosphere in the tent was very tense. When I left Seattle Mrs. Francisco gave me a book. I took it merely because she offered it to me, for I expected to be very busy with my nuggets and mining property during the winter and, of course, would have no time to read. However, I still had it, so I began to read. It was "The White Company," by Doyle, and an excellent book it is. I suppose I read that book through twenty times during the winter, and practically knew it by heart. I have always regretted that I did not have a volume or two of Shakespeare or a Bible in which I could have become well versed, since there was nothing to do during these long seventeen-hour nights except read, and we had any abundance of candles.

During the day I explored the moraine, which was ever a place of absorbing interest. This moraine was about one-half mile in width and five miles long. It was the trail of the receding glacier that I have spoken of, and resembled nothing so much as the bed of a great river that had suddenly gone dry. To call it a moraine was not, I believe, entirely correct, for this word is used in a somewhat broader and even at times different sense. However, we called it "The Moraine," and there seems to be no other word so suitable. I have never seen any place in the world like it.

With well-defined steep banks, its bottom was covered

with great and small boulders, stone and pebble of every conceivable shape and color, all dumped and piled in a heterogeneous and most fascinating way.

After a while, when things appeared somewhat more amiable in the tent, I suggested to George that I should make a trip to the eastward in the direction of the Alsek River and explore the flat, wooded country in that direction. Just east of us the mountains seemed to stop abruptly; either that or they turned sharply to the north. I explained to him that it might be entirely possible to follow these mountains around until we reached the Alsek River, which was supposed to break through them about fifty miles to the east. Once in the river bottom, we might find a way through the mountains along its banks and thus gain the interior after all.

He told me to go ahead. Accordingly, I left at daybreak. I had an axe, a rifle, blanket and some provisions and was accompanied by my dog Prince, now called Precious. I was by this time quite expert on snow shoes, and otherwise hard as a rock. I crossed the moraine and tramped all day through a dense forest of fir, hemlock and spruce. The snow was very deep (twenty or thirty feet in places), but well frozen and hard on top. There is something indescribably thrilling about exploring a country in which no white man has ever been. I had this joy, in a small way, several times while in Alaska, but felt it more particularly on this trip. Who could tell what strange objects I might discover? A ruined city maybe, or some great tombs of ancient people.

About dusk I emerged from the forest and came into a prairie section where there were large fields, clear of tim-

ber, for six or seven miles. From here I got a good view of the country further east and a glorious view of Mt. Fairweather, its top like blazing fire in the setting sun and a long stream of snow blowing from its top also lighted and ablaze like the tail of a great comet. I was fascinated and gazed at it until it faded away.

I otherwise discovered that the mountains here did turn to the north, but not so sharply as I had hoped, but they were of much lower altitude than those in front of our camp. I then dropped back into the forest and built a fire of logs next to a great stone, and cut some boughs to lie on, and cut a water hole in a stream at hand and prepared with Precious to spend the long winter night.

It was a glorious thing, this night in the forest with Precious. Just Precious, me and my soul. I thought of many, many things that night, the dear ones at home and how this thing would ever end. I slept a little, wrapped in my blanket, but Precious not at all. He spent the whole night with his ears cocked over me, perfectly willing to give his life in my defence if called upon. It was a long night, sixteen hours of darkness, but the happiest I spent in Alaska, I believe.

The next day I tramped back to camp, having seen no signs of animal life of any description. I might add here that on this strip of bench land between the St. Elias range of mountains and the coast there is very little game of any kind. Occasionally we heard wolves howling in the distance; there were also some foxes, a few bears and more wolverines. But game is very scarce. A few birds winter here, mostly eagles and ducks, also a few magpies and ravens on the coast.

Upon my report of conditions to the east, George decided to move toward the Alsek by this route. Accordingly, our Camp No. 3 was pitched about halfway through the forest that I had visited.

This was a most comfortable camp, and we were here for some time. We had by now lost track of the days of the week, and were, in fact, not sure of the week. Some claimed it was the first Tuesday in February; others that it was the last Friday in January, and so on. Romeo proved some help in this matter. He had a very heavy beard, and for thirty years had shaved on Saturdays and Tuesdays. Now, since he was not shaving, his face itched severely on these days. If it was two days between itches, we knew it was Tuesday; if three days, it was Saturday, so that he became a kind of human calendar, which we accepted and he proved in the end to be correct as to the days of the week. None of us had shaved since we left Seattle. Our beards were, of course, all over our faces, and we were rather frightful things to look at, especially on the trail, for the moisture of the breath condensing on the beard formed icicles and frost all around the mouth, which was not only hideous to look at, but most uncomfortable as well.

The temperature was never so low as I had expected. We had no thermometer, but I do not think it was often below zero, and mostly just above that point. We never suffered at all at any time from cold, nor did any of us have a cold or a cough throughout the winter.

While at Camp No. 3 Jess and I sank a little hole near a ravine that came down from the mountains and which conformed to our idea of a gold-bearing creek. We were

much surprised after getting down several feet to strike solid ice. I afterwards understood that this was a very common formation, both on the coast and on the inside of Alaska, where large areas covered with thick forest are underneath solid ice of an undetermined depth.

Camp No. 4 was out on the prairie section that I have mentioned, in a grove of spruce. This place looked exactly like an abandoned farm. From here we followed the mountains and crossed a beautiful little lake about three miles across, and established Camp No. 4 at a spot very much resembling Camp No. 3.

It was now about the middle of March, I think. We had worked so leisurely and shown so little energy and spirit that we had advanced only about fifty miles in about sixty days. All knew perfectly well that the expedition was a fraud, yet no one dared say so or refer in any way to any future plans. From Camp No. 4 George and Tom went forward a day's march to see if they could locate the Alsek River. They returned and reported the river about fifteen miles away. A great river, they said. The ice was breaking up and going out in great floes.

The plan now was to build a boat and ascend this river, a feat about as easy as paddling a canoe up Mt. St. Elias. We could, of course, have built a boat, and of large size, for we had a number of cross-cut saws, and could have got out the timber very rapidly. However, this river is not navigable for any craft on earth, for it flows through and under a series of glaciers.

From Camp No. 4 we advanced about twelve miles and came to a deep and swift-running little river about fifty yards across. Earlier in the season we would have

sledded over this stream without even knowing of its existence. However, it was beginning to thaw out now in the lowlands and along the coast, and many streams and lakes were appearing that had been until now entirely concealed from us.

We established Camp No. 5 on the banks of this stream. There is nothing in nature so companionable as a river, and Precious and I were delighted to be on its banks and to be able to get away from that beastly crowd in the tent and stroll along its peaceful shores. Besides, there were many signs of coming spring now. Geese and swan were appearing in great numbers, and then one day a little robin redbreast came and sang to me his song of home and far away, and whispered back into my memory many things that made me sad.

While we were in the tent one day a rifle shot was heard. We all jumped, startled. It was perfectly plain what was in everyone's mind for a moment, and a great relief came over us when it was seen that all were present. George went outside and answered this shot, which was proper and good manners in the woods, for be it understood that whenever you approach a habitation in the woods of the North, you must fire a shot, which is like sending in your card, so to speak.

If the shot is answered, your host is in, otherwise you must not approach. If you wish to enter, you fire a second shot, which, if answered, means "come in, old fellow; I am glad to see you." George answered the second shot, and we all stood around to see who would appear. After some moments two men walked up, who proved to be that

Mr. Krowley and his man Brooks, or vice versa, as it may have been, the same we had met at Yakutat.

We all crowded around for talk and for any news of the outside world. It seems that these people, supposing that we had something good up in the woods, had started about the first of March to find us. In this they had no trouble, since, having landed at the head of Enchantment Bay, they had found our trail and camping places and had simply followed us here.

Their camp was about a mile away, and was presided over by the charming Mrs. Krowley in person. They informed us how Jack had been taken into Yakutat by a band of Indians and had gone down to "Frisco" on a fishing schooner. But what excited us most was the information that Spain and the United States were at war. Nothing as to the progress of the war was known, except that at the time of the declaration of war there was a Spanish fleet anchored in New York harbor, which had immediately turned its guns on the city, which was entirely destroyed, our informants said.

This information, though incorrect, for war had not yet been declared, caused me to become very restless, and I at once began to plan some escape from my situation and to entertain hopes of entering the army.

The Krowleys moved their camp up very near us, which was not pleasing to me, for I felt that the presence of that woman meant trouble. I was, therefore, more determined than ever to find some way to quit the party. I knew that the first steamer going south would arrive at Yakutat about the first of June, and I determined to catch that steamer if possible.

Romeo had been very unwell—in fact, had broken down so that he could practically do nothing. I therefore decided to approach him on the subject of going out. My plans were to take him down this little river into the Alsek, then down the Alsek to its mouth. From there we planned to walk the beach to Yakutat, a supposed distance of about sixty miles. I went over the proposition with Jess, and invited him to join us. He entirely approved of my plans as to Romeo, but decided himself to remain with the party, as he expressed it, "until hell freezes over."

I was waiting to catch George in an amiable mood to suggest this plan to him, when an incident occurred that I have always thought assisted me very much in this matter.

One day we were all lying in our tent, comfortable after supper, when suddenly Mrs. Krowley, accompanied by Mr. Krowley and Brooks, burst through the flap. Her hair was disheveled, one eye was black as from a blow and her face was white with rage. She advanced rapidly and, pointing a finger at George, said, "That's the man!" George was already on his feet and with a revolver leveled said, "Get out of this tent, damn you!" Tom also was on his feet with rifle clasped. It was a dramatic moment, and I felt my blood chill. George, as he stood in that pose, was the most dreadful-looking thing I have ever seen. Certainly the thing we had dreaded all winter would break here now. I glanced at Jess for a cue. His eyes were ablaze, but he made no move. Fortunately, the Krowleys immediately withdrew, without speaking a word. Nothing whatever was ever said

by anyone, so far as I know, about this incident. It would, indeed, have been dangerous to have done so, for the feeling in our camp had been growing worse all the time. Personally, of course, I believe that George had committed an assault upon that woman, who had come over there expecting that the camp would take her side, drive George out and take her in. However, she was not the type that men wage war over. She was no Helen of Troy, and there was no knighthood in our camp, anyway. So we all ignored the incident out of indifference and a positive fear that it would certainly lead to more serious happenings.

I judged that this occurrence would affect George in a way that would cause him to be more favorable to my plans. For George, with all his wickedness, was no fool. He was as cunning as any rascal on earth, and as understanding, too.

If Romeo and I left the party, he would be relatively stronger in the camp and at a time, too, when he was threatened by foes from without. So the next day I approached him on the subject.

I found him perfectly willing and agreeable to my plans. He thought Romeo ought to be taken out by all means, and said that we could take anything whatever we wanted from the supplies and tools on hand. This was the whole thing, tools and supplies, so accordingly we made plans to leave at once. My first plan was to build a raft and drift down this little river that we were on into the Alsek, thence to the sea. This, however, was abandoned after I had almost completed the raft, because one stormy night, as I lay in my bag, I heard the surf distinctly pounding on the beach, and realized that we were very much nearer the sea than we had supposed.

CHAPTER VI.

The Retreat.

We left camp about the first of May. Many little buds were about to break, and in patches, where the snow had gone, numerous and wonderful wild flowers were beginning to appear.

We took as much as we could carry, and our outfit consisted of two axes, two rifles with ammunition, two blankets each, frying pan, coffee pot and some pounds of bacon, hardtack, sugar, tea and other things.

We said good-bye and shook hands with each member of the party. Edwards gave me a letter of identification and stopped me on the outskirts of the camp and said some complimentary things to me that he did not wish the others to hear, and entrusted me with two letters that he did not want George to know had gone forward. These I accepted and afterwards took the pains to mail in Sitka.

There is one thing I must pass over rapidly here. That is Precious. He was, of course, not my dog, but had taken up with me, and I felt very deeply about him. I considered stealing him and letting him take a chance with me, though my own future was so uncertain and dark at that time. However, I finally decided not to do so, which was well, for I could never have got him through, as will be seen. So I left him with the others, hard as it was to do so.

We had only gone a short distance before it became

apparent that Romeo could carry hardly any burden, though, poor fellow, he was plucky. I had to gradually relieve him of his load, until I had both burdens, which were more than I could carry.

We managed to get to the mouth of the river the first night, notwithstanding, and discovered that this river flows into Dry Bay, a huge bay when the tide is in and no bay at all when the tide is out. The Alsek River also flows into this bay.

Here we spent a rather uncomfortable night. The next morning there were thousands of hair seals coming in with the tide. The surface of the water was crowded with their heads and graceful bodies sporting in the water as far as the eye could see. There are some Indians that are said to live around this bay, the small remnant of a tribe that are not on good terms with the Yakutats. However, I saw no indications whatever of them, and was relieved, for I had no desire to meet them in my present situation.

Romeo being too weak to carry anything at all, I gave him a rifle and started him up the beach, while I would take a load and, going ahead several miles, put it down and go back for the second load. This was slow. However, I was tied down to the pace that Romeo could make, anyway, and wanted to save as much of the supplies as possible, for it was now evident that we would be on the way much longer than calculated.

The walking on the beach was very good, and the days were very long, so by keeping it up late at night I hoped to reach Yakutat in about five days.

The third day out it rained all day, and we had a most

uncomfortable night as well. I found that these double trips were too much for me, so I left behind some of our effects (an axe and some provisions), but went very heavily loaded as it was. Romeo was getting rapidly weaker, and had to walk with two sticks, and I began to consider whether or not I should take him back to camp.

We proceeded on in the rain until one evening we came to a good sized stream, and going up this stream a short distance to discover a crossing, we found a very comfortable Indian hut or "bribary" built on the banks of this stream. There was no one there, but a considerable amount of Indian belongings, such as paddles, traps and fishing apparatus. Having been out in the rain for two days and nights, this place seemed a palace to me.

I built a fire and made some tea, and told Romeo that we would have to rest here for a day or two for him to recover his strength. I then walked down to the beach to gather some driftwood for the fire. The beach on this coast, from California up, is piled high with driftwood; it is a continuous line. Wherever there is a beach it is piled high with wood, and I estimate there must be 30,000 miles of it. I had gathered an armful, when, looking up, I saw a figure standing not far away. I yelled and the figure turned and started to run. I dropped my wood and gave chase, yelling all the while. As I rapidly gained, the figure fell to the ground. Upon coming up I recognized Mrs. Krowley. She was dressed in what sailors call a Southwester, with hip rubber boots. She was badly frightened, having mistaken me for a Dry Bay Indian. She presented a pathetic sight, sitting there on the cold, wet ground, her eye still black from George's blow.

When she recognized me she began to sob, and I sat down beside her and waited. Her frail little body was convulsed with emotion and despair, and I felt that, whatever she was, I would do anything for her now.

She told me that Krowley and Brooks were nearby, pitching camp, and that they had no provisions, except tea and a little hardtack. I went to her camp with her and apologized to Mr. Krowley for having frightened his bride. It seems that these people had started out immediately after their trouble with George, but had been lost in the forest for several days, and had just now come out on the beach.

After looking over their situation, I invited them all to come down to my palace on the river, which invitation they very gratefully accepted.

So we were five now, and had started with provisions for two. We all sat around the fire that night and got dry and warm for the first time in several days.

A peculiar assertive feeling came over me. I may have been a little intoxicated by the large quantities of tea I had been drinking, for tea, if drunk in large quantities, will affect you a little that way.

Anyway, I announced in a most emphatic tone that from now on I would assume leadership of this party; that if anyone there did not like it, he or she could immediately leave my house.

I told Brooks that he would get out at dawn and proceed along the beach to a point about eight miles back, where he would find an axe and certain other things, which he would immediately bring to me, as I might need him further in the afternoon.

I told Mrs. Krowley that we were not interested in the time when she was a society leader in West Milwaukee, but I hoped she would prove amiable and courageous in these circumstances and give Romeo whatever attention she could.

Romeo was dumfounded at my speech and attitude, but pleased. Indeed, I was surprised at myself, but it worked perfectly, and from that moment my word was law. In some such way as this, I imagine, the first petty monarch established himself on earth, though he had perhaps something stronger than tea as an excuse.

The next day and the next it rained and poured, and we did not move on account of Romeo's condition. He was very weak, and I was at a loss to know what to do with him. After two days we again started and, crossing the river with some difficulty, went on our way.

We three men were loaded fairly well, but not too heavily, I having ordered a thirty pound sleeping bag belonging to Mrs. Krowley to be left behind. No one said a word.

Very shortly after crossing this river our troubles commenced. Leaving the belt of timber land that skirted the river banks, we came out upon an extensive network of quicksand marshes. There was no timber growing in this belt, only clusters of Alder brush. It appeared to be about fifteen miles across to big timber, and to extend from the sea back to the foothills, which were also about fifteen miles away. I did not for the first day or two realize the difficulties and dangers that confronted us, and we pushed on as best we could.

We would cross a short distance of this sand and then

a short distance of solid earth, and so on without end. It was very heavy and slow traveling, for long detours had to be made. It was dangerous, too, for several times I had to lie down and roll over and over as rapidly as I could in order to get out. I dont' think we made over two miles the first day, when we camped in a cluster of Alder brush.

Finally, the marshes became much worse, and in addition thereto we came to numerous streams, some of them quite deep, which had to be waded. The banks of these streams were usually solid, but their bottoms proved treacherous. Krowley came very near, indeed, losing his life in one of them, and all of us had several narrow escapes more than once.

The situation was, in fact, desperate in every way, and our provisions had been reduced to almost nothing. It was evident that we could make no headway in this place, and would surely perish if we persisted. I began to upbraid myself for not having more accurately read the terrain, for certainly the absence of timber here meant something, and we had actually seen what that something was in the beginning. Yet I had plunged blindly on, wasting much precious time, our provisions and strength.

Impressed by this situation, I called the party together and announced that the route must be immediately abandoned. Romeo, who was again almost in a state of collapse, could, in fact, go no further. I turned over to Krowley all the provisions we had except about a pound of tea and a handful of cracker dust that was in the bottom of my haversack. I told him to take his wife and

Romeo back to the cabin we had just left and to remain there until I sent some Indians up from Yakutat for them by boat.

I explained to him that Brooks and I would make our way to the foothills, which were in sight, and, having found solid ground, would continue on to the head of Enchantment Bay, where he had left a good boat secured. In this we would proceed to Yakutat and would at once send some Indians to fetch them out.

It was a hopeless and desperately depressed group that stood around me on that far away marsh. Mrs. Krowley gave way to tears; so did Krowley. However, there seemed nothing else to do. I started them off on their return to the cabin, which I do not think was more than five miles away. They had provisions that with care would last for some days, and tea that would last for a month. We could see them for some distance after we parted, slowly making their way toward the cabin, poor Romeo bent over and walking with two sticks, very much resembling a crab, I thought, in the distance.

Brooks and I then started on our long tramp for the foothills. We followed the banks of the stream we were on, but were still bothered and delayed very much by quicksand, and had to wade this stream many times. It was a tedious, dangerous and long tramp. It was the worst place I have ever seen, and what seemed curious to me was the number of dead fish that covered the whole surface of the earth for miles and miles.

It seems that this place in July and August is covered with water from the melting snow in the foothills. The fish then come in here by the tens of thousands. At the

first freeze the water recedes, leaving these fish to die. So the fish we now saw had been dead for about a year, and would soon be washed out to sea and others would take their place.

Brooks, as a companion, proved amiable enough, though he was weak and would give way to fits of despair. At such times he talked incessantly of his little farm "back in Missouri," and would mourn and wail and swing himself like a Baptist about to shout. We, of course, had no provisions at all, except tea without sugar. We drank great quantities of this, and always felt stimulated.

It was, of course, a dreadfully rough trip, and we were growing weaker all the time, but what amazed me was that I did not suffer from hunger at all. I felt myself growing weaker each day, but had no pangs or uncomfortable feeling at any time. In about forty-eight hours we succeeded in freeing ourselves from this dreadful quagmire and reached solid land.

I knew the exact position of our old Camp No. 3 from its location near the base of an extinct volcano, whose top had been blown off in a peculiar way. We directed ourselves toward this camp, which was, in fact, not more than a dozen miles away, but we encountered many unexpected difficulties.

As soon as we reached the highlands we found several feet of snow, which was very soft, and we had no snow shoes. Often we had to plough through this up to our waist, and as a general thing it was knee deep. This delayed us dreadfully and absorbed our strength. There were, besides, many huge and extensive "wind-falls" of tangled trees in our paths, which are difficult things to

scale, and also numerous streams to wade. In short, the entire aspect of the country had changed since I had passed through here during the winter. All of these things were covered up and frozen then, so that we passed over them without even knowing of their presence. It was very different now, and the difficulties were increased a thousandfold.

Finally we became so weak that we had to stop every few hundred yards to rest. Brooks was constantly raving about his little farm "back in Missouri," and his face had taken on a deathly pallor. My shoulders were raw from the blanket straps, and they became an intolerable burden. It did not seem possible to carry them any farther, especially over the "wind-falls," which had to be climbed. They were constantly catching in branches and snags, and we had some dangerous falls, for some of these "wind-falls" covered several acres and were from three to twenty feet high.

So we discarded our blankets and proceeded with only our axes, rifles, a coffee pot, some tea and a big block of Chinese matches. This relieved us of a sore trial while moving, but it proved a great hardship at night, for it was still very cold and we got no rest at all after this, having to spend the night cutting wood and huddled closely beside the fire.

I thought at this time that we should surely reach the head of the bay in twenty-four hours. However, so immensely difficult was the task and so weak had we become, that it was forty-eight hours before we reached the moraines. During all this time I never felt the slightest doubt but that we should come through in perfect safety,

though I realized, of course, that we were having a desperate time and that there were still hardships to be met.

While we were so weak for want of food, there were thousands of geese flying over our heads; they were constantly flying, night and day, and often very low. We had been firing at them for days, but had never got even so much as a feather. Our ammunition now was almost exhausted. Finally, one evening, our last evening in the woods, we came upon a flock that had alighted in a bottom. Brooks fired at them. Imagine our joy when one fell. We almost shouted. We cut that goose up and boiled him in the coffee pot. We had several pots full of it, and it was the best wild goose I have ever tasted, without salt or bread.

That night we spent at our old Camp No. 3, and though we got no sleep again, we felt better and much stronger. From here on I was on very familiar ground. We started early the next morning for the moraine, which was only a few miles through the forest, and at the foot of this moraine we had left a boat that I now expected to secure and to proceed on our journey to Yakutat.

Suppose the boat had disappeared, had been broken up by the ice or taken away? Then, indeed, we should be in desperate straits. There was no question about that. We approached the moraine, therefore, with much anxiety and with a feeling that we must rush and see as quickly as possible.

As soon as we came out to the moraine, however, we thought no more of the boat, for the sight that met our eyes amazed us and we stood for a while stupefied.

We came out on the moraine at a point about halfway

between our old Camps No. 1 and No. 2, and from this point a view of the entire moraine was had. Immediately across from where we stood was a cluster of tents which extended all the way up to our Camp No. 2. Below, in the vicinity of our old Camp No. 1, was another cluster of tents. Scattered along throughout the moraine itself were several hundred men, working away, pulling, packing and carrying great loads; some of them even had horses, and they extended far up on to the glacier itself, where they looked like little flies perched on a great white wall.

I was entirely bewildered, and a great feeling of disappointment came over me, for I thought that these people had made a rich strike on the spot where we had camped alone and wasted so much time. I fired my rifle and waited for an invitation to come over. This was answered from the front of several tents. I fired again and the invitation was repeated. We then crossed the moraine, which was here about a half-mile wide.

As we struggled up the opposite bank several men met us, and we were at once invited in. The head of the party who received us was a man named Hearndon. He was from Chicago, and had charge of a small party of young men, "sons of well-to-do," some of whom, I soon gathered, had been running rather untamed along State Street.

Hearndon was making men of them, and had several of them in harness and hitched to sleds, as he introduced them to me, giving at the same time some amusing little account of each. One was the son of a Senator of much influence in Washington at that time; the father of an-

other was a well-known banker and philanthropist of Chicago. I told Hearndon that we had had no food for some time, and we were immediately supplied with a hot meal of everything that is best in camp. During the meal I told Hearndon that I belonged to the Stinson party, and gave him a rapid account of our experiences. Several other men were also in the tent. I told him that there was something very rotten about the Stinson party that I did not understand as yet. That we had not gone over that glacier at all, as he supposed we had; that the glacier could not be crossed, in fact, and did indeed lead nowhere.

I noticed several times a pained and peculiar look in Hearndon's face. I went on, however, and told him that the Stinson party was at that moment some fifty miles down the coast, near Dry Bay. I then got a look and gesture which said most plainly "shut up." I was a little puzzled at this. The party in the tent had been increased by several while this was going on, and Brooks also was talking at a great rate, but mostly about his little farm "back in Missouri" and the terrible hardships we had just gone through with.

The meal over, Hearndon took me to another tent, where we conversed alone. He then explained to me that practically all of these people, the several hundred that were then encamped along the moraine, had been sent up there by Rennick and Pennick; that they all had letters to George Stinson, Bruce Cotten or some other member of the party, instructing said Stinson or Cotten to locate bearer on certain placer diggings named and described as now held by said Stinson, Cotten or Lang for said Rennick.

Hearndon said that there were many men here who had paid their all for this purchase of a claim from Rennick; that very many of them were now suspicious of the whole thing and were desperate and discouraged. Therefore, he had stopped me from talking in the other tent as soon as he could, because he was not sure what the effect of my disclosure would be on this situation.

He himself had nothing whatever to do with Rennick. He had merely come out to take care of a bunch of young fellows, mostly sons of his friends. Having heard that there was a great rush on to Yakutat, he had followed along, thinking this as good a place as anywhere to break in and give his young fellows experience.

This was, of course, a great surprise and shock to me, and I began to see the light. I now understood Rennick's kindly interest in seeing that we got that $1 a day and why. To insure this, he had insisted that the bank should give *him* a receipt each month for the amount placed to our credit. For did this not prove that Cotten, Lang and the rest of us were his caretakers in Alaska, and what better proof would any Iowa farmer want than this statement from a national bank? It was a wicked thing, this wholesale robbery of the credulous and simple-minded, and Rennick paid for it with his life.

But to return to Hearndon. After full explanations I had a feeling that Hearndon was hesitating to say something that was on his mind. I then asked him frankly what he thought the effect of my presence in camp would be. He was immediately relieved and said: "That is just what I have been thinking about." He said that there were many desperate men there; that they were now

almost all out at work and scattered along the trail; that when they returned my disclosures would be known throughout the camp. Well, he got up and went out of the tent for a few moments. When he returned he said, "If I were you, I should go on to Yakutat tonight. I can get you an Indian who will take you and Brooks down, and you can leave now." I said, "All right; I will do so." He went for the Indian and I went to find Brooks.

Brooks was seated on a pile of goods talking to some of Hearndon's party. The strangers who were in the tent while I was having my meal had disappeared.

It was a wonderful day. The sun was a blaze of glory. I looked across the moraine that I knew so well and loved, too, for it had given me many, many interesting moments, and it seemed to belong to me, too, for I had it all to myself, and now it was filled with all those idiotic farmers, who should have been at home attending to their wives and pigs, instead of coming here to ruin themselves and spoil the view.

What Hearndon had really said to me was, that if I did not get out of camp before these men came in from work, I might be hanged. He did not use these words, but there was no mistaking his meaning. These men had been ruined. My own disclosures proved that, and certainly Stinson and the rest of us were associated in the fraud, and would look very proper on the short end of a rope.

This, of course, did not appeal to me at all. I had left home prepared for any honorable adventure, but this was too much. The people at home would certainly never

understand such a performance, and I should have been a disgrace to the family forever.

I called Brooks and told him that we would leave at once for Yakutat. He protested, but when I told him of the situation and reminded him that there was a man named Brooks in the Stinson party, he became as meek as a lamb.

Hearndon had sent the Indian to prepare the boat, and now told me that the Indians at Yakutat were very much excited, and that most of them had run away to the woods. It seemed that one of their medicine men had tied up some witches and had tortured one to death. The Governor had been appealed to, and had visited Yakutat in the little gunboat Wheeling. He tried to arrest the medicine man, but, being unable to find him, had fired the ship's guns and turned the searchlights on the village itself, which so frightened the Indians that they had fled.

The Indian, however, who was to take me down, "Skoocum" Jim, was all right, he said, for he had been working for Hearndon for a week or two.*

Hearndon walked with me almost to the beach, and asked me that if I got to Seattle to please try and find a Mr. Colton and to stop him from coming up. He said that Mr. Colton was from Kentucky, and had been an Episcopal minister, was a friend of his, and he wanted me to stop him from coming and thus save him a heavy expense. He had no idea where I would find Mr. Colton in Seattle.

"Skoocum" means strong, handsome, noble, true, brave and many other nice things, so if there is anything in a name, Jim should have been perfection.

We found "Skoocum" Jim waiting for us at the foot of the moraine, where there was a store with all manner of things for sale, and on the site where our Camp No. 1 had been I noticed that the woods had been marked out in streets for the location of a town. I did not inquire as to what this new city was going to be called. Rennickville, I suppose, would have been a proper name, but I was not then suggesting anything to anybody, and felt no particular civic pride in the locality.

Since this is an intimate relation, I must admit something here that usually is not confessed except to one's closest pal. That is, that all the money I had was two $5 gold pieces that I had carried all winter securely sewn in the lining of my coat. As for Brooks, he did not have a penny. I cut them out here and purchased some sugar, bacon and hardtack, and paid the Indian $6 for the trip in advance. At Yakutat, however, I sold this same Indian my rifle, or rather the rifle I had, for $18, so I was still far from broke.

We started immediately, about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The boat was an Indian canoe, dug out and equipped with a small sail in the bow, which was a great help in places.

We traveled all night and until about 9 o'clock the next morning without any stop, for indeed there were no places where we could stop. This night and this trip have always stood out in my memory as the night of all horrors. Certainly in my life I have never suffered such frightful pain and such prolonged agony as on this occasion. We were both, of course, as can be judged from this little description I have given, in an advanced stage

of exhaustion. It was true, we had food now, but we were full of bruises and stiffness, my feet were much swollen, and I ached all over. But what caused us by far the greatest agony was our need of sleep. We had had no sleep at all to speak of for over seventy hours, and very little, indeed, since we left the Indian hut on the river. As the sun got low my eyes began to pain me fearfully. My eyelids seemed like lead and spikes seemed to have been driven into my pupils. It was fearfully cold, and we had no blankets or shelter of any kind. To sleep meant certain death, either by freezing or by falling out of the canoe, which was too small to lie down in. There was nothing to do but to paddle and suffer.

There were many icebergs in the bay, and I am sure I was delirious at times, for I had visions and saw many unreal things, such as great ships and groups of men and animals fighting among these icebergs. These ships were most distinct, and sometimes passed so near that I feared we would be run down. They were all of ancient design and carried men armed with spears and axes and protected with armor and shields like the cohorts in Caesar's Legions.

I never lost my senses and knew that these things could not exist, yet they were so real to me that when we landed on a little island the next morning, I took pains to let the Indian go ashore first, though he had to crawl over me to do so. I was not at all sure it was a real island. Brooks was suffering, too, and groaned a great deal, though I never knew what particular form his agony took. We had hot tea and breakfast on this island and felt better. We were at the mouth of Enchantment Bay,

and from here on for a distance of about five miles we were exposed to the full swell from the ocean as it swept into Yakutat Bay. It was entirely too rough for a canoe, and how we ever made it and were not all drowned has always been a mystery to me. This Indian was a master boatman, but even he at times was alarmed.

To make a dangerous situation worse, Brooks, when we were in the midst of this passage and under full sail, seemed to be seized with some form of mental disorder. He began to throw himself from side to side and turn himself about. The boat was all but capsized several times. The Indian threw off his coat in order to take to the water. As for me, I could not have lived five minutes in that water, and the shore was fully two miles away. We were facing certain death if Brooks was not quieted instantly. He was seated in front of me, on the forward seat of the boat, and I was facing his back, but during these contortions he had got himself turned around in some way and was now seated facing me.

I reached forward and struck him as hard as I could with my fist squarely in the mouth. He fell over in the boat, his back and shoulders on the bottom, his legs hanging over the seat. Most fortunately, he fell square and did not move, or we should have been lost. I crawled forward between his knees and told him not to move or the boat would be capsized. He said, "Is that you, Cotten?" and lay perfectly still. I crouched over him and watched him and cautioned him occasionally. His lips began to swell, and a tiny little stream of blood trickled down on his beard. I had a big feeling of sorrow for him then, and affection, as he lay there perfectly still, thank God.

Fortunately, we were soon out of this rough water, for we had sailed it at good speed. We came under the lee of a little island, called Hat Island, because of its shape like a hat. To my joy, I saw several tents pitched there. "Skoocum" said they were Indians fishing. I told him to go ashore, for I wanted to get Brooks up. We found quite a party of Indians camped there. They received us with open arms and with more tokens of friendship than I had ever seen Indians show before.

We got Brooks up and took him in a tent where there was a stove. We warmed up and drank tea. These Indians were so polite and considerate that I was mystified, and finally became suspicious, for Indians are never thoughtful of your comfort and considerate in a way these Indians were. Besides, they insisted upon giving us their own tea, which was extraordinary, I thought, for they value tea beyond anything on earth, and are rarely able to keep themselves supplied with it.

I kept hearing a peculiar noise in an adjoining tent, and feeling now somewhat suspicious, I got up and walked over to this tent and went in. There I found, seated around the body of a dead woman, several Indians, among whom was the old medicine man. They were having some ceremony and putting hot rocks to the body in an effort to restore her life. The odor in the tent was frightful, and I withdrew, more suspicious than ever, for I remembered what Hearndon had told me about the Governor trying to arrest this medicine man, and I surmized that his followers here perhaps thought that we were looking for him and might take him away.

I do not, of course, know whether these Indians medi-

tated any mischief toward Brooks and myself or not; anyway, I felt very suspicious of them. They might have poisoned the tea, which I now seemed to remember tasted rather queerly, and the more I thought of this the more queerly I remembered the tea had tasted.

Though being killed by Indians on an island was much more romantic than being hanged by white men on the mainland, yet I was not prepared for this either, so I decided to leave the island at once. "Skoocum" said that Yakutat was not so far away, and pointed out to me and illustrated by a drawing on the ground that by using a portage across a narrow island that lay between us we could make it that night. We started immediately, Brooks perfectly quiet and apparently much better. Brooks, I might say, never remembered anything at all about the latter part of this trip. I lived with him for about two weeks afterwards, and he had no recollection whatever of that episode in the boat, or of being on this island at all.

Our way from here was through quiet waters and among numerous small islands. We reached the portage and carried our boat about 100 yards across an island. From here we could see Yakutat; in fact, we were immediately in front of the town, and it was only a question now of crossing over a distance of about two miles.

We landed in front of Johnson's store. It was about 10 o'clock at night, though the sun was shining brightly. Johnson received us most kindly, seated us beside a big iron stove that had been made from a Standard Oil drum, and started some of his squaws preparing a meal for us.

I became warm and dry. I could feel my whole ner-

vous system relaxing with jerks and twitches. All my troubles seemed to be gone, and I was drifting away. Johnson seemed to be talking in the distance. I remember seeing some hot rolls, some butter and steaming coffee. But that was the last. I passed away, asleep.

CHAPTER VII.

BACK TO SEATTLE.

Sometime the next morning I awoke in Johnson's store, where I had been placed away on a cot and covered with blankets. They had got my shoes off with difficulty, and my feet were very sore and swollen. Otherwise I felt very well, surprisingly well, considering. Johnson prescribed hot sea water for my feet, and I got "Skoocum" to get me some from the bay and heat it. This seemed to help very much. I continued this for several days, and the swelling passed entirely. "Skoocum" had taken a great fancy to my rifle and was around two or three times a day to buy it. I told him Iwould not sell it to him now, but that if he would bring me that hot sea water twice a day, when my feet got well I would let him have it. This he did faithfully, and I sold him this rifle for $18.

My first thought, of course, was to relieve Romeo and the Krowleys from their predicament in the cabin down the coast, and with Johnson's assistance two Indians were at once dispatched in a boat, who brought them in safely, the round trip taking only about three days. It seems that the Indians knew these quicksand marshes well, and would under no circumstances enter them. However, there was a short cut to that cabin by way of a portage and river called Ancow, which, if we had known it, would have saved us great trouble and hardships. Romeo arrived looking better for his rest in the cabin, but very

morose and sour. He and the Krowleys were taken in at the Mission, and were very comfortable there.

Johnson's sense of humor and amusing ways was a fine tonic, and did much to brace me up. Feeling, however, that we ought not to land ourselves on him, I rented the front room of Steve's cottage—the same Steve who had brought us here and who had recently been hanged on the Valdez Glacier. His young squaw was glad to get $2.50 per week for permitting us to sleep on the floor and furnish our own blankets, which Johnson loaned us. This was an attractive little room for these parts, and was the "drawing room" of the cottage. There were several "icons" on the wall and some decorated skins and bead work. There was also a looking-glass that threw me into hysterics, for I had not seen myself for over six months. I walked over to this mirror, and the sight of myself was a dreadful and painful thing to behold. I wept and laughed in turn. It did not seem possible that I could ever look like that. So far as I could recall, there was not a single feature of my old self left. My face was covered with a shaggy, colorless beard, except at two spots at the corners of my mouth, which were entirely bare. I looked like a terrible Siberian convict. My clothes, too, were in keeping with my appearance—torn, stained and all out of shape. My heavy hob-nailed shoes were much worn and patched in places. I looked very different, indeed, from the dandy that had so astonished the Governor of Alaska six months before. The skin of my face, however, wherever visible was of a milky whitness and as soft as that of a baby. This was caused, I was told, from so long bathing in snow water.

I knew that I had to improve my appearance if I wished to get along any further in the world and have any decent companions. So I finally succeeded in borrowing a razor, and so darned and cleaned my clothing that I looked very handsome and well groomed in comparison.

Now commenced the wait for the steamer Dora, which was expected in about ten days. As has been inferred, I had not sufficient funds to pay for a passage to Seattle. My intention was to go aboard when the steamer arrived and induce the purser to take me down on my promise to pay at Seattle. I expected Edwards' letter to assist me in this. Failing—well, I had no plans, only I was going down on that steamer if it was humanly possible.

Brooks and I continued to live at the cottage, doing our own cooking. Romeo did not visit me at all, but held himself aloof, and seemed to have attached himself to the Krowleys, whom I disliked. This rather pained me, and I have never understood it. The days were very long and full of sunshine. I recall sitting outside and reading a book until after 11 o'clock at night. There were a number of white men in Yakutat waiting to go down on the Dora.

Shortly after my arrival, a Mr. Wilcox came to my "drawing room" and introduced himself to me. Wilcox was a mining engineer and investigator. He was about fifty years of age, I should say, and was from Minnesota, where he had a real wife and family. As we got better acquainted I learned that he represented an English mining syndicate and, having spent his entire life in this business, was familiar with all the mining districts in America.

Wilcox was of the old school of mining men, a school that had its beginning in the days of '49, which had a very different soul and psychology from this thing that was now developing in Alaska. His was the open manners of the Rockies, while that of these people in this rush was that of the city tough intermingled with agrarian provincialism.

He was a large man, self-educated and without culture. He was a revelation to me, as gentle as a child and as rough as a bull, but he had, as I found, a heart of gold. He is dead now, and may God rest his big soul.

Wilcox told me that this rush to Yakutat had caused considerable excitement below, and that his company had insisted upon his coming here and seeing what it was all about. He had got in on the first trip of the Dora going north, and had seen at a glance that it was all about nothing. He had learned that the whole thing had been started by Pennick, and that was enough for him. He had known of Pennick since he was a boy, and told me a great deal about him (Pennick) and his career, some of which has been used in this narrative. When I told him of the Stinson party and Pennick's connection therewith, he was immensely interested, and we became fast friends. He came to my "drawing room" every day, and we had many long chats and came to know each other well.

One day a schooner came into the harbor with a new party. This was a rather large party, and among their possessions were two horses. As there was no place to land these animals, they were thrown overboard some distance out in the bay and made to swim ashore. The beach was lined with the usual crowd of old men, squaws

and children, who delight in sitting out on sunny days to air themselves, wrapped in blankets. When these horses came up on the beach, there was a panic, the like of which had never been known in Yakutat before, for none of these people had ever seen a horse, and the sight of the devil himself arising from the water could not have caused greater terror. The town was entirely depopulated in a few minutes; even the dogs betook themselves to the forest, and some of the Mission people had to go out and gradually coax them back.

The head and financial backer of this new party was a man whose name I did not record, and for this I am sorry, for he enters somewhat into this relation. I am entirely unable to recall his name, though I saw much of him for a while. However, if someone will look up the Seattle papers for the latter part of June, 1898, his name will be found in a column or two devoted to a spectacular fight he had with Rennick in the Seattle Hotel one midnight.

This Mr. X—, as we will call him, was from Duluth, and was said to be a prominent business man there. He had been president of the Chamber of Commerce, was about forty years of age, and had with him as friend and assistant a Mr. Hall.

Wilcox brought him up to my "drawing room" and told me that Rennick had swindled him out of about $75,000, mostly in expenses, I presume. After my disclosures Mr. X— decided to send the schooner back and to return himself on the Dora.

A few days before the Dora arrived, Wilcox asked me if I was going down on her. I told him I was if I could

do so, but that much depended on the purser, as I had hardly any money at all. His answer to this made such an impression on me that I can swear to his exact words to this day. He ran his hand in his pocket and, drawing out a large roll of bills, said, "Mr. Cotten, if you will be so kind as to state what amount of money you require, I will be delighted to let you have it." Here was generosity for you, and faith, too, and I was, of course, immensely pleased. I started to tell him that he knew nothing whatever about me, but he refused to listen, and said that I had inspired a confidence in him which he hoped he would have inspired in me had our situations been reversed. That if he lost a hundred or so by me, he would not mention it to a soul, and that it did not in the least matter, anyway.

I finally told him that if he would pay my fare and expenses down to Seattle, it would indeed relieve me of much embarrassment, and that I was in position to repay him upon arrival. This was indeed a fine thing for Wilcox to do, for I looked a tramp, and he knew nothing whatever of me.

In the meantime, Brooks had found a friend from "back in Missouri," and had been taken off my hands; Romeo and the Krowleys also managed to get in the steerage of the Dora when she arrived. Romeo seemed to be awfully peeved about something, and I only saw him once on the boat. Brooks thought that Romeo was displeased because I had not secured him in the good graces of Wilcox. This, however, I could not do, because Wilcox simply would have nothing whatever to do with either Brooks or Romeo.

Wilcox wanted to visit Juneau on business, and insisted upon my stopping over with him. This I could not very well refuse under the circumstances, though I wanted so much to hurry south and enter the army. So we left the Dora at Sitka and awaited an opportunity to get over to Juneau.

After leaving Yakutat Wilcox really looked after me like a father. He began to call me lad, and came near throwing a rather neatly dressed man overboard because he left his seat that was next to mine at the table. Wilcox thought he did this on account of my rough appearance, which was probably true, and, though I must say I could hardly blame him myself, Wilcox thought otherwise, and gave him a call down the like of which I have never heard in my lifetime.

This man was badly frightened, and was not seen on deck again. His "biled shirt" was too immaculate and his collar too high, besides he had a sweet tenor voice, a combination entirely fatal to fellowship in this land of Chanooke. Wilcox would also come around every day or two and push a ten or twenty dollar bill in my pocket. Of these he kept no account whatever, and when we got to Seattle and he finally rendered a bill, I already had more than enough of his own money in my pocket to pay him with.

This caused some argument, and we finally settled by my turning over to him all the money I had in my pocket upon arrival, plus the fare and other expenses that could be remembered.

We remained in Sitka several days. When we went up to our room at the hotel that night, the Indian porter told

us with pride that Madame Sarah Bernhardt had recently occupied that same room, but what interested me most was real beds, such as I had not seen for six months. Mine had sheets on it, and they tickled me so that I could not sleep for a long time. Here we heard of Dewey's victory over the Spaniards in Manila Bay. No one knew at all where Manila was, and a fierce argument went on at the hotel for several days. Finally someone discovered a map, which showed Manila to be in the Spice Islands. After a few days a yacht belonging to the Alaska Packers' Association came in and offered to take us over to Juneau. It was a beautiful trip of one day, through the islands and across the entrance of Glacier Bay. Juneau is a wonderful spot. Across the narrow strait on Douglas Island is Douglas City, where are situated the Tredwell mines, the largest stamp milling property in the world.

At Juneau we had quite an interesting experience, for in the hotel here were stopping both "Nigger Jim" and "Swift Water Bill" Gates. These were very prominent Klondike millionaires, and until quite recently had been just ordinary tramps. They were each occupying entire floors at the hotel and were accompanied by numerous retainers, including a number of girls from the underworld.

"Nigger Jim" was a common white man from Louisiana, who had acquired his name from the fact that he spoke like a negro. He had taken out, it is said, about $800,000 from the Klondike section, and was now at the height of his glory. This fortune was entirely squandered in about two years, and in 1904 he was pointed out to me in Skagway, where he was working as a common laborer at $2.50 a day.

"Swift Water Bill" Gates was more presentable than "Nigger Jim." He was said to have possessed more than a million, which he likewise entirely squandered in a year or two, during which process he married three sisters in rapid succession.

They were both unique and widely known characters as long as their money lasted, and the whole of Juneau felt their presence on this occasion. It was a noisy, drunken and riotous time, and I remember coming in one evening, when the crowd had got too drunk to be noisy, and found "Nigger Jim" and "Swift Water" quietly sitting at a table drinking champagne out of the bottle and cutting the cards for $5,000 a cut.

These notables were being held here on account of the situation in Skagway, where a famous gambler, "Sopey" Smith, had seized control of things and was openly robbing everybody that came through the town. "Sopey" had himself elected Mayor of the town, and immediately inaugurated a reign of terror. This lasted for about six weeks, during which time fully fifty people were murdered in cold blood. "Sopey" himself was finally killed, but succeeded in killing at the same time his adversary, and they are both buried in Skagway, side by side.

Upon the arrival of the City of Seattle, we proceeded down through the wondrous inside passage into Puget Sound, and arrived at Seattle on the 14th of June. There were a number of miners and gamblers aboard, and some of the atmosphere of "Swift Water Bill" lingered with us still. The captain kept a roster of the boys who should answer bells and wait on the poker parties that were going on, and it was said that the tips received by some of

these boys on a single trip often exceeded the captain's pay for a month.

On the way down I saw in a paper that my brother, Lyman Cotten, had graduated from the United States Naval Academy and had been assigned to the U. S. S. Columbia, thereby starting a career that has been brilliant and most creditable to himself and to the family as well.

My first day in Seattle was spent shopping and in a barber shop, where I got a shave, haircut, singe, shampoo, massage and manicure. When I appeared for dinner that night Wilcox was most enthusiastic over my appearance. He had never seen me in a "biled" shirt, and hardly knew me. That evening we went to a theatre. Next to me sat a gentleman, alone, with whom I began to converse. It proved to be Mr. Colton, and I delivered Hearndon's message upon the first evening I arrived, which was most fortunate, for he was leaving in two days for Yakutat.

We both thought this a queer coincidence. He came to see me the next morning and we started to church. On the way we met Dr. Shelton Jackson. Mr. Colton knew Dr. Jackson, and introduced me to him and we all went to church together. Dr. Jackson was at that time regarded the best living authority on everything pertaining to Alaska.

I again went to the Globe Hotel and quickly got in contact with what friends I had in Seattle. All received me warmly and were much interested in this story. I began to study the war and to make plans to enter the army at once. Wilcox did not approve of this entirely, and offered me a place in some works of his in Idaho, but

I felt the call of the soldier, and Wilcox finally said good-bye with a big bear hug, and I never saw him again, though I have thought of him often and his great kindness to me. I shall never see his like again.

Only one other thing need be recorded here. Very early one morning, before anyone was up, there came a knock on my door and a whisper, "Open the door, Cotten; it is Rennick." I opened the door, and it was Rennick indeed. Not the Rennick that I knew, with blue shirt and mackinaw, but Rennick, the immaculate, if you please. Rennick with whiskers nicely trimmed, tailored suit, gloves and walking cane. He came in and I locked the door behind him and stood against it. Many people in Seattle were looking for Rennick. Mr. X—, at the Seattle Hotel, was most anxious to find him. In every hotel in Seattle there were people looking for Rennick, and here he was in my room at sunrise.

I was so surprised that I could make no decision as to how I ought to act, and ended in making a mess of the opportunity I had. He asked me why I had left the party, and said I had ruined him by coming back and spreading all those reports. I stopped him and began talking in a rough and threatening way. Rennick was alarmed and thought that I was going to do him bodily harm, for he was physically a great coward. He began to beg piteously. He insisted that he had been robbed by Pennick and betrayed by that beast of a George, and put up a most pathetic tale. I again began to feel the effect of this man's personality, which was most curious and hypnotic in some way.

I began to weaken and then let him go entirely, feeling

rather sorry for him. I almost immediately repented. I should have listened to what he had to say, learned his plans and then acted. As it was, I do not know to this day why he came to my room at sunrise, but I am sure he had something very interesting up his sleeve.

I dressed hurriedly and went to Wilcox and got him out of bed. Wilcox said I had behaved like a ten-year-old, but told me to hurry to the room of Mr. X— and inform him that Rennick was in town. Mr. X— and Hall were much excited and immediately began a search of the town. But no Rennick was found. Mr. Rennick was a most difficult man to find; he kept rooms in many hotels in many places, and had spies at them all, usually some of the desk clerks, and they covered him up and lied for him splendidly.

Mr. X—, however, persevered in his search, and finally ascertained that Rennick would most likely be found in Portland. He detailed Mr. Hall, who was unknown to Rennick, to undertake the search and to arrange to bring Mr. X— and Rennick together.

Mr. X—'s sole object in this was to adminster to Rennick a sound thrashing, and he vowed that he would never be happy again until he had in person administered such punishment. "A little piece of his hide," as he expressed it, would to some extent atone for the injury done and console him in his declining years for having been such a fool in his younger days.

Accordingly, Hall was dispatched to Portland, where he shortly located Rennick in one of the smaller hotels. He took a room at this hotel and let it be known that he was from the Middle East; that he had sold out his

business and wanted to go to Alaska. He even showed the head clerk a large roll of hundred-dollar bills, and said he would invest in something in Alaska, provided it was something sufficiently promising and sure.

Rennick, of course, had nothing but "sure things" to offer, and the presence of easy money in the lobby soon brought him from his seclusion. Hall was advised by one of Rennick's spies to see Mr. Rennick, who was described as a wealthy and successful miner and the owner of valuable properties in Alaska.

It was insinuated that Rennick was a great personal friend of the Secretary of the Interior, and could do things in Alaska forbidden to the less favored.

Hall appeared interested, and asked to see Mr. Rennick. Mr. Rennick was very busy, as usual, but after some delay gave him an appointment. Hall stated his situation; said that he had sold out his packing business in Quincey; that the Trust had driven him out, and that he never expected to go East again.

Rennick was very abusive of the Trust, Hall said, and after a while, seeing that he was a deserving man, offered to sell him certain interests in mining property located near Yakutat. Rennick said that he had been developing this district secretly for some years, but that the thing was out now and that the entire section ought to be located as quickly as possible, before Congress changed the laws and put a stop to the whole thing. He showed Hall a pile of blueprints, and told him of a number of people who were in there, mentioning by name among others Mr. X—, who, he said, would certainly make a million.

Hall, as can be understood, was very much interested in this prospect, and deeply impressed with the opportunity. After some further negotiations, he told Rennick that he had but $5,000, but that a friend of his named Adams had come west with him for exactly the same purpose as himself; that Adams had about $10,000, but had gone to Seattle. He so much desired to bring Mr. Rennick and Adams together, and himself wanted to go in with Adams on this proposition.

Hall then tried (?) to get Adams to come down to Portland, but Adams would not come, and Hall showed Rennick his letter, which looked so promising that Rennick finally consented to run over to Seattle, though he was so busy he could only spend a couple of hours there.

Hall and Rennick arrived in Seattle at midnight, and Mr. Adams (X—) was waiting to receive them in his room at the Seattle Hotel on Yestler Way.

Mr. Hall took Rennick to Mr. X—'s room and locked the door behind him. Mr. X— then stepped from behind a screen and with his bare fists began to extract that "bit of hide" that he so ardently craved. In a few seconds Rennick lay sprawling on the floor, yelling and screaming with all his might. Mr. X— continued to administer his punishment, until suddenly he realized that the entire hotel was in an uproar and panic. Someone had turned in a fire alarm, half-clad men and women were rushing through the halls, boxes and trunks were being tumbled around, children crying and the office force rushing about trying to locate the trouble.

Mr. X— opened the door and he and Hall went out and tried to calm things down by explaining to the

ladies and apologizing for what had occurred. It was some time before quiet was restored, during which time Rennick vanished, leaving on the floor a very pretty little gold nugget, which had rolled out of his pocket during the melee. This Mr. X— secured and valued very much as a souvenir of his experiences.

Shortly after this a plain man came down from Yakutat, one of the many such that had been ruined by Rennick's extraordinary cunning and cruel dishonesty. He sought Rennick, too, quietly, himself and alone. He found him, and his bullet found its mark. I should say that if Rennick could have talked to that man for one minute and looked him in the eye, he would not have shot him.

Now I have come to the end of this narrative. It is a true story, and a curious tale for one like me. I have often examined myself in an effort to discover if any evil remained therefrom, if any mud had stuck to my character in the passing. I think not. I learned much of the world, and saw much that was not beautiful in man, but it did not affect me badly. Though I met George, I also met Wilcox, and I took more of Wilcox than I did of George, and went on in my way to other things, and am not sorry.

[FINIS.]

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