

A DAMP JOURNEY ON A DOWN GRADE.

BY RALPH K. WING.

TIME was when a trip into the woods meant "roughing it." Nowadays it may mean anything. An arm-chair in the stern of a skiff, propelled by a backwoods laborer, who lugs your boat from one lake to another over the highways of such travel—his is the Ordinary type of the modern Adirondack voyage. The tourist languidly views the scenery through his eye-glass, and returns to his City friends to rapturously descant upon the perils and hardships undergone, and the bravery required for a sojourn in this "uncombed" region.

We had never taken an outing in such a manner. It was our intention to "do" the North Woods on business principles, take a tent, shun hotels, keep away from the usual paths. Of travel! carry our own canoe, do our own paddling, and, in fact, get the real benefit of genuine wild life in wild places.

Our canoe was at Blue Mountain Lake; and thither Will Maynard, my chum, and I made the thirty-mile stage ride from North Creek, the terminus of the railway. We reached the lake in the afternoon; and desiring to avoid the necessity of stopping over night at any of the hotels, we immediately looked around for a wagon to start us on our way. Our objective point was Rock Lake, about seven miles from Blue Mountain Lake, and a mile off the regular road. This pond gives rise to the Rock River, which flows into the Indian River, which again makes a junction with the upper Hudson far back in the remote wilderness. These water-courses we desired to follow, and continuing on the Hudson River to a few miles below the village of North Creek, portage over into Schroon River, from which Lake George, our ultimate destination, could easily be reached.

Good luck brought us an empty returning wagon, and it was soon engaged. About sunset we were landed at an inn at a point a mile and a half from Rock Lake. We discussed the feasibility of packing our boat and luggage this distance over a trail not too good and entirely unknown to us, before darkness settled down. Meanwhile we ate our supper, and then cut the Gordian knot by hiring two backwoodsmen to help us.

As, lagging somewhat behind our guides, we emerged from the end of the path we met them returning noiselessly, motioning to enjoin silence.

"What is it?" we whispered.

"Hist! Keep quiet. There's a bear about the camp. Perhaps we can get a shot."

We tiptoed after them, They had their rifles and I my revolver. The fading light glimmered faintly across the lake and over the open, swampy margin. We peered eagerly through the gloaming; but, strain eye and ear as we might, we scanned the landscape in vain. Bruin wisely concluded not to do battle at such great odds against him. A few shots, that provoked hollow, lonesome echoes from the wilderness, we fired in the direction in which the bear had last been heard.

We turned to look at our surroundings. On the verge of the woods, a few hundred yards from where the path terminated at the lake, was a very small log cabin, with one window, breast high, and a low door. This was to be our quarters for the night, Our friends, quickly starting a brisk fire at the front, sat down for a few minutes' chat before they began their dark, and, to less practiced persons, uncertain journey home. We took occasion to glean all the information we could regarding our proposed route, Great were our astonishment and dismay at their replies.

"Well" remarked one "when I hear'n that you fellows were 'going down the Rock and Cedar rivers, I just said right out loud to myself, 'They can't do it.' Do you know how far you will get to-morrow if you begin work early in the morning and work all day just as hard as you can? You won't go no farther than six miles below—to where the Cedar River comes in, There ain't enough water, and it's rough and rocky all the way. When you get down to Cedar River there be some still water; but it is all filled up with logs. There isn't no paths, and the woods be too thick for you to carry your things around any of the bad places. You will have to drag your boat over the rocks a smart bit of the way, and you stand a mighty good chance of getting it smashed."

"Would you advise us to take our outfit

back to the road and wait for some team to take us to North River?" we inquired. "The water is deep enough there, is it not?"

"I wouldn't say what I think you ought to do 'cept as you ask it. We ain't trying to frighten ye; but I don't think any of the boys livin' up this way, unless they had a blamed good reason, would think to try what you said you wanted to do. It's too late to get back through the woods to-night. I would stay right here on this Pile of balsam boughs in your shanty till morning, then carry your things back to the road, and wait until an empty wagon comes your way. But we've got to get home, so good-night!"

Maynard and I built up the fire with green wood to make smoke and drive off the insect pests, universal in these dense woods; and each crawling into his sleeping bag, made by sewing several blankets together, slept until long after sunrise.

I stepped over to a little brook that dashed by our camp to take my morning's wash. A large flat stone was lying in the middle of the stream. On this I stood, and while making a liberal lather, discovered on another rock only three feet away a big green bullfrog, staring at me with a fixed, immovable, owl-like gaze. After several efforts, which did not seem to alarm him in the least, I finally succeeded in landing some soapsuds in his eyes. This made him relax sufficiently to wink violently two or three times, but not enough to change his posture or the glassy gleam of his optics. With no better effect I again anointed him, but the third time I gave him such a nasty dose that he deliberately waddled down to the water, put his head under, and removed the objectionable foreign substance. Then he ambled back to his old roost, composedly resuming his position in a way which seemed to say, "Keep it up if you want to; it don't hurt me any." I laughed till I was tired, and left this genuine humorist of nature in undisturbed possession.

After breakfast we very leisurely carried our canoe and equipment back to the road. We reposed under the trees, waiting for "something to turn up," but as hour after hour slipped by, we found it very monotonous. We had almost reconciled ourselves to staying where we were for the night, when with joy we saw a wagon coming our way.

The driver, who intended to make an all-night journey to the railroad terminus,

was an employé of one of the Blue Mountain Lake hotels. He was a native of the district, well versed in all the stories and traditions of the wilderness, and was evidently glad of an audience. He told of the last of the Indians in that region; of the deer and bear that had been shot at different points as we passed; the uselessness of attempting to farm on the rocky precipitous slopes; and, now that the section was open to competition with the products of more fertile localities, the dependence of the inhabitants on the Summer tourists. Despite the talk, the banter, and the songs, our not over-soft seats on the bow of the canoe and the sides of the springless wagon became no easier. As the result of our two days' severe work and the lateness of the hour, we would find ourselves dropping off into a short doze, to awake just in the nick of time to avoid falling out of the wagon by a desperate grab at the first available support. The small hours of the morning overtook us: still the wheels rolled on in their dusty course, still the horses trotted down a decline to toil panting up the crest of the next hill; still the dim shadows ahead would, as we approached, disclose the faintly outlined forms of rocks, stumps and trees; still the mountains bathed their feet in the fogs of the valley and in their sable garments draped the scene in mourning. Soon black, threatening clouds shut out the small remnant of light that the giant mountains failed to obscure. Presently we heard a deep muttering, as if these Titans roared in anger to each other, then the illuminating flashes, as if they exchanged shots with one another, proclaimed more certainly than a weather bulletin that it would become moist in our vicinity. Rubber coats afforded us as good protection as could be expected in the postures we were obliged to assume.

But soon the stars reasserted their sway; then the first glimmer of the river, as after its long *détour* through the virgin forest, it once more approached the highway, could be caught through the trees from the hill we were descending. Then a house or two appeared, and we rattled up in front of the inn at North River, a hamlet about six miles above North Creek, the terminus of the railroad.

Very thankful we were to see a light burning. Our elation was but short-lived, for we were told that every room in the house was occupied. We were, however, more prepared for emergencies than the

ordinary traveler, and carrying our blankets into the barn, we were easily convinced, and not for the first time, that a haymow has its advantages as a sleeping-place.

Before launching next morning we repaired to the only store in the place to make a few purchases. In this remote country store, surrounded by a well-nigh uninhabited and inaccessible region, we did not expect to find anything to remind us of the teeming marts of trade from which we had recently come. Judge then our surprise when upon entering the place we found the proprietor cornered by the everlasting, ubiquitous drummer. This particular specimen was not carrying a general line, but was a specialist, traveling for a soap powder. I expressed my astonishment, and was informed by the storekeeper that there had been already ten salesmen in there that day. Probably these fellows had an idea that in a place so remote from the ordinary routes of travel, if the storekeeper wanted anything in their line, he would take a large amount. Be that as it may, it furnished a striking illustration of American business enterprise.

In the store was a child, not over three years of age, complacently smoking a full-sized cigar. This was the proprietor's son, and it seemed to give the father much pleasure to exhibit the little wretch's accomplishment. "He uses tobacco just like a man," he beamingly remarked, "He takes to it naturally. He chewed a piece of my fine-cut before he was out of the cradle, and he is now never without a cigar, pipe, or quid. He can take his little toddy, too, without winking, just like his old man," and the unnatural parent fairly gloated over the precocious depravity of his offspring. It must be said, though, in favor of this "infant prodigy," that he seemed to survive the treatment with remarkable success. A sturdier young sinner, with rosier cheeks, would be hard to find.

Directly across the road, opposite the hotel and the few houses comprising the hamlet, flowed the river, which at this point was much contracted, booming and roaring for half a mile in a not insignificant rapid. As soon as it became noised about that we intended to embark at the head of this, the place was on the tiptoe of expectation. The inhabitants were accustomed to nothing but rowboats, and could not appreciate the advantages possessed by a canoe in lightness and in the ability of the occupant to see his course as he pro-

ceeds, so many skeptics were found. As we loitered about, making purchases and getting things in shape, the number of doubters increased, some of them being unkind enough to hint at a lack of "sand" on the part of "them city dudes." This was our first rapid of the season, and it must be confessed that as we shoved off we did not feel exactly stiff in the knees,

We made directly for the centre with our quickest, most powerful strokes, and sooner almost than thought itself the banks were whizzing past us, and we were plunging in the midst of the foam and the billows, dodging the rocks as they sought our frail craft, and zigzagging from one side of the stream to the other in quest of a channel. We had hardly time to get frightened, hold our breath hard, and receive a few dashes of spray before we found ourselves in comparatively smooth water at the foot of the run.

The distance to North Creek, six miles, was, in the high state of the river, very easily and most enjoyably made. The sun was shining, the water clear, the current swift but free enough from dangerous stretches to allow us to give our full attention to the charms of the landscape, rendered doubly attractive by the rain of the previous night. The road ran close to the river, The driver of a conspicuous red wagon, drawn by a team of spirited horses, going in our direction, became filled with a desire to show us the greater expedition of his method of travel. With this end in view he lashed his horses up hill and down, speeding them to the best of his ability. Not being in the racing mood, we enjoyed at our leisure his manifest desire to leave us in the lurch, finding that, aided by the swift water, we were able to keep the lead by the exercise of only ordinary effort.

In less than an hour we had traveled the six miles to North Creek. While there it rained heavily, to the relief of my chum, who utilized the time by flirting with the pretty post-mistress. Female charms must always be recognized as dangerous, especially when placed in the vantage-ground of a post-office. Owing to the indiscretion of Uncle Sam in placing this maiden in a position to practise her seductive wiles on my susceptible friend, our departure was delayed till late in the afternoon, so bringing upon us a catastrophe before the day was done.

Although it was five o'clock before we started, we judged from the quick and

easy run that we had already made, that the ten miles to Riverside, the point at which we intended to leave the Hudson, could readily be made before darkness overtook us. The road had now turned off from the river, and for the nonce we plunged once more into the Primitive wilderness.

Forests overhung the water on both banks, and no landing for our boat, much less a camping-place, could be found. This deprivation of a last resort, obliging us in any case to continue, we soon found to be a most serious matter. Rapids began to be frequent, presenting many undesirable features, Angular boulders of immense size threatened to monopolize the current at these points, while we were forcibly reminded of that great feature of the Hudson, the lumber traffic, by enormous piles of logs. These had drifted on the rocks in the freshets, and had been left high and dry far above us, blockading the channel and shutting off the view of what lay before us. Our hands were in now, and recking little of what was concealed, we plunged boldly in, paddling fast even in the swiftest water, and trusting to experience and intuition to get us through.

The mountain air grew cool in the lengthening shadows; but coats, vests and hats were thrown aside. Amidst the boom and surge of the rushing water, one interval of white, foam-crested waves succeeding another in almost unbroken succession, we shouted to each other in the din and plied our paddles from side to side, now backing with heavy stroke or desperately shoving ahead on the opposite quarter. Our blood was on fire with excitement and the spirit of battle pervaded every nerve,

The rocks thickened, the current quickened. White water appeared at the beginning of a bend, and we made right for it with the confidence born of recklessness. As we slid on to the dancing billows, we were coolly discussing the relative merits and demerits of decked and open canoes for running rapids, when on turning the Point such a sight was presented as made even our madcap hearts pause in their tattoo against our ribs. For half a mile extended a toboggan slide of water, with all element of smoothness omitted. Rocks were piled in confused, broken heaps as in the crater of a volcano; and between round and over them rushed and plunged, like an aqueous cannon-ball, the deep contracted, resistless tide. No escape: the

alternatives were to get through on our muscle or die game. We became self-possessed from desperation. Onward and downward, like a descent into a maelstrom, we dived and tossed. To attempt to shape our course to suit ourselves was almost useless: the depth and volume of the narrowed flood was too great. Suddenly the broad stream became a funnel, and tumbling down a miniature cascade of some three feet, swept over a Partially submerged flat rock a few yards below the middle of the plunge. Toward this we were irresistibly drawn. The bow of the canoe was higher than the stern when we dived down the incline, so the prow glided over the obstruction, the bottom gave a sharp rasp, and the stern was lifted high upon the rock. At once we shoved our paddles against the unyielding surface to push off ere our predicament was made worse. The boat would not budge; the water was driven hard against it, threatening by its force alone to tear the wood apart; the craft, balanced nicely on the end of its heel, tipped violently with the slightest movement, several times admitting water.

We calmly discussed the situation. There seemed to be little hope for us. Maynard was in the stern, I in the bow. In a hoarse, deliberate voice, he said, "If we capsize here we are both lost. I am going to attempt to get out on the rock and pull her loose. If I succeed you will go down alone, stern first, but you may get through all right. It is our only hope."

Carefully rising, gathering his strength, he made a leap, He landed on the rock. Pressing his foot against a projection, by a succession of powerful efforts he got the boat loose, and before it had time to take the momentum of the water and be swept from his hands, he made a desperate grab at the gunwales as far forward as he could reach, drawing himself off of the stone and out of the water, and resumed his paddle before the canoe had a chance to drift broadside.

The sweat of exertion and terror stood out on our brows—but the worst was over; a few more vigorous strokes and we floated where we might again feel moderately secure,

The sun was just sinking. We thought anxiously, of camp, and to our great relief, a house appeared. It must be near Riverside, so we landed. The dwelling was close to the bank, and a few cultivated fields lay around it, another habitation

appearing in the distance. With these exceptions all was wild. However, a glorious blaze on the beach soon dried our wet garments. The moon was full, and as no signs of human proximity were visible, by its light we proceeded to investigate the house. A tumble-down fence and a rankly overgrown garden betokened a neglect which was soon explained by a deserted home. We shoved our dark lantern through all the windows, and being satisfied that the house was vacant, and we would not be disturbed, we produced our bedding and wrapping ourselves up on the porch were soon lost in our dreams. So ended an eventful day, the scenes of which in our slumber were re-enacted with terrifying variations. The house, fences, trees, moon, and the solid earth seemed to have an insecure, tumbling, rolling tendency; and as the roar of an actual rapid below where we landed filled the air and was echoed to our sleeping ears, one of us, as a corner of a blanket covered his mouth, would fancy that he was taking his last plunge into the cold, hurrying waters, and wake with a suffocating gasp.

The dawn found us stirring. It ushered in a day so full of queer circumstances as to seem like a chapter from "Alice in Wonderland." After a breakfast of dried beef, bread, hot chocolate and oatmeal, which we thoroughly appreciated, our first solicitude was to find a wagon to convey our canoe to Loon Lake, via which and its outlet we intended to reach the Schroon River. This was an occasion of the mountain coming to Mahomet; for we had hardly finished our breakfast when three men bent on a swim, and attracted by the revolver practice in which we had been indulging, made their appearance. Living at a distance from any improved road, they had no wagon suitable for our purpose, but a neighbor who was to be found nearly a mile across country, might be able to satisfy our wants. Maynard made the quest; and after an hour or so of weary waiting, beguiled by the conversation of the granger delegation, I spied a box lumber wagon coming slowly and carefully through the fields. The duffle and the light little boat were soon aboard and snugly lashed down.

Now began a journey of seven miles by land, requiring as much care, but lacking the excitement of the previous day's river trip. We took turns walking, the man on foot keeping behind to see that

the craft did not lurch over to one side so that the delicate cedar would be chafed against an uneven board or protruding nail. Listening to our driver, alternately trudging and riding, picking berries, telling stories, singing and declaiming, we made our portage. Along the borders of Loon Lake we passed for about half a mile to a spot where our guide informed us we could obtain a meal. Carrying our outfit down to a beautiful sandy beach, and leaving all ready for a launch, we stormed the house. Though it was in the afternoon, the prospect of earning a little money was sufficient inducement to these frugal folks to quickly produce a dinner in which that inevitable last resort of a remote farmhouse—fried pork—largely figured.

We swept rapidly through the lake, a small body of water. Paddling down the narrow outlet, we soon reached the dam, which marked its terminus. A boom of logs on the near side of the structure, and the lack of an available place to land after the obstruction was passed, said plainly to boatmen, "No thoroughfare." We dragged the canoe through a clump of willows uncomfortably close to a pig-sty, and much to our chagrin, frightened away two pretty girls who stood farther down on the path. We were soon at the dam, only to find by glancing below that the water supplied to the mills on the brook down which we had expected to float had been almost entirely shut off. We were in a quandary how to proceed. Inquiring, we learned that a mile below the stream received a tributary, and that beyond the junction we would probably find water enough to float. We tried the Adirondack plan; and one of us shouldering the boat and the other carrying as much as he could of what remained, we let down bars and climbed fences, cutting across fields in approved style, to strike the road at the most direct point. Perspiring, but persevering, we pushed on. The sky now began to darken. A thunder-storm was evidently rapidly approaching.

A desire for sleeping under a wooden roof took possession of us. Carefully concealing the canoe in the bushes by the brookside, we made for a farmhouse near by. We had taken a solemn oath not to sleep in beds, To get the concession of spending the night in the barn, we used diplomacy. After telling who we were, what we were doing, where we were going, and producing our canvas "Saratoga" in

proof of our statements, we would say, "If you will allow us to sleep in your barn we will not smoke nor light any matches, that being the regulation bugbear of the average farmer. Generally, as in this case, the granger had become intensely interested in our adventurous journey by field and flood, and would warmly press upon us the hospitalities of his home. This invitation we invariably declined.

"At peep of dawn we brushed, with hasty steps, the dews away," and trudging across the meadow, found the small stream now deep enough for our purposes. moved slowly through beautiful, fresh meadow land along the winding stream, the water clear as the air above it, and varying from five to fifteen feet in width, and of a depth just sufficient for our pur-

The bottom was covered with sawdust from the mill, over the yielding beds of which, as occasion required, we could easily pole our craft. The banks were now open and lined with rushes, ferns and sweet-smelling grasses, and again rose crested with thickly crowded trees, overhanging and enclosing the thread of silver. The brook was in charming harmony with our diminutive bark, affording us uninterrupted enjoyment.

Continuing several miles in this manner, making, it is true, slow but delightful progress, we arrived about dinner-time at Chestertown, a village which, though ten miles from any railroad, is surrounded by beautiful drives, and is on the turnpike to famous Schroon Lake, and other of the less wild and most fashionable resorts of the Adirondacks. It is itself possessed of several fine hotels, containing not a few rich city people, who are content to spend their summers simply breathing the pure air of this region, and occasionally making a carriage excursion to some of the fine fishing ponds in the neighborhood,

We saved the time necessary for preparing food by making a savage inroad on a civilized hotel dinner, much to the terror of the other guests and the holy horror of the landlord. I believe we paid before sitting down, otherwise, judging from the merits of the case, we should have left with purses as light as our meal had been heavy.

The stream now led through the village, and we were viewed by the inhabitants with as much curiosity as if we hailed from the spirit world. After flattening out for several low bridges, and Posing as the "only greatest show on earth," we found

ourselves once more free from the confines and criticism of people and society,

Then we immediately found ourselves surrounded by thick woods. Occasional open vistas showed gently rising hills clothed in harmonious proportions with timber and pasture, and disclosed a fine perspective of lofty mountains in the background, marking the untraveled wilderness. The forest continued for a number of miles—in fact, until we emerged into the Schroon River. Occasionally a duck would fly up just out of reach of the eager We revolver, or an animal of some kind would manifest itself by scurrying off through the thick undergrowth before we had a chance to get a glimpse of its form.

Suddenly we came to an obstruction which occupied a large part of the small stream, and though in an alluvial bottom appeared to be a large rock. As we came up with it, to our unbounded surprise this boulder became endowed with motion, and resolved itself into a turtle of huge dimensions. In spite of a shot fired excitedly with rather uncertain aim, it managed to disappear in the water. Although the stream was so shallow, a thorough probing of the bottom failed to reveal the hard-shell's retreat.

Higher ground on the immediate banks of our brook, and a rift which obliged us to wade and float the canoe, warned us that we were nearing the Schroon River, This was entered so very abruptly that we at first supposed it to be a sudden lake-like expansion of the diminutive creek which we had been following.

The Schroon is known among the lumbermen as "Still River," to distinguish it from the Hudson. At first it seemed to justify this local designation. It flowed sluggishly, the banks were of a rich, loamy soil, and immense forest trees grew close to the water's edge, or had been undermined by the erosion of the light earth by the slow-moving current.

Soon we were undeceived. An ominous thunder broke upon our ears at first nothing but a murmur then for a while it was lost altogether, only to grow louder as we turned a favoring bend until finally the heavy, sustained roar warned us that we were getting dangerously near to a genuine Cataract. We landed, forced ourselves through the impeding fringe of thick, young growth and carefully making our way out in the stream on a succession of half-submerged rocks found the fall to be about eight feet high. The descent was at

somewhat of an angle, and at one place, a few feet wide, there seemed to be enough water to float a steamboat. But so great was the force, and so problematical our ability to shape our course over this particular spot, and the memory of our recent narrow escape so fresh in our minds, that after due consideration we wisely made a portage.

The sun was now throwing his copper-colored lance of light upon the tops of the highest hills. Another mile was made, a large lumber mill was discerned, and pulling out on to a closely cropped meadow at the foot of a loudly-talking rapid, we prepared to spend the night. The air was mild. We determined to dispense with a tent, and pulling our blankets closely round us, lulled by the silvery gurgle of the rushing water close by our heads, we slept as birds must sleep after a day's free flight into the untrammelled recesses of the air.

A quarter of a mile carry, a brief sojourn at a store which we found locked, and the proprietor at work in an adjoining field, and once more we started on to turn the leaves of the book of fate. The river now showed constant current, and the landscape much diversity and beauty. Again the low, portentous monotone of a waterfall caught the ear. This one, like that of the day previous, was just possible, but not very inviting. It consisted of three low falls, not far apart, and, though the volume of the water was ample, the sinuosities of the channel, and particularly the sight on the rocks at the foot of the third, of a skiff crushed to the fineness of kindling wood, sufficed, not, perhaps, to dampen our ardor, but to prevent it from getting dampened.

After hauling our things around, we had barely paddled away from the all-pervading din, when, as that sound grew less, the noise of another rush of water took its place. This, as we advanced, possessed the air, and disclosed its source in an apparently unbroken line of white water.

We were by this time rather ashamed of having backed out so frequently. A man whom we saw just at that moment was interrogated with regard to what lay below.

"I calkerlate you fellows can't run it," he drawled, "leastwise in that bit of a thing. The big lumber skiffs do sometimes go to pieces down thar. No, they ain't no falls," he added in a reply to our inquiry, "but you be like to find two miles of as stiff rapids as you ever see."

Rather than undertake such a long laborious carry, we determined to take our chances. The morning was now well advanced, and the sun so warm that we could dry our things that might get wet, Elevating all our belongings above the bottom of the canoe, so as to get them out of the way of the waves we anticipated would wash in, and lashing everything firmly into position, we headed with misgiving hearts directly for the most available opening,

What a glorious run that was! A storm at sea, with massive walls of mountainous waves making clean breaches over flooded decks, a cavalry charge, the rattle of musketry, the groans of the wounded and the dying, the shouts of the attacked and of the assailants, the impetuous momentum of the gigantic missile of flesh and blood—all these might seem tame to those who have been through them, as they lose themselves in the ecstasy of the wild rush over foam-crested billows and the plunge down the rock-studded declivity with a speed too great to realize. The waves bounded in fine style. Half way down we encountered an eddy, and taking advantage of it, ran the boat up to the rocky shore, and clinging desperately, made a hasty inspection of our condition.

We were kneeling in water. Where was the sponge? It was not to be found. It must have been left at the head of the rapid. While Maynard held the boat I made my way at my best speed to where we recollected having landed. Although walking my fastest, it took me twenty minutes to go and return. The passage by water had occupied hardly two. We accounted ourselves most fortunate in getting as far as we had. I wielded the stern paddle, and it was agreed that, upon my saying left or right, as the case might be, Maynard was to paddle on the side indicated. Shoving off, we were at once ill the fray again. The earth and everything solid seemed to reel and revolve. The waves of rapids are not uniform undulations—they roll and curve in all directions. As we were thrown high into the air, twisted sideways or backwards, jerked hither and thither, shot forward into a yawning depression, nothing seemed stationary—we had apparently nothing by which to be guided.

Instead of our going toward the rocks they appeared to be moving, like spent cannon-balls, right up stream. We dodged these to the best of our ability. The fun

waxed fast and furious. The immediate surroundings, the channel just ahead, and the course far below, had all to be considered at once. The combination had to be worked like a mathematical puzzle, but it must needs be solved instantly. The mental and physical acrobatics proved nearly too much for me. I could not speak my own name. I wanted Maynard to make certain moves, but was utterly unable to utter the words—I could not tell left from right.

My companion remembered our under-starting. Until told, he did not intend to make a stroke. We whizzed straight for a rock. I could not avoid it unassisted; and Maynard, not knowing my intentions, did not try to keep off. Luckily, it was of a gentle slope, and not much above the surface, so the canoe, instead of hitting it a fair blow, was simply lifted clean out of the river by the tremendous force of the current and launched in the water on the lower side of the obstruction. A few more spasmodic strokes, a little more spasmodic steering, and we found ourselves out of the vortex. The river that erstwhile shook its rumpled mane in anger, looked with eyes of gentle peace again. We swept through a narrow channel past a beautiful island, and, turning a bend at its foot, found ourselves in a gentle current, and in the bright sunshine of a pastoral scene, the angry roar of furious waters replaced by the sweet melody of birds.

"You fellows did pretty well to come out of that all right," said a man who had come up behind us. "It's no fool trick to get through there. Last summer there was a young millionaire blood that came up from Warrensburg, just for the fun of running these rapids. He had a fine cedar boat that cost him considerably over \$100, and he was skillful enough to go to everlasting smash just a half mile above here."

After a hearty dinner we spent the afternoon in getting through some minor rapids, eventually, just at dusk, pulling out to portage round a bit of water that was absolutely impassable. Our route lay over a hill, on the crest of which we paused to drink in the inspiring scene made by the river as it leaped, bounded and reverberated through the perpendicular cañon at our feet. A house, a green meadow with a barn in the centre, made the end of the carry a most inviting spot for camping.

The next day was one of hard work,

We had reached the quiet part of Schroon River. The shores were now entirely alluvial. The valley broadened and the stream wound in and out in wake-like curves. Trees, swamps and sand-bars constituted the scenery. The banks were uniformly low, and any mile, like one of a block of city houses, was a counterpart of every other.

We had been afloat that morning at seven o'clock. By unremitting labor, at eleven A.M. we had covered the distance of twenty-two miles to the village of Warrensburg. This beautiful place lies scattered in wide, shaded avenues, fine houses and attractive gardens close along the river, as if fearful lest the stream in its winding course might escape from those who prize it so highly.

Our trip was now practically ended. Lake George lay but six miles to the eastward. At the lower part of the village, a few miles before the Schroon joins the Hudson, is a rapid with an ugly reputation. We were anxious to stir our blood once more by a farewell wrestle with the river demon that had been so long slumbering. Engaging a conveyance to meet and carry us from the foot of the rapids to Lake George, I put the canoe upon my back, and marching ceremoniously through the business thoroughfare, a crowd followed us to the huge wood-pulp paper mill, at which point began our half-mile run. Well-nigh unanimous was the testimony regarding our inability to do what we had announced. An ominous shaking of all heads proclaimed that it was generally expected that we stood a better chance of getting to the bottom of the river than the bottom of the rapid, and made us feel half fool and half hero, filling us with a strong desire to act the part of neither by taking the land route out of the difficulty. However, having committed ourselves, we threw the town and people over our shoulders by slipping out into the stream. It was like a salmon ladder—all zigzag. We had a very good aquatic representation of broncho riding :

A forward plunge,
A sidelong lunge,
A dash, a splash,
A just-missed smash;
The paddles fly,
The waves run high.
The end is reached
Without a breach.
We pull ashore,
Our journey's o'er,