

## BY STEAMER FROM SAVONA TO EAGLE PASS.

SINCE the Fraser, the great main waterway of the Province, is too turbulent and rocky for navigation in the great canyon extending for many miles above the town of Yale, the steamboats plying on the interior streams and lakes of British Columbia are disconnected from those on the Lower Fraser and Gulf of Georgia. The most important of these inland routes is that from Savona through Lake Kamloops, up Thompson River and through the Shuswap lakes to the settlements on Spallumcheen River. From Lytton, where the Thompson pours its accumulated waters into the Fraser, the former stream is unnavigable as far as Savona, at the foot of Lake Kamloops, a distance of sixty-nine miles. During the summer of 1881 repeated attempts were made to utilize the stream for forty-seven miles below Savona for the transportation of supplies for railroad construction, but all ended in failure. The most notable effort was that made by Captain John Irving with the steamer *Peerless*. The run down the swift and treacherous stream was made in a few hours, but it was only after a month's hard work and many narrow escapes from wrecking that the valuable steamer was again safely tied up to the landing at Savona.

From Savona to Spallumcheen steamers have plied for a number of years, and last year the route as far as Eagle Pass, by which the Canadian Pacific cuts through the Gold Mountains, was utilized in conveying passengers, supplies, etc., during the construction of the railroad running parallel to it. On this route ran the *Peerless*, commanded by Captain Troup, well known on the Columbia as the man who took the *Harvest Queen* through the rapids at Celilo, and who in 1883 successfully ran the gauntlet of the Cascades. Captain Troup was no small factor in hastening the construction of the Canadian Pacific. During the fall of 1884, though navigation of the Upper Thompson was at that season deemed impossible, this was the only practicable route by which supplies and material could be distributed along the line of construction. Captain Troup alone was found equal to the emergency. He declared the river navigable and proceeded to demonstrate it. His carefulness and skill brought success, and after three months he was presented by Mr. Onderdonk, the contractor, with a check for \$1,000 in addition to his regular large salary. From Savona the lake and river route is about 150 miles in length, and on it now run the *Peerless*, *Kamloops* and *Spallumcheen*, the first named costing \$30,000. They are owned by J. A. Mara & Co., the partners being Captain John Irving and F. J. Barnard. The headquarters of the company are at Kamloops. The Thompson is a rapid and shallow stream, but the lakes are deep enough to float the largest craft, reaching in places a depth of 300 feet.

It was a beautiful August morning when I boarded the *Peerless* at Savona for the purpose of going to Kamloops and then by the same boat to Eagle Pass. The steamer drew slowly away from the dock, and heading into Lake Kamloops was soon churning the water into foam with her wheel. Kamloops is the least attractive

of these inland lakes, and yet in the bright, clear morning air it was a beautiful sight. It is seventeen miles long and from two to three miles wide. The water has not that crystal transparency for which the Shuswaps are noted, but in them salmon and the beautiful lake trout swarm in countless numbers. Its shores are bordered by gracefully rolling hills, barren of timber, yet pleasing to the eye in spite of the absence of rocky gorges and green forests. At the upper end of the lake we entered the Thompson again, the lake itself being but a widening of that stream, and after ascending it nine miles reached the bustling town of Kamloops, lying on the south side, opposite the point of junction of the North Thompson with the main stream.

Here the difference in the water of the two rivers is very noticeable. The North Thompson, like the Fraser, is a muddy stream, while the South Thompson carries the crystal waters of the Shuswap. For a distance below Kamloops the waters of the two streams flow side by side, gradually mingling until the river becomes of one hue throughout.

After a short stop at this thriving inland town, which has become the most important trade centre of the interior, the *Peerless* again headed eastward and proceeded up the south branch. The pebbly bottom could be clearly seen, since the water was only from ten to twelve feet deep, and as I bent over the rail I saw thousands of salmon, perch and trout darting in all directions from the steamer's bows. The salmon I could hardly recognize as the same fish I had seen swarming in the Fraser a few days before, or which the fishermen at the mouth of the stream had been hauling into their boats as I entered the river below New Westminster. While leaping and darting in the turgid waters of the Fraser Gorge, the salmon, with his silver sides glistening in the sun, is a sight to captivate the eye and challenge the admiration of every beholder. In the Upper Thompson it is another fish. Its days of glory have departed. Instead of the plump, succulent salmon of a few days ago it has become a long, lank fish, whose tenure of life is brief. During its pilgrimage of 400 miles from the sea it has been denuded of its silvery scales by its encounters with rapids and sharp rocks, its body has assumed a dull red hue, and though it still darts through the water with lightning speed its almost boundless energy is well nigh spent. A few weeks later I saw the bed and banks of Upper Thompson and Eagle rivers covered for miles with their festering bodies. The salmon is truly a wonderful fish. Nature has given it the instinct to return from the sea in the summer season and ascend to the headwaters of the stream where it was born to exercise the faculty of procreation, and has provided it with the power and energy to accomplish the task. They are often found 2,000 miles inland, their heads bruised, their fins and tails almost worn away, their scales rubbed off and their sides covered with wounds and sores, still valiantly fighting their way upward against the current of some shallow and rapid mountain brook, on whose banks their lacerated carcasses finally lie rotting in the