

by a squall, and on the point of being overturned, Chabonneau, who with Sacajawea, was on board, had the steering oar, and struck with fear "went howling to the Gods." The boat filled to the gunwale and was saved from an overturn only at the last moment, her precious cargo floating out upon the stream. But the Bird-woman, with her wits all at hand, saved not only her self and baby, but grasping right and left at the escaping packages rescued what was indispensable. It was the first conspicuous exhibition of her presence of mind and handiness, which later were constantly shown.

As the summer waned the party approached the gates of the mountains, where the canoes must be forsaken, and the horses obtained, with which it would be possible to cross the divide to the head of the springs of the Columbia. Thus far since leaving the Mandans, there had been neither sight nor sound of man; nor as the mountains rose before them was there a trace of human beings except in camps deserted months before. The captains ranged far ahead of their men; but though at last glimpses were obtained of Indians at a distance, these at once hurried away, avoiding all contact. Caution, for those mountain tribes, in fact, was the price of existence. When the case of Lewis and Clark was growing desperate, and the possibility appeared that the attempt must be abandoned and the expedition go back, the Bird-woman began to dance and sing. She was once more among the haunts of her people; she has recognized the valley into which they had penetrated as the place where five or six years before she had been taken captive. Presently some Indian women were brought in, who abandoned by the men, had been left to fall into the hands of the strangers. As the creatures cowered before their captors, bending their heads to receive their deathblow, suddenly a young girl, catching sight of Sacajawea, rushed toward her. She was a tribeswoman, who having been captured at the same time with the Bird-woman, had for a time undergone with her the pains of bondage. Escaping, however, the friend had found her people

again. Now a second time losing her freedom, as she supposed, she descried among the newcomers no other than her old companion. The two squaws embraced tenderly. The Shoshone women acting as guides and intercessors, brought back the warriors. It was the very band of the Bird-woman that at last had been reached, and when presently at the council she began to interpret the speech of the chief, lo, it was her own brother whose words she was translating! A firm friendship was at once established between the party and the Shoshones, the Indian girl had made further progress possible.

Henceforth the way was smoothed. Horses and guides were furnished; the friendly Shoshones passed the white men on to the flatheads and they in turn to the Nez Percés. At the councils Sacajawea was always the most important one in the line of interpreters. The Captains speculated, amused as to what kind of representation it was that at last reached the mountain men, when their speech, done into French for Chabonneau, rendered by him into Minnetaree for Sacajawea, filtered on from her Shoshone into Chippianish, Ootlashoot or whatever barbaric dialect might be at hand. But some message was conveyed, and through the Indian girl those remotest wilds first heard of the greatness of Uncle Sam and the good things he meditated for his newly gained children of the forest. Nor was it solely as an interpreter that she was useful. As the party passed from tribe to tribe, who were always timorous at the first encounter, disposed to fly like frightened deer, the sight of Sacajawea with her papoose, riding with the Captains, was reassuring. It could be no war-party if a squaw and her baby were among them.

The Pacific was safely reached before winter set in, and the journals record the wonder of the squaw before the great ocean, and the mighty whale which its waters had cast upon the beach. With the tribes near the coast there might have been much barrier; but Lewis and Clark had now quite ex-

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