

she was repaired and afterward saw considerable service on the lower river.

A year or two later Captain Ainsworth successfully ran the cascades with the magnificent side-wheeler *Oncenta*, and still later he brought down the stern-wheelers *Shoshone* and *Nez Perce Chief*. The *Shoshone* was built on the Upper Snake river, near the point where the pioneers crossed on their weary journey to the west. She failed to receive the patronage expected, and the owners decided to flood her down through the Grand canyon to Lewiston—a most dangerous undertaking. The canyon is a most wonderful passage cut by the river through the basaltic bases of the Blue

irresistible currents and whirling, unavoidable vortexes were more than pilot could hope to overmatch; caught by a tremendous eddy, the boat was thrown against the solid wall of the gorge at one point, demolishing her cut-water and carrying away her jack-staff. A bulkhead forward prevented her sinking, however, and Captain Miller succeeded in extricating the steamer from the dangerous eddy, and pursued the thrilling race. There were still, lake-like reaches, too, where the pilot found time to rest, and where the weather-stained bluffs echoed back the pant and churn of pipe and wheel strangely. But these served only to warn the wary master of deeper falls beyond where more



PASSAGE OF THE CASCADES OF THE COLUMBIA BY THE
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mountains. It is the same narrow defile which Washington Irving, in "Astoria," describes as "not more than thirty yards wide, where cascades and rapids succeed each other almost without interruption." It was with great difficulty that Captain Bass Miller examined the route along shore from Lewiston up to the boat, treading the same ground, part of the way, over which Astor's famishing men struggled well nigh hopelessly, fifty years before. The captain decided to attempt the trip and when the boat was ready started down with her. No steamboat ever made a more dangerous voyage, perhaps. Ledges of basalt, broken by slides of "drift" from the crumbling walls, rise hundreds of feet above the tortuous channel. The abrupt turns,

serious obstructions held the flood in check. But, at last, after more than once escaping almost certain wreck, the *Shoshone* emerged from the noonday shadows of the Grand canyon with torn guards and damaged wheel, darted down the long rapid to Lewiston and rounded in to the low, gravelly landing, to the amazement of the many who saw her. Years after, one dark, rainy night, on the Upper Willamette, the boat met her fate, crushing in her weakened timbers and going down, the same hands holding the wheel that clasped the spokes when she ran the wild gorge of the Snake.

The ever changing conditions of trade continued to make it necessary, from time to time, to transfer steamers, at considerable risk, from the Upper to the Middle or Lower Columbia. The recent run of the