FREDERIC HOMER BALCH

THE BRIDGE OF THE GODS

Frederic Balch

The Bridge of the Gods

Balch F.

The Bridge of the Gods / F. Balch — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

Frederic Homer Balch
The Bridge of the Gods / A Romance of Indian Oregon. 19th Edition

PREFACE

In attempting to present with romantic setting a truthful and realistic picture of the powerful and picturesque Indian tribes that inhabited the Oregon country two centuries ago, the author could not be indifferent to the many serious difficulties inseparable from such an enterprise. Of the literary success with which his work has been accomplished, he must of course leave others to judge; but he may without immodesty speak briefly of his preparation for his task, and of the foundation of some of the facts and legends which form the framework of his story. Indian life and character have long been a favorite study with him, and in these pages he has attempted to describe them, not from an ideal standpoint, but as he knew them in his own boyhood on the Upper Columbia. Many of the incidents related in the story have come under his personal observation; others have been told him by aged pioneers, or gleaned from old books of Northwestern travel. The every-day life of the Indians, their food, their dress, their methods of making their mats, of building their houses, of shaping their canoes, their gambling games, their religious beliefs, their legends, their subjects of conversation, the sports and pastimes of their children, – all these have been studied at first hand, and with the advantages of familiar and friendly intercourse with these people in their own homes. By constant questioning, many facts have been gained regarding their ancestry, and the fragments of history, tradition, and legend that have come down from them. Indian antiquities have been studied through every available source of information. All the antiquarian collections in Oregon and California have been consulted, old trading-posts visited, and old pioneers and early missionaries conversed with. Nothing has been discarded as trivial or insignificant that could aid in the slightest degree in affording an insight into Indian character and customs of a by-gone age.

As to the great Confederacy of the Wauna, it may be said that Gray's "History of Oregon" tells us of an alliance of several tribes on the Upper Columbia for mutual protection and defence; and students of Northwestern history will recall the great confederacy that the Yakima war-chief Kamyakin formed against the whites in the war of 1856, when the Indian tribes were in revolt from the British Possessions to the California line. Signal-fires announcing war against the whites leaped from hill to hill, flashing out in the night, till the line of fire beginning at the wild Okanogan ended a thousand miles south, on the foot-hills of Mount Shasta. Knowing such a confederacy as this to be an historical fact, there seems nothing improbable in that part of the legend which tells us that in ancient times the Indian tribes on either side of the Cascade Range united under the great war-chief Multnomah against their hereditary foes the Shoshones. Even this would not be so extensive a confederacy as that which Kamyakin formed a hundred and fifty years later.

It may be asked if there was ever a great natural bridge over the Columbia, – a "Bridge of the Gods," such as the legend describes. The answer is emphatically, "Yes." Everywhere along the mid-Columbia the Indians tell of a great bridge that once spanned the river where the cascades now are, but where at that time the placid current flowed under an arch of stone; that this bridge was *tomanowos*, built by the gods; that the Great Spirit shook the earth, and the bridge crashed down into the river, forming the present obstruction of the cascades. All of the Columbian tribes tell this story, in different versions and in different dialects, but all agreeing upon its essential features as one of the great facts of their past history.

"*Ancutta* (long time back)," say the Tumwater Indians, "the salmon he no pass Tumwater falls. It too much big leap. Snake Indian he no catch um fish above falls. By and by great *tomanowos* bridge at cascades he fall in, dam up water, make river higher all way up to Tumwater; then salmon he get over. Then Snake Indian all time catch um plenty."

"My father talk one time," said an old Klickitat to a pioneer at White Salmon, Washington; "long time ago liddle boy, him in canoe, his mother paddle, paddle up Columbia, then come to *tomanowos* bridge. Squaw paddle canoe under; all dark under bridge. He look up, all like one big roof, shut out sky, no see um sun. Indian afraid, paddle quick, get past soon, no good. Liddle boy no forget how bridge look."

Local proof also is not wanting. In the fall, when the freshets are over and the waters of the Columbia are clear, one going out in a small boat just above the cascades and looking down into the transparent depths can see submerged forest trees beneath him, still standing upright as they stood before the bridge fell in and the river was raised above them. It is a strange, weird sight, this forest beneath the river; the waters wash over the broken tree-tops, fish swim among the leafless branches: it is desolate, spectre-like, beyond all words. Scientific men who have examined the field with a view to determining the credibility of the legend about the bridge are convinced that it is essentially true. Believed in by many tribes, attested by the appearance of the locality, and confirmed by geological investigation, it is surely entitled to be received as a historic fact.

The shipwreck of an Oriental vessel on the Oregon coast, which furnishes one of the most romantic elements in our story, is an altogether probable historic incident, as explained more fully in a foot-note on page 75.

The spelling of Indian names, in which authorities differ so widely, has been made as accurate as possible; and, as in the name "Wallulah," the oldest and most Indian-like form has been chosen. An exception has been made in the case of the modernized and corrupted "Willamette," which is used instead of the original Indian name, "Wallamet." But the meaningless "Willamette" has unfortunately passed into such general use that one is almost compelled to accept it. Another verbal irregularity should be noticed: Wauna, the name given by all the Indians in the story to the Columbia, was only the Klickitat name for it. The Indians had no general name for the Columbia, but each tribe had a special name, if any, for it. Some had no name for it at all. It was simply "the big water," "*the* river," "the big salmon water." What Wauna, the Klickitat name, or Wemath, the Wasco name, signifies, the author has been unable to learn, even from the Indians who gave him the names. They do not know; they say their fathers knew, but it is forgotten now.

A rich and splendid treasure of legend and lore has passed away with the old pioneers and the Indians of the earlier generation. All that may be found interesting in this or any other book on the Indians, compared to what has been lost, is like "a torn leaf from some old romance."

F. H. B.

Oakland, California,
September, 1890.

What tall and tawny men were these,
As sombre, silent, as the trees
They moved among! and sad some way
With tempered sadness, ever they,
Yet not with sorrow born of fear,
The shadows of their destinies
They saw approaching year by year,
And murmured not.

...

They turned to death as to a sleep,
And died with eager hands held out
To reaching hands beyond the deep;
And died with choicest bow at hand,
And quiver full and arrow drawn
For use, when sweet to-morrow's dawn
Should wake them in the Spirit Land.

Joaquin Miller.

BOOK I
THE APOSTLE TO THE INDIANS

CHAPTER I
THE NEW ENGLAND MEETING

Such as sit in darkness and the shadow of death. —*Bible*

One Sabbath morning more than two hundred years ago, the dawn broke clear and beautiful over New England. It was one of those lovely mornings that seem like a benediction, a smile of God upon the earth, so calm are they, so full of unutterable rest and quiet. Over the sea, with its endless line of beach and promontory washed softly by the ocean swells; over the towns of the coast, – Boston and Salem, – already large, giving splendid promise of the future; over the farms and hamlets of the interior, and into the rude clearings where the outer limits of civilization mingled with the primeval forest, came a flood of light as the sun rose above the blue line of eastern sea. And still beyond, across the Alleghanies, into the depth of the wilderness, passed the sweet, calm radiance, as if bearing a gleam of gospel sunshine to the Indians of the forest.

Nowhere did the Sunday seem more peaceful than in a sheltered valley in Massachusetts. Beautiful indeed were the thrifty orchards, the rustic farmhouses, the meadows where the charred stumps that marked the last clearing were festooned with running vines, the fields green with Indian corn, and around all the sweep of hills dark with the ancient wood. Even the grim unpainted meeting-house on the hill, which was wont to look the very personification of the rigid Calvinistic theology preached within it, seemed a little less bare and forbidding on that sweet June Sabbath.

As the hour for morning service drew near, the drummer took his accustomed stand before the church and began to thunder forth his summons, – a summons not unfitting those stern Puritans whose idea of religion was that of a life-long warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Soon the people began to gather, – grave men and women, dressed in the sober-colored garb of the day, and little children, clad in their “Sunday best,” undergoing the awful process of “going to meeting,” yet some of them, at least, looking at the cool shadowed wood as they passed, and thinking how pleasant it would be to hunt berries or birds’ nests in those sylvan retreats instead of listening to a two hours’ sermon, under imminent danger of perdition if they went to sleep, – for in such seductive guise did the Evil One tempt the souls of these youthful Puritans. Solemn of visage and garb were the groups, although here and there the gleam of a bit of ribbon at the throat of some young maiden, or a bonnet tastefully adorned, showed that “the world, the flesh, and the devil” were not yet wholly subdued among them.

As the audience filed through the open door, the men and women divided, the former taking one side of the house, the latter the other, – the aisle forming a dividing line between them. The floor was uncarpeted, the walls bare, the pulpit undraped, and upon it the hour-glass stood beside the open Bible. Anything more stiff and barren than the interior of the meeting-house it would be difficult to find.

An unwonted stir breaks the silence and solemnity of the waiting congregation, as an official party enters. It is the Governor of the colony and his staff, who are making a tour of the province, and have stopped over Sunday in the little frontier settlement, – for although the Governor is an august man, even he may not presume to travel on the Sabbath in this land of the Puritans. The new-comers

are richly dressed. There is something heavy, massive, and splendid in their garb, especially in the Governor's. He is a stately military-looking man, and wears his ample vestments, his embroidered gloves, his lace and ruffles, with a magisterial air.

A rustle goes through the audience as the distinguished visitors pass up the aisle to the front seats assigned, as the custom was, to dignitaries. Young people steal curious glances at them; children turn around in their seats to stare, provoking divers shakes of the head from their elders, and in one instance the boxing of an ear, at which the culprit sets up a smothered howl, is ignominiously shaken, and sits swelling and choking with indignant grief during the remainder of the service.

At length the drum ceased, indicating both the arrival of the minister and the time for service to begin.

The minister took his place in the pulpit. He was a young man, of delicate mould, with a pale and intellectual face. Exquisite sensitiveness was in the large gray eyes, the white brow, the delicate lips, the long slender fingers; yet will and energy and command were in them all. His was that rare union of extreme sensibility with strong resolution that has given the world its religious leaders, – its Savonarolas and Chrysostoms; men whose nerves shrank at a discord in music, but when inspired by some grand cause, were like steel to suffer and endure.

Something of this was in the minister's aspect, as he stood before the people that morning. His eyes shone and dilated, and his slight figure gathered dignity as his gaze met that of the assembly. There was no organ, that instrument being deemed a device of the Prince of Darkness to lead the hearts of the unwary off to popery; but the opening hymn was heartily sung. Then came the Scripture reading, – usually a very monotonous performance on the part of Puritan divines; but as given in the young minister's thoughtfully modulated voice, nothing could have been more expressive. Every word had its meaning, every metaphor was a picture; the whole psalm seemed to breathe with life and power: "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations."

Majestic, mournful, yet thrilling with deathless hope, was the minister's voice; and the people were deeply moved. The prayer followed, – not the endless monologue of the average Puritan clergyman, but pointed, significant, full of meaning. Again his face was lifted before them as he rose to announce the text. It was paler now; the eyes were glowing and luminous; the long, expressive fingers were tremulous with excitement. It was evident to all that no common subject was to be introduced, no common effort to be made. Always composed, the audience grew more quiet still. The very children felt the hush of expectation, and gazed wonderingly at the minister. Even that great man, the Governor, lost his air of unbending grandeur, and leaned expectantly forward.

The subject was Paul's vision of the man in Macedonia crying for help. The speaker portrayed in burning words the condition of Macedonia, the heathen gloom and utter hopelessness of her people, the vision that came to Paul, and his going to preach to them. Then, passing to England under the Druids, he described the dark paganism, the blood-stained altars, the brutal priesthood of the age; and told of the cry that went forth for light, – a cry that touched the heart of the Roman Gregory into sending missionaries to show them the better way.

Like some royal poem was the discourse, as it showed how, through the storms and perils of more than a thousand years, amid the persecution of popes, the wars of barons, and the tyranny of kings, England had kept the torch burning, till in these latter times it had filled the world with light. Beautiful was the tribute he paid to the more recent defenders of the faith, and most intense the interest of the listeners; for men sat there who had come over the seas because of their loyalty to the faith, – old and grizzled men, whose youth had known Cromwell and Charles Stuart, and who had in more recent years fought for "King Monmouth" and shared the dark fortunes of Argyle.

The old Governor was roused like a veteran war-horse at the sound of the trumpet; many faces were flushed with martial ardor. The young minister paused reflectively at the enthusiasm he had kindled. A sorrowful smile flitted around his lips, though the glow of inspiration was still burning in his eyes. Would they be as enthusiastic when he made the application of his discourse?

And yet England, yea, even New England, was false, disloyal. She had but half kept the faith. When the cry of pagan England had gone forth for light, it had been heard; the light had been given. But now in her day of illumination, when the Macedonian cry came to her, she closed her ears and listened not. On her skirts was the blood of the souls of men; and at the last day the wail of the heathen as they went down into the gulf of flame would bear witness against her.

Grave and impassioned, with an undertone of warning and sorrow, rang the voice of the minister, and the hearts of the people were shaken as though a prophet were speaking.

"Out from the forests around us come the cry of heathen folk, and ye will not listen. Ye have the light, and they perish in darkness and go down to the pit. Generation after generation has grown up here in forest and mountain, and has lived and died without God and without hope. Generation has followed generation, stumbling blindly downward to the dust like the brutes that perish. And now their children, bound in iron and sitting under the shadow of death, reach out their hands from the wilderness with a blind cry to you for help. Will ye hear?"

He lifted his hands to them as he spoke; there was infinite pathos in his voice; for a moment it seemed as if all the wild people of the wilderness were pleading through him for light. Tears were in many eyes; yet in spite of the wonderful power of his oratory, there were faces that grew stern as he spoke, – for only a few years had passed since the Pequod war, and the feeling against the Indians was bitter. The Governor now sat erect and indignant.

Strong and vehement was the minister's plea for missionaries to be sent to the Indians; fearlessly was the colonial government arraigned for its deficiencies in this regard; and the sands in the hour-glass were almost run out when the sermon was concluded and the minister sank flushed and exhausted into his seat.

The closing psalm was sung, and the audience was dismissed. Slow and lingering were the words of the benediction, as if the preacher were conscious of defeat and longed to plead still further with his people. Then the gathering broke up, the congregation filing out with the same solemnity that had marked the entrance. But when the open air was reached, the pent-up excitement burst forth in a general murmur of comment.

"A good man," remarked the Governor to his staff, "but young, quite young." And they smiled approvingly at the grim irony of the tone.

"Our pastor is a fine speaker," said another, "but why will he bring such unpleasant things into the pulpit? A good doctrinal sermon, now, would have strengthened our faith and edified us all."

"Ay, a sermon on the errors of Episcopacy, for instance."

"Such talk makes me angry," growled a third. "Missionaries for the Indians! when the bones of the good folk they have killed are yet bleaching amid the ashes of their cabins! Missionaries for those red demons! an' had it been powder and shot for them it had been a righteous sermon."

So the murmur of disapprobation went on among those slowly dispersing groups who dreaded and hated the Indian with an intensity such as we now can hardly realize. And among them came the minister, pale and downcast, realizing that he had dashed himself in vain against the stern prejudice of his people and his age.

CHAPTER II
THE MINISTER'S HOME

Sore have I panted at the sun's decline,
To pass with him into the crimson West,
And see the peoples of the evening.

Edwin Arnold.

The Reverend Cecil Grey, – for such was our young minister's name, – proceeded immediately after the service to his home. Before we cross its threshold with him, let us pause for a moment to look back over his past life.

Born in New England, he first received from his father, who was a fine scholar, a careful home training, and was then sent to England to complete his education. At Magdalen College, Oxford, he spent six years. Time passed very happily with him in the quiet cloisters of that most beautiful of English colleges, with its memories of Pole and Rupert, and the more courtly traditions of the state that Richard and Edward had held there. But when, in 1687, James II. attempted to trample on the privileges of the Fellows and force upon them a popish president, Cecil was one of those who made the famous protest against it; and when protests availed nothing, he left Oxford, as also did a number of others. Returning to America, he was appointed pastor of a New England church, becoming one of the many who carried the flower of scholarship and eloquence into the bleak wilds of the New World.

Restless, sensitive, ardent, he was a man to whom a settled pastorate was impossible. Daring enterprises, great undertakings of a religious nature yet full of peril, were the things for which he was naturally fitted; and amid the monotonous routine of parish duties he longed for a greater activity. Two centuries later he might have become distinguished as a revivalist or as a champion of new and startling views of theology; earlier, he might have been a reformer, a follower of Luther or Loyola; as it was, he was out of his sphere.

But for a time the Reverend Mr. Grey tried hard to mould himself to his new work. He went with anxious fidelity through all the labors of the country pastorate. He visited and prayed with the sick, he read the Bible to the old and dim-sighted, he tried to reconcile petty quarrels, he wrestled with his own discontent, and strove hard to grind down all the aspirations of his nature and shut out the larger horizon of life.

And for a time he was successful; but during it he was induced to take a very fatal step. He was young, handsome, a clergyman, and unmarried. Now a young unmarried minister is pre-eminently one of sorrows and acquainted with grief. For that large body of well-meaning people who are by nature incapacitated from attending to their own business take him in hand without mercy. Innumerable are the ways in which he is informed that he ought to be married. Subtle and past finding out are the plots laid by all the old ladies and match-makers of his church to promote that desired event. He is told that he can never succeed in the ministry till he is married. The praises of Matilda Jane Tompkins or Lucinda Brown are sounded in his ears till he almost wishes that both were in a better world, – a world more worthy their virtues. At length, wearily capitulating, he marries some wooden-faced or angular saint, and is unhappy for life.

Now there was in Mr. Grey's church a good, gentle girl, narrow but not wooden-faced, famous for her neatness and her housekeeping abilities, who was supposed to be the pattern for a minister's wife. In time gone by she had set her heart on a graceless sailor lad who was drowned at sea, much to the relief of her parents. Ruth Anderson had mourned for him quietly, shutting up her sorrow in her own breast and going about her work as before; for hers was one of those subdued, practical natures that seek relief from trouble in hard work.

She seemed in the judgment of all the old women in the church the "very one" for Mr. Grey; and it likewise seemed that Mr. Grey was the "very one" for her. So divers hints were dropped and divers things were said, until each began to wonder if marriage were not a duty. The Reverend Cecil Grey began to take unusual pains with his toilet, and wended his way up the hill to Mr. Anderson's with very much the aspect of a man who is going to be hanged. And his attempts at conversation with the maiden were not at all what might have been expected from the young minister whose graceful presence and fluent eloquence had been the boast of Magdalen. On her part the embarrassment was equally great. At length they were married, – a marriage based on a false idea of duty on each side. But no idea of duty, however strong or however false, could blind the eyes of this married pair to the terrible fact that not only love but mental sympathy was wanting. Day by day Cecil felt that his wife did not love him, that her thoughts were not for him, that it was an effort for her to act the part of a wife toward him. Day by day she felt that his interests lay beyond her reach, and that all the tenderness in his manner toward her came from a sense of duty, not from love.

But she strove in all ways to be a faithful wife, and he tried hard to be a kind and devoted husband. He had been especially attentive to her of late, for her health had been failing, and the old doctor had shaken his head very gravely over her. For a week or more she had grown steadily worse, and was now unable even to walk without help. Her malady was one of those that sap away the life with a swift and deadly power against which all human skill seems unavailing.

Mr. Grey on returning from church entered the living room. The invalid sat at the window, a heavy shawl wrapped about her, her pale face turned to the far blue line of sea, visible through a gap in the hills. A pang wrenched his heart keenly at the sight. Why *would* she always sit at that window looking so sorrowfully, so abstractedly at the sea, as if her heart was buried there with her dead lover?

She started as she heard his footstep, and turned her head quickly toward him, a faint flush tinging her cheek and a forced smile quivering around her lips. Her greeting was very gentle, and he saw that her heart was reproaching her for being so disloyal to him as to think of her lost lover; and yet he felt her fingers tremble and shrink away from his as he took her hand.

"God forgive me!" he thought, with infinite self-accusation. "How repugnant I must be to her, – an intruder, thrusting myself into the heart that is sacred to the dead."

But he let her see nothing of this in his voice or manner as he inquired how she had been. She replied wearily that she was no better, that she longed to get well again and be at work.

"I missed your sermon to-day," she said, with that strained, pathetic smile upon her lips again. "You must tell me about it now."

He drew his chair to her side and began to give an outline of the sermon. She listened, but it was with forced attention, without sympathy, without in the least entering into the spirit of what he was saying. It pained him. He knew that her nature was so narrow, so conventional, that it was impossible for her to comprehend his grand scheme of Indian evangelization. But he checked his impatience, and gave her a full synopsis of the discourse.

"It is useless, useless. They cannot understand. A whole race is perishing around them, and they will not put forth a hand save to mistreat a Quaker or throw a stone at a Churchman. Our Puritanism is like iron to resist tyranny, – but alas! it is like iron, too, when one tries to bend it to some generous undertaking."

He stopped, checking back other and more bitter words. All his soul rose up in revolt against the prejudice by which he was surrounded. Then Ruth spoke timidly.

"Seeing that it is so, would it not be best to let this missionary subject go, and preach on practical every-day matters? I am not wise in these things, I know; but would it not be better to preach on common subjects, showing us how we ought to live from day to day, than to discourse of those larger things that the people do not understand?"

His face darkened, though not angrily. This was the same prejudice he had just encountered in the meeting-house, though in a different form. He arose and paced back and forth with quick, impatient steps. Then he came and stood before her with folded arms and resolute face.

"Ruth, I have tried that so often, tried it with prayers and tears, but it is utterly impossible. I cannot bring myself to it. You know what the physicians say of my disease of the heart, – that my life may be very short; and I want it to be noble. I want to live for the greatest possibilities within my reach. I want to set some great work in motion that will light up thousands of darkened lives, – yea, and grow in might and power even after my lips are sealed in death."

The little figure on the chair moved uneasily under his animated though kindly gaze.

"I do not quite comprehend you. I think the best work is to do what God gives us to do, and to do it well. To me he has given to labor in caring for the house," – there was a patient weariness in her tone that did not escape Cecil, – "to you he has given the duties of a pastor, to strengthen the weak, cheer the sorrowing, comfort the old. Is it not better to do those things faithfully than to spend our time longing for some more ideal work not given us?"

"But suppose the ideal work is given? Suppose a man is called to proclaim new truths, and be the leader in a new reform? For him the quiet pastorate is impossible; nay, were it possible, it would be wrong, for would he not be keeping back the message God had given him? He would be one called to a work, yet entering not upon it; and upon him would come the curse that fell on the unfaithful prophets of old."

All the gloom of the theology of his age was on him as he spoke. Refined and poetic as was his nature, it was thoroughly imbued with the Calvinism of early New England.

She lifted her hand wearily and passed it over her aching brow.

"I do not know," she said; "I have never thought of such things, only it seems to me that God knew best when he gave us our lots in life. Surely wherever we find ourselves, there he intended us to be, and there we should patiently work, leaving our higher aspirations to his will. Is not the ideal life, after all, the one that is kindest and humblest?"

"But, Ruth," replied the minister, sadly, "while the work you describe is certainly noble, I have yet felt for a long time that it is not what God calls me to. Day after day, night after night, I think of the wild races that roam the forests to the west, of which no man knows the end. Sometimes I think that I am called to stand before the rulers of the colony and plead that missionaries be sent to the Indians. Sometimes I feel that I am called to go and preach to them myself. Often in my dreams I plead with dark-browed sachems or with mighty gatherings of warriors to cast away their blood-stained weapons and accept Christ, till I awake all trembling with the effort. And always the deadly pain at my heart warns me that what is done must be done quickly."

The burning ardor that had given such intensity to his sermon came into his voice as he spoke. The invalid moved nervously on her chair, and he saw that his enthusiasm merely jarred on her without awakening any response.

"Forgive me," he said hurriedly, "I forgot that you were not well enough to talk of those things. Sometime when you are better we will speak of them again."

And then he talked of other and to her more interesting topics, while a keen pang rankled in his breast to find her irresponsive to that which was so dear to him.

But he was very kind to her; and when after a while the old Indian woman, Cecil's nurse in childhood and their only servant now, came to tell him that dinner was ready, he would not go until he had first brought his wife her dinner and waited on her with his own hands.

After his own repast was finished he must hasten away to preach his afternoon sermon. But he came to her first and bent over her; for though love never had been, perhaps never could be, between them, there was a deep domestic feeling in his nature.

"How good and patient you are in your sickness," he said, gazing down into the quiet, wistful face that was so honest and true, yet so thoroughly prosaic and commonplace. "What a sermon you have been preaching me, sitting here so uncomplainingly."

"Do you think so?" she said, looking up gratefully. "I am glad. I so want to do my duty by you."

He had meant to kiss her as he bent over her, though such caresses were rare between them, but there was something in her tones that chilled him, and he merely raised a tress of her hair to his lips instead. At the door he bade her a pleasant farewell, but his countenance grew sorrowful as he went down the path.

"Duty," he murmured, "always duty, never love. Well, the fault is my own that we were ever married. God help me to be true and kind to her always. She shall never know that I miss anything in her."

And he preached to his congregation that afternoon a sermon on burden-bearing, showing how each should bear his own burden patiently, – not darkening the lives of others by complaint, but always saying loving words, no matter how much of heartache lay beneath them. He told how near God is to us all, ready to heal and to strengthen; and closed by showing how sweet and beautiful even a common life may grow through brave and self-sacrificing endurance of trouble.

It was a helpful sermon, a sermon that brought the listeners nearer God. More than one heart was touched by those earnest words that seemed to breathe divine sympathy and compassion.

He went home feeling more at peace than he had done for many days. His wife's room was still, as he entered it. She was in her easy-chair at the window, lying back among the pillows asleep. Her face was flushed and feverish, her long lashes wet with tears. The wraps had fallen away from her, and he stooped over to replace them. As he did so her lips moved in her half-delirious slumber, and she murmured some name sounding like his own. A wild throb of joy thrilled through him, and he bent closer to listen. Again she spoke the name, spoke it sorrowfully, longingly. It was the name of her lover drowned at sea.

The long, nervous fingers that held the half-drawn wraps shook convulsively as with acutest pain, then drew the coverings gently around her.

"God help her, God help her!" he murmured, as he turned softly away, his eyes filling with tears, – tears for her sorrow rather than his own.

CHAPTER III
A DARKENED FIRESIDE

… Her way is parted from my way;
Out of sight, beyond light, at what goal may we meet?

Dante Rossetti.

Ruth was much worse in the evening, but at last, after Cecil had watched at her side till a late hour, she sank into a troubled sleep. Then the old Indian servant insisted on taking his place at the sufferer's bedside, for she saw that he was much worn by the labors of the day and by anxiety for his wife. At first he refused; but she was a skilled nurse, and he knew that the invalid would fare better in her hands than his own, so at last he consented on condition that she would call him if his wife grew worse. The woman promised, and he withdrew into the library, where a temporary bed had been made for him. At the door he turned and looked back.

His wife lay with closed eyes and flushed face amid the white pillows. The robe over her breast stirred with her difficult breathing, and her head turned now and then from side to side while she uttered broken, feverish words. By her sat the swarthy nurse, watching her every movement and ready with observant eye and gentle touch to minister to all her needs.

A yearning tenderness and pity came into his gaze. "Poor child, poor child!" he thought. "If I could only make her well and happy! If I could only bring her dead lover back to life, how gladly would I put her in his arms and go away forever!" And it seemed to him in some dim way that he had wronged the poor sufferer; that he was to blame for her sorrow.

He went on into the library. A lamp was burning on the table; a Hebrew Bible and a copy of Homer lay beside it. Along the walls were arranged those heavy and ponderous tomes in which the theology of the age was wont to clothe itself.

He seated himself at the table and took up his Homer; for he was too agitated to sleep. But it was in vain that he tried to interest himself in it. The rhythm had lost its music, the thought its power; it was in vain that he tried to forget himself in the reply of Achilles, or the struggle over the body of Patroclus.

Hawthorne tells us that a person of artistic temperament may at a time of mental depression wander through the Roman galleries and see nothing in the finest masterpieces of Raphael or Angelo. The grace is gone from the picture, the inspiration from the marble; the one is a meaningless collection of colors, the other a dull effigy carved in stone.

Something of this mood was on Cecil to-night. Irresponsive to the grand beauty of the poem he felt only its undertone of heartache and woe.

"It is like human life," he thought, as he listlessly turned the pages; "it is bright on the surface, but dark and terrible with pain below. What a black mystery is life! what bitter irony of justice! Hector is dragged at Achilles' chariot-wheel, and Paris goes free. Helen returns to her home in triumph, while Andromache is left desolate. Did Homer write in satire, and is the Iliad but a splendid mockery of justice, human and divine? Or is life so sad that every tale woven of it must needs become a tragedy?"

He pondered the gloomy puzzle of human existence long that night. At length his brain grew over-weary, and he slept sitting in his chair, his head resting on the pages of the open book.

How long he slept he knew not, but he awoke with a start to find a hand laid on his shoulder and the tall figure of the Indian woman standing beside him. He sprang up in sudden fear.

"Is she worse?" he cried. But the woman, with that light noiseless step, that mute stolidity so characteristic of her race, had already glided to the door; and there was no need for her to answer, for already his own apprehensions had replied.

He was in the room almost as soon as she. His wife was much worse; and hastening through the night to a neighboring farmhouse, he roused its inmates, despatched a messenger for the physician, and returned, accompanied by several members of the neighbor's family.

The slow moments dragged away like years as they watched around her. It seemed as if the doctor would never come. To the end of his life Cecil never forgot the long-drawn agony of that night.

At length their strained hearing caught the quick tread of horses' hoofs on the turf without.

"The doctor, the doctor!" came simultaneously from the lips of Cecil and the watchers. The doctor, – there was hope in the very name.

How eagerly they watched his face as he bent over the patient! It was a calm, self-contained face, but they saw a shadow flit over it, a sudden almost imperceptible change of expression that said "Death" as plainly as if he had spoken it. They could do nothing, he said, – nothing but wait for the end to come.

How the moments lingered! Sometimes Cecil bent over the sufferer with every muscle quivering to her paroxysms; sometimes he could endure it no longer and went out into the cool night air or into the library, where with the mere mechanical instinct of a student he picked up a book, reading a few lines in it, then throwing it aside. Yet wherever he was he felt her sufferings as acutely as when standing by her side. His whole frame was in keenest sympathy with hers, his whole being full of pain. So sharp were his sensations that they imparted an abnormal vigor to his mind. Every line his eyes met in reading stood out on the page with wonderful distinctness. The words seemed pictorial, and his mind grasped abstruse propositions or involved expressions with marvellous facility.

He noted it, and remembered afterward that he thought at the time how curious it was that his tortured sympathies should give him such startling acuteness of perception.

The slow night waned, the slow dawn crept over the eastern hills. Cecil stood with haggard eyes at the foot of the bed, watching the sleeper's face. As the daylight brightened, blending with the light of the still burning lamps, he saw a change come over her countenance; the set face relaxed, the look lost its wildness. A great hope shone in his hollow eyes.

"She is getting better, she is coming out of her sufferings," he whispered to the doctor.

"She will be out of her sufferings very soon," he replied sadly; and then Cecil knew that the end was at hand. Was it because the peace, the profound serenity which sometimes is the prelude of death, filling her being, penetrated his, that he grew so strangely calm? An inexpressible solemnity came to him as he looked at her, and all his agitation left him.

Her face grew very sweet and calm, and full of peace. Her eyes met Cecil's, and there was in them something that seemed to thank him for all his goodness and patience, – something that was both benediction and farewell. Her lips moved, but she was past the power of speech, and only her eyes thanked him in a tender, grateful glance.

The sun's edge flashed above the horizon, and its first rays fell through the uncurtained window full upon her face. She turned toward them, smiling faintly, and her face grew tenderly, radiantly beautiful, as if on that beam of sunshine the spirit of her dead lover had come to greet her from the sea. Then the sparkle died out of her eyes and the smile faded from her lips. It was only a white, dead face that lay there bathed in golden light.

A moment after, Cecil left the house with swift footsteps and plunged into the adjacent wood. There under a spreading oak he flung himself prone upon the earth, and buried his face in his hands. A seething turmoil of thoughts swept his mind. The past rose before him like a panorama. All his married life rushed back upon him, and every memory was regret and accusation.

"I might have been kinder to her, I might have been better," he murmured, while the hot tears gushed from his eyes. "I might have been so much better to her," he repeated over and over, – he, whose whole thought had been to shut up his sorrow in his own heart and show her only tenderness and consideration.

By and by he grew calmer and sat up, leaning against the tree and looking out into vacancy with dim eyes that saw nothing. His heart was desolate, emptied of everything. What was he to do? What was he to set before himself? He had not loved her, but still she had been a part of his life; with what was he to fill it now?

As he sat there depressed and troubled, a strange thing happened.

He was looking, as has been said, blindly into vacancy. It may have been an optical illusion, it may have been a mere vagary born of an over-wrought brain; but a picture formed before him. In the distance, toward the west, he saw something that looked like a great arch of stone, a natural bridge, rugged with crags and dark with pine. Beneath it swept a wide blue river, and on it wild horsemen were crossing and recrossing, with plumed hair and rude lances. Their faces were Indian, yet of a type different from any he had ever seen. The bridge was in the heart of a mighty mountain-range. On either side rose sharp and lofty peaks, their sides worn by the action of water in some remote age.

These details he noted as in a dream; then the strangeness of it all burst upon him. Even as it did so, the vision dissolved; the bridge wavered and passed away, the mountain-peaks sank in shadow. He leaped to his feet and gazed eagerly. A fine mist seemed passing before his sight; then he saw only the reach of hill and woodland, with the morning light resting upon it.

While the vision faded, he felt springing up within him an irrepressible desire to follow it. A mysterious fascination seized him, a wild desire to seek the phantom bridge. His whole being was swayed as by a supernatural power toward the west whence the vision had passed. He started forward eagerly, then checked himself in bewilderment. What could it mean?

In the nineteenth century, one similarly affected would think it meant a fevered, a disordered brain; but in the seventeenth, when statesmen like Cromwell believed in dreams and omens, and *roués* like Monmouth carried charms in their pockets, these things were differently regarded.

The Puritan ministry, whose minds were imbued with the gloomy supernaturalism of the Old Testament on which they fed, were especially men to whom anything resembling an apparition had a prophetic significance. And Cecil Grey, though liberal beyond most New England clergymen, was liable by the keenness of his susceptibilities and the extreme sensitiveness of his organization to be influenced by such delusions, – if delusions they be. So he stood awed and trembling, questioning within himself, like some seer to whom a dark and uncertain revelation has been made.

Suddenly the answer came.

"The Lord hath revealed his will unto me and shown me the path wherein I am to walk," he murmured in a hushed and stricken tone. "Ruth was taken from me that I might be free to go where he should send me. The vision of the Indians and the bridge which faded into the west, and the strange desire that was given me to follow it, show that the Lord has another work for me to do. And when I find the land of the bridge and of the wild people I saw upon it, then will I find the mission that God has given me to do. 'Lord God of Israel, I thank Thee. Thou hast shown me the way, and I will walk in it, though all its stones be fire and its end be death.'"

He stood a moment with bowed head, communing with his God. Then he returned to his lonely home.

The friends whose kindly sympathies had brought them to the house of mourning wondered at the erect carriage, the rapt, exalted manner of the man. His face was pale, almost as pale as that within the darkened room; but his eyes shone, and his lips were closely, resolutely set.

A little while, and that determined face was all sorrowful and pitying again, as he bent over the still, cold body of his dead.

CHAPTER IV
THE COUNCIL OF ORDINATION

Friends were assembled together; the Elder and Magistrate also
Graced the scene with their presence, and stood like the Law and the Gospel…
After the Puritan way and the laudable custom of Holland.

The Courtship of Miles Standish.

A few days after the funeral, letters missive from the little society went out to all the neighboring churches, calling a council to ordain the Reverend Cecil Grey a missionary to the Indians.

It was a novel thing, in spite of the noble example that Roger Williams had set not many years before; and the summons met with a general response.

All the churches, far and near, sent delegates. If one could only have taken a peep, the day before the council, into the households of that part of New England, what a glimpse he would have gotten of Puritan domestic life! What a brushing up there was of black coats, what a careful starching and ironing of bands; and above all, in Cecil's own neighborhood, what a mighty cookery for the ordination dinner the next day! For verily the capacity of the clerical stomach is marvellous, and is in fact the one thing in theology that does not change. New departures alter doctrines, creeds are modified, but the appetite of the clergy is not subject to such mutations.

The morrow came, and with it the expected guests. The meeting house was crowded. There were many ministers and lay delegates in the council. In the chair sat a venerable preacher, not unknown in the records of those days, – a portly man, with a shrewd and kindly face. Sterner faces were there also. The council wore a grave aspect, more like a court of judges before whom a criminal is cited to appear than an assembly of clergymen about to ordain a missionary.

After some preliminaries, Cecil was called on to give a statement of his reasons for wishing to go as an evangelist to the Indians. He rose before them. There was a singular contrast between his slight form and expressive features and the stout frames and grim countenances of the others. But the graceful presence of the man had in it a quiet dignity that commanded the respect of all.

In obedience to the command, he told how he had thought of the unknown tribes beyond the Alleghanies, living in the gloom of paganism and perishing in darkness, till an intangible sympathy inclined him toward them, – till, as it seemed to him, their great desire for light had entered into and possessed him, drawing him toward them by a mysterious and irresistible attraction. He felt called of God to go and minister to their spiritual needs, and that it was his duty to leave everything and obey the call.

"Is this all?" he was asked.

He hesitated a moment, and then described his vision in the wood the morning of his wife's death. It made a deep impression on his hearers. There was scarcely a man in the assembly who was not tinged with the superstition of the age; and all listened, not lightly or sceptically, but in awe, as if it brought them to the threshold of the supernatural.

When the narration was ended, the chairman requested him to retire, pending the decision of the council; but first he was asked, —

"Are you willing to abide by the decision of this council, whatever it may be?"

He raised his head confidently, and his reply came frank and fearless.

"I shall respect the opinions of my brethren, no matter how they may decide; but I shall abide by the will of God and my own convictions of duty."

The grave Puritan bent his head, half in acknowledgment of the reply, half in involuntary admiration of its brave manhood; then Cecil left the room, the silent, watchful crowd that filled the aisles parting respectfully to let him pass.

"Now, brethren," said the chairman, "the matter is before you. Let us hear from each his judgment upon it."

Solemn and weighty were the opinions delivered. One brother thought that Mr. Grey had plenty of work to do at home without going off on a wild-goose chase after the heathen folk of the wilderness. His church needed him; to leave it thus would be a shameful neglect of duty.

Another thought that the Indians were descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel, and as such should be left in the hands of God. To attempt to evangelize them was to fly in the face of Providence.

Another thought the same; but then, how about that vision of Mr. Grey? He couldn't get around that vision.

"I don't know, brethren, I don't know!" he concluded, shaking his head.

Still another declared positively for Mr. Grey. The good people of the colonies owed it to the savages to do something for their religious enlightenment. It was wrong that so little had been done. They had taken their land from them, they had pushed them back into the wilds at the point of the sword; now let them try to save their souls. This man had been plainly called of God to be an apostle to the Indians; the least that they could do was to bid him Godspeed and let him go.

So it went on. At length the venerable chairman, who had twice turned the hour-glass upon the table before him, rose to close the discussion. His speech was a singular mixture of shrewdness, benevolence, and superstition.

He said that, as Christians, they certainly owed a duty to the Indians, – a duty that had not been performed. Mr. Grey wished to help fulfil that neglected obligation, and would go at his own expense. It would not cost the church a shilling. His vision was certainly a revelation of the will of the Lord, and *he* dared not stand in the way.

A vote was taken, and the majority were found to be in favor of ordination. The chairman pronounced himself pleased, and Mr. Grey was recalled and informed of the result.

"I thank you," he said simply, with a glad and grateful smile.

"Now, brethren," said the worthy chairman with much unction, "the hour of dinner is nigh at hand, and the good people of this place have prepared entertainment for us; so we will e'en put off the ceremony of ordination till the afternoon. Let us look to the Lord for his blessing, and be dismissed."

And so with a murmur of talk and comment the council broke up, its members going to the places where they were to be entertained. Happy was the man who returned to his home accompanied by a minister, while those not so fortunate were fain to be content with a lay delegate. Indeed, the hospitality of the settlement was so bounteous that the supply exceeded the demand. There were not enough visitors to go around; and more than one good housewife who had baked, boiled, and roasted all the day before was moved to righteous indignation at the sight of the good man of the house returning guestless from the meeting.

Early in the afternoon entertainers and entertained gathered again at the meeting-house. Almost the entire country side was there, – old and young alike. The house was packed, for never before had that part of New England seen a man ordained to carry the gospel to the Indians. It occurred, too, in that dreary interval between the persecution of the Quakers and the persecution of the witches, and was therefore doubly welcome.

When Cecil arrived, the throng made way reverently for him. Was he not going, perchance like the martyrs of old, to the fagot and the stake? To those who had long known him he seemed hardly like the same man. He was lifted to a higher plane, surrounded by an atmosphere of sanctity and heroism, and made sacred by the high mission given him of God, to which was now to be added the sanction of holy men.

So they made way for him, as the Florentines had made way for "il Frate" and as the people of God had made way for Francis Xavier when he left them to stir the heart of the East with his eloquence, and, alas! to die on the bleak sea-coast of China, clasping the crucifix to his breast and praying for those who had cast him out.

Cecil's face, though pale, was calm and noble. All his nature responded to the moral grandeur of the occasion. It would be difficult to put into words the reverent and tender exaltation of feeling that animated him that day. Perhaps only those upon whose own heads the hands of ordination have been laid can enter into or understand it.

The charge was earnest, but it was not needed, for Cecil's ardent enthusiasm went far beyond all that the speaker urged upon him. As he listened, pausing as it were on the threshold of an unknown future, he wondered if he should ever hear a sermon again, – he, so soon to be swallowed by darkness, swept, self-yielded, into the abyss of savagery.

Heartfelt and touching was the prayer of ordination, – that God might accept and bless Cecil's consecration, that the divine presence might always abide with him, that savage hearts might be touched and softened, that savage lives might be lighted up through his instrumentality, and that seed might be sown in the wilderness which would spring up and cause the waste places to be glad and the desert to blossom as the rose.

"And so," said the old minister, his voice faltering and his hands trembling as they rested on Cecil's bowed head, "so we give him into Thine own hand and send him forth into the wilderness. Thou only knowest what is before him, whether it be a harvest of souls, or torture and death. But we know that, for the Christian, persecutions and trials are but stepping-stones leading to God; yea, and that death itself is victory. And if he is faithful, we know that whatever his lot may be it will be glorious; that whatever the end may be, it will be but a door opening into the presence of the Most High."

Strong and triumphant rang the old man's tones, as he closed his prayer committing Cecil into the hands of God. To him, as he listened, it seemed as if the last tie that bound him to New England was severed, and he stood consecrated and anointed for his mission. When he raised his face, more than one of the onlookers thought of those words of the Book where it speaks of Stephen, – "And they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

A psalm was sung, the benediction given, and the solemn service was over. It was long, however, before the people left the house. They lingered around Cecil, bidding him farewell, for he was to go forth at dawn the next day upon his mission. They pressed his hand, some with warm words of sympathy, some silently and with wet eyes. Many affectionate words were said, for they had never known before how much they loved their pastor; and now he seemed no longer a pastor, but a martyr and a saint. More than one mother brought him her child to bless; – others strangers from a distance – lifted their children up, so that they could see him above the press, while they whispered to them that they must always remember that they had seen the good Mr. Grey, who was going far off into the west to tell the Indians about God.

Long afterward, when nearly all that generation had passed away and the storm of the Revolution was beginning to gather over the colonies, there were a few aged men still living who sometimes told how, when they were children, they had seen Cecil Grey bidding the people farewell at the old meeting-house; and through all the lapse of years they remembered what a wonderful brightness was on his face, and how sweet and kind were his words to each as he bade them good-by forever.

CHAPTER V
INTO TRACKLESS WILDS

"I will depart," he said, "the hour is come,
And in the silence of yon sky I read
My fated message flashing."

Edwin Arnold.

The next morning Cecil rose early after a sleepless night. On that day he was to go out from all that was sweet and precious in life and take the path into the wilderness. At first his heart sank within him; then his strength of purpose revived, and he was resolute again.

He must go, and soon. The briefer the parting the briefer the pang. He had already bidden his friends good-by; his parents were long since dead; it only remained to part from the old Indian woman, his nurse in childhood, now his faithful housekeeper and the only inmate of his home.

He went to the kitchen, – for usually at this hour she was up and preparing breakfast. She was not there, and the room looked cold and cheerless in the gray dawn. He went to her door and knocked; there was no response. He called her; the room was as still as death. Alarmed, he opened the door; no one was within; she was gone, – had evidently been gone all night, for the bed was untouched.

He was pained and bewildered at this desertion, for only the day before he had given her a paper legally drawn up, securing to her the little property he possessed and making her independent for the rest of her life. She had taken it, listened in silence to the kindly expressions that accompanied the gift, and turned away without a word. Now she was gone; what could it mean?

Slowly he made the simple preparations that were needed for the journey – putting a little food, his Bible, and other necessaries into a kind of knapsack and strapping it upon his back. Then taking his staff, he went out from his home, never to return.

The sun was rising, the air was fresh and dewy, but his heart was sad. Yet through it ran a strange thrill of joy, a strange blending of pain and gladness.

"The parting is bitter, bitter almost unto death, but He will keep me," murmured the white lips, as he went down the walk.

The sound of voices fell on his ears, and he looked up. At the gate, awaiting him, was a group of his parishioners, who had come to look once more on the face of their pastor. One by whose bedside he had prayed in the hour of sickness; another, whom his counsel had saved when direly tempted; a little lame child, who loved him for his kindness; and an aged, dim-sighted woman, to whom he had often read the Scriptures.

He opened the gate and came out among them.

"God bless you, sir," said the old woman, "we wanted to see your bonny face again before you left us."

The little lame boy said nothing, but came up to Cecil, took his hand, and pressed it to his cheek in a manner more eloquent than words.

"Friends," said Cecil, in a faltering voice, "I thank you. It is very sweet to know that you care for me thus."

One by one they came and clasped his hand in tearful farewell. For each he had a loving word. It was an impressive scene, – the sorrow-stricken group, the pastor with his pale spiritual face full of calm resolve, and around them the solemn hush of morning.

When all had been spoken, the minister reverently uncovered his head; the others did the same. "It is for the last time," he said; "let us pray."

After a few earnest words commending them to the care of God, he drew his hand gently from the lame boy's cheek and rested it on his head in silent benediction. Then giving them one last look of unutterable love, a look they never forgot, —

"Good-by," he said softly, "God bless you all."

"Good-by, God bless *you*, sir," came back in answer; and they saw his face no more.

One more farewell was yet to be said. The winding path led close by the country graveyard. He entered it and knelt by the side of the new-made grave. Upon the wooden headboard was inscribed the name of her who slept beneath, – "Ruth Grey."

He kissed the cold sod, his tears falling fast upon it.

"Forgive me," he whispered, as if the dull ear of death could hear. "Forgive me for everything wherein I failed you. Forgive me, and – Farewell."

Again he was on his way. At the entrance to the wood he saw a figure sitting on a rock beside the path. As he drew nearer he observed it was clad in Indian garb, and evidently awaited his coming. Who was it? Might it not be some chief, who, having heard of his intended mission, had come forth to meet him?

He hastened his steps. When he came nearer, he saw that it was only an Indian woman; a little closer, and to his inexpressible astonishment he recognized his old nurse.

"What does this mean?" he exclaimed. "What are you doing here, and in Indian garb, too?"

She rose to her feet with simple, natural dignity.

"It means," she said, "that I go with you. Was I not your nurse in childhood? Did I not carry you in my arms then, and has not your roof sheltered me since? Can I forsake him who is as my own child? My heart has twined around you too long to be torn away. Your path shall be my path; we go together."

It was in vain that Cecil protested, reasoned, argued.

"I have spoken," she said. "I will not turn back from my words while life is left me."

He would have pleaded longer, but she threw a light pack upon her back and went on into the forest. She had made her decision, and he knew she would adhere to it with the inflexible obstinacy of her race.

He could only follow her regretfully; and yet he could not but be grateful for her loyalty.

At the edge of the wood he paused and looked back. Before him lay the farms and orchards of the Puritans. Here and there a flock of sheep was being driven from the fold into the pasture, and a girl, bucket in hand, was taking her way to the milking shed. From each farmhouse a column of smoke rose into the clear air. Over all shone the glory of the morning sun. It was civilization; it was New England; it was *home*.

For a moment, the scene seemed literally to lay hold of him and pull him back. For a moment, all the domestic feelings, all the refinement in his nature, rose up in revolt against the rude contact with barbarism before him. It seemed as if he could not go on, as if he must go back. He shook like a leaf with the mighty conflict.

"My God!" he cried out, throwing up his arms with a despairing gesture, "must I give up everything, everything?"

He felt his resolution giving way; his gray eyes were dark and dilated with excitement and pain; his long fingers twitched and quivered; before he knew what he was doing, he was walking back toward the settlement.

That brought him to himself; that re-awakened the latent energy and decision of his character.

"What! shall I turn back from the very threshold of my work? God forgive me – never!"

His delicate frame grew strong and hardy under the power of his indomitable spirit. Again his dauntless enthusiasm came back; again he was the Apostle to the Indians.

One long last look, and he disappeared in the shadows of the wood, passing forever from the ken of the white man; for only vague rumors floated back to the colonies from those mysterious wilds into which he had plunged. The strange and wondrous tale of his after-life New England never knew.

BOOK II
THE OPENING OF THE DRAMA

CHAPTER I
SHALL THE GREAT COUNCIL BE HELD?

The comet burns the wings of night,
And dazzles elements and spheres;
Then dies in beauty and a blaze of light
Blown far through other years.

Joaquin Miller.

Two hundred years ago – as near as we can estimate the time from the dim and shadowy legends that have come down to us – the confederacy of the Wauna or Columbia was one of the most powerful the New World has ever seen. It was apparently not inferior to that of the Six Nations, or to the more transitory leagues with which Tecumseh or Pontiac stayed for a moment the onward march of the white man. It was a union of the Indian tribes of Oregon and Washington, with the Willamettes at the head, against their great hereditary enemies, the Nootkas, the Shoshones, and the Spokanes.

Sonorous and picturesque was the language of the old Oregon Indians in telling the first white traders the story of the great alliance.

"Once, long before my father's time and before his father's time, all the tribes were as one tribe and the Willamettes were *tyee* [chief]. The Willamettes were strong and none could stand against them. The heart of the Willamette was battle and his hand was blood. When he lifted his arm in war, his enemy's lodge became ashes and his council silence and death.

"The war-trails of the Willamette went north and south and east, and there was no grass on them. He called the Chinook and Sound Indians, who were weak, his children, and the Yakima, Cayuse, and Wasco, who loved war, his brothers; but *he* was elder brother. And the Spokanes and the Shoshones might fast and cut themselves with thorns and knives, and dance the medicine dance, and drink the blood of horses, but nothing could make their hearts as strong as the hearts of the Willamettes; for the One up in the sky had told the old men and the dreamers that the Willamettes should be the strongest of all the tribes as long as the Bridge of the Gods should stand. That was their *tomanowos*."

But whenever the white listener asked about this superstition of the bridge and the legend connected with it, the Indian would at once become uncommunicative, and say, "You can't understand," or more frequently, "I don't know." For the main difficulty in collecting these ancient tales – "old-man talk," as the Siwashes call them – was, that there was much superstition interwoven with them; and the Indians were so reticent about their religious beliefs, that if one was not exceedingly cautious, the lively, gesticulating talker of one moment was liable to become the personification of sullen obstinacy the next.

But if the listener was fortunate enough to strike the golden mean, being neither too anxious nor too indifferent, and if above all he had by the gift of bounteous *muck-a-muck* [food] touched the chord to which the savage heart always responds, the Indian might go on and tell in broken English or crude Chinook the strange, dark legend of the bridge, which is the subject of our tale.

At the time our story opens, this confederacy was at the height of its power. It was a rough-hewn, barbarian realm, the most heterogeneous, the most rudimentary of alliances. The exact manner

of its union, its laws, its extent, and its origin are all involved in the darkness which everywhere covers the history of Indian Oregon, – a darkness into which our legend casts but a ray of light that makes the shadows seem the denser. It gives us, however, a glimpse of the diverse and squalid tribes that made up the confederacy. This included the "Canoe Indians" of the Sound and of the Oregon sea-coast, whose flat heads, greasy squat bodies, and crooked legs were in marked contrast with their skill and dexterity in managing their canoes and fish-spears; the hardy Indians of the Willamette Valley and the Cascade Range; and the bold, predatory riders of eastern Oregon and Washington, – buffalo hunters and horse tamers, passionately fond, long before the advent of the white man, of racing and gambling. It comprised also the Okanogans, who disposed of their dead by tying them upright to a tree; the Yakimas, who buried them under cairns of stone; the Klickitats, who swathed them like mummies and laid them in low, rude huts on the *mimaluse*, or "death islands" of the Columbia; the Chinooks, who stretched them in canoes with paddles and fishing implements by their side; and the Kalamaths, who burned them with the maddest saturnalia of dancing, howling, and leaping through the flames of the funeral pyre. Over sixty or seventy petty tribes stretched the wild empire, welded together by the pressure of common foes and held in the grasp of the hereditary war-chief of the Willamettes.

The chiefs of the Willamettes had gathered on Wappatto Island, from time immemorial the council-ground of the tribes. The white man has changed its name to "Sauvie's" Island; but its wonderful beauty is unchangeable. Lying at the mouth of the Willamette River and extending for many miles down the Columbia, rich in wide meadows and crystal lakes, its interior dotted with majestic oaks and its shores fringed with cottonwoods, around it the blue and sweeping rivers, the wooded hills, and the far white snow peaks, – it is the most picturesque spot in Oregon.

The chiefs were assembled in secret council, and only those of pure Willamette blood were present, for the question to be considered was not one to be known by even the most trusted ally.

All the confederated tribes beyond the Cascade Range were in a ferment of rebellion. One of the petty tribes of eastern Oregon had recently risen up against the Willamette supremacy; and after a short but bloody struggle, the insurrection had been put down and the rebels almost exterminated by the victorious Willamettes.

But it was known that the chief of the malcontents had passed from tribe to tribe before the struggle commenced, inciting them to revolt, and it was suspected that a secret league had been formed; though when matters came to a crisis, the confederates, afraid to face openly the fierce warriors of the Willamette, had stood sullenly back, giving assistance to neither side. It was evident, however, that a spirit of angry discontent was rife among them. Threatening language had been used by the restless chiefs beyond the mountains; braves had talked around the camp-fire of the freedom of the days before the yoke of the confederacy was known; and the gray old dreamers, with whom the *mimaluse tillicums* [dead people] talked, had said that the fall of the Willamettes was near at hand.

The sachems of the Willamettes, advised of everything, were met in council in the soft Oregon spring-tide. They were gathered under the cottonwood trees, not far from the bank of the Columbia. The air was fresh with the scent of the waters, and the young leaves were just putting forth on the "trees of council," whose branches swayed gently in the breeze. Beneath them, their bronze faces more swarthy still as the dancing sunbeams fell upon them through the moving boughs, thirty sachems sat in close semi-circle before their great war-chief, Multnomah.

It was a strange, a sombre assembly. The chiefs were for the most part tall, well-built men, warriors and hunters from their youth up. There was something fierce and haughty in their bearing, something menacing, violent, and lawless in their saturnine faces and black, glittering eyes. Most of them wore their hair long; some plaited, others flowing loosely over their shoulders. Their ears were loaded with *hiagua* shells; their dress was composed of buckskin leggings and moccasins, and a short robe of dressed skin that came from the shoulders to the knees, to which was added a kind of blanket woven of the wool of the mountain sheep, or an outer robe of skins or furs, stained various colors and always drawn close around the body when sitting or standing. Seated on rude mats of rushes,

wrapped each in his outer blanket and doubly wrapped in Indian stoicism, the warriors were ranged before their chief.

His garb did not differ from that of the others, except that his blanket was of the richest fur known to the Indians, so doubled that the fur showed on either side. His bare arms were clasped each with a rough band of gold; his hair was cut short, in sign of mourning for his favorite wife, and his neck was adorned with a collar of large bear-claws, showing he had accomplished that proudest of all achievements for the Indian, – the killing of a grizzly.

Until the last chief had entered the grove and taken his place in the semi-circle, Multnomah sat like a statue of stone. He leaned forward reclining on his bow, a fine unstrung weapon tipped with gold. He was about sixty years old, his form tall and stately, his brow high, his eyes black, overhung with shaggy gray eyebrows and piercing as an eagle's. His dark, grandly impassive face, with its imposing regularity of feature, showed a penetration that read everything, a reserve that revealed nothing, a dominating power that gave strength and command to every line. The lip, the brow, the very grip of the hand on the bow told of a despotic temper and an indomitable will. The glance that flashed out from this reserved and resolute face – sharp, searching, and imperious – may complete the portrait of Multnomah, the silent, the secret, the terrible.

When the last late-entering chief had taken his place, Multnomah rose and began to speak, using the royal language; for like the Cayuses and several other tribes of the Northwest, the Willamettes had two languages, – the common, for every-day use, and the royal, spoken only by the chiefs in council.

In grave, strong words he laid before them the troubles that threatened to break up the confederacy and his plan for meeting them. It was to send out runners calling a council of all the tribes, including the doubtful allies, and to try before them and execute the rebellious chief, who had been taken alive and was now reserved for the torture. Such a council, with the terrible warning of the rebel's death enacted before it, would awe the malcontents into submission or drive them into open revolt. Long enough had the allies spoken with two tongues; long enough had they smoked the peace-pipe with both the Willamettes and their enemies. They must come now to peace that should be peace, or to open war. The chief made no gestures, his voice did not vary its stern, deliberate accents from first to last; but there was an indefinable something in word and manner that told how his warlike soul thirsted for battle, how the iron resolution, the ferocity beneath his stoicism, burned with desire of vengeance.

There was perfect attention while he spoke, – not so much as a glance or a whisper aside. When he had ceased and resumed his seat, silence reigned for a little while. Then Tla-wau-wau, chief of the Klackamas, a sub-tribe of the Willamette, rose. He laid aside his outer robe, leaving bare his arms and shoulders, which were deeply scarred; for Tla-wau-wau was a mighty warrior, and as such commanded. With measured deliberation he spoke in the royal tongue.

"Tla-wau-wau has seen many winters, and his hair is very gray. Many times has he watched the grass spring up and grow brown and wither, and the snows come and go, and those things have brought him wisdom, and what he has seen of life and death has given him strong thoughts. It is not well to leap headlong into a muddy stream, lest there be rocks under the black water. Shall we call the tribes to meet us here on the island of council? When they are all gathered together they are more numerous than we. Is it wise to call those that are stronger than ourselves into our wigwam, when their hearts are bitter against us? Who knows what plots they might lay, or how suddenly they might fall on us at night or in the day when we were unprepared? Can we trust them? Does not the Klickitat's name mean 'he that steals horses'? The Yakima would smoke the peace-pipe with the knife that was to stab you hid under his blanket. The Wasco's heart is a lie, and his tongue is a trap.

"No, let us wait. The tribes talk great swelling words now and their hearts are hot, but if we wait, the fire will die down and the words grow small. Then we can have a council and be knit together again. Let us wait till another winter has come and gone; then let us meet in council, and the tribes will listen.

"Tla-wau-wau says, 'wait, and all will be well.'"

His earnest, emphatic words ended, the chief took his seat and resumed his former look of stolid indifference. A moment before he had been all animation, every glance and gesture eloquent with meaning; now he sat seemingly impassive and unconcerned.

There was another pause. It was so still that the rustling of the boughs overhead was startlingly distinct. Saving the restless glitter of black eyes, it was a tableau of stoicism. Then another spoke, advising caution, setting forth the danger of plunging into a contest with the allies. Speaker followed speaker in the same strain.

As they uttered the words counselling delay, the glance of the war-chief grew ever brighter, and his grip upon the bow on which he leaned grew harder. But the cold face did not relax a muscle. At length rose Mishlah the Cougar, chief of the Mollalies. His was one of the most singular faces there. His tangled hair fell around a sinister, bestial countenance, all scarred and seamed by wounds received in battle. His head was almost flat, running back from his eyebrows so obliquely that when he stood erect he seemed to have no forehead at all; while the back and lower part of his head showed an enormous development, – a development that was all animal. He knew nothing but battle, and was one of the most dreaded warriors of the Willamettes.

He spoke, – not in the royal language, as did the others, but in the common dialect, the only one of which he was master.

"My heart is as the heart of Multnomah. Mishlah is hungry for war. If the tribes that are our younger brothers are faithful, they will come to the council and smoke the pipe of peace with us; if they are not, let us know it. Mishlah knows not what it is to wait. You all talk words, words, words; and the tribes laugh and say, 'The Willamettes have become women and sit in the lodge sewing moccasins and are afraid to fight.' Send out the runners. Call the council. Let us find who are our enemies; then let us strike!"

The hands of the chief closed involuntarily as if they clutched a weapon, and his voice rang harsh and grating. The eyes of Multnomah flashed fire, and the war-lust kindled for a moment on the dark faces of the listeners.

Then rose the grotesque figure of an Indian, ancient, withered, with matted locks and haggard face, who had just joined the council, gliding in noiselessly from the neighboring wood. His cheek-bones were unusually high, his lower lip thick and protruding, his eyes deeply sunken, his face drawn, austere, and dismal beyond description. The mis-shapen, degraded features repelled at first sight; but a second glance revealed a great dim sadness in the eyes, a gloomy foreboding on brow and lip that were weirdly fascinating, so sombre were they, so full of woe. There was a wild dignity in his mien; and he wore the robe of furs, though soiled and torn, that only the richest chiefs were able to wear. Such was Tohomish, or Pine Voice, chief of the Santiam tribe of the Willamettes, the most eloquent orator and potent medicine or *tomanowos* man in the confederacy.

There was a perceptible movement of expectation, a lighting up of faces as he arose, and a shadow of anxiety swept over Multnomah's impassive features. For this man's eloquence was wonderful, and his soft magnetic tones could sway the passions of his hearers to his will with a power that seemed more than human to the superstitious Indians. Would he declare for the council or against it; for peace or for war?

He threw back the tangled locks that hung over his face, and spoke.

"Chiefs and warriors, who dwell in lodges and talk with men, Tohomish, who dwells in caves and talks with the dead, says greeting, and by him the dead send greeting also."

His voice was wonderfully musical, thrilling, and pathetic; and as he spoke the salutation from the dead, a shudder went through the wild audience before him, – through all but Multnomah, who did not shrink nor drop his searching eyes from the speaker's face. What cared he for the salutation of the living or the dead? Would this man whose influence was so powerful declare for action or delay?

"It has been long since Tohomish has stood in the light of the sun and looked on the faces of his brothers or heard their voices. Other faces has he looked upon and other voices has he heard. He has learned the language of the birds and the trees, and has talked with the People of Old who dwell in the serpent and the cayote; and they have taught him their secrets. But of late terrible things have come to Tohomish."

He paused, and the silence was breathless, for the Indians looked on this man as a seer to whom the future was as luminous as the past. But Multnomah's brow darkened; he felt that Tohomish also was against him, and the soul of the warrior rose up stern and resentful against the prophet.

"A few suns ago, as I wandered in the forest by the Santiam, I heard the death-wail in the distance. I said, 'Some one is dead, and that is the cry of the mourners. I will go and lift up my voice with them.' But as I sought them up the hill and through the thickets the cry grew fainter and farther, till at last it died out amid distant rocks and crags. And then I knew that I had heard no human voice lamenting the dead, but that it was the Spirit Indian-of-the-Wood wailing for the living whose feet go down to the darkness and whose faces the sun shall soon see no more. Then my heart grew heavy and bitter, for I knew that woe had come to the Willamettes.

"I went to my den in the mountains, and sought to know of those that dwell in the night the meaning of this. I built the medicine-fire, I fasted, I refused to sleep. Day and night I kept the fire burning; day and night I danced the *tomanowos* dance around the flames, or leaped through them, singing the song that brings the *Spee-ough*, till at last the life went from my limbs and my head grew sick and everything was a whirl of fire. Then I knew that the power was on me, and I fell, and all grew black.

"I dreamed a dream.

"I stood by the death-trail that leads to the spirit-land. The souls of those who had just died were passing; and as I gazed, the wail I had heard in the forest came back, but nearer than before. And as the wail sounded, the throng on the death-trail grew thicker and their tread swifter. The warrior passed with his bow in his hand and his quiver swinging from his shoulder; the squaw followed with his food upon her back; the old tottered by. It was a whole people on the way to the spirit-land. But when I tried to see their faces, to know them, if they were Willamette or Shoshone or our brother tribes, I could not. But the wail grew ever louder and the dead grew ever thicker as they passed. Then it all faded out, and I slept. When I awoke, it was night; the fire had burned into ashes and the medicine wolf was howling on the hills. The voices that are in the air came to me and said, 'Go to the council and tell what you have seen;' but I refused, and went far into the wood to avoid them. But the voices would not let me rest, and my spirit burned within me, and I came. Beware of the great council. Send out no runners. Call not the tribes together. Voices and omens and dreams tell Tohomish of something terrible to come. The trees whisper it; it is in the air, in the waters. It has made my spirit bitter and heavy until my drink seems blood and my food has the taste of death. Warriors, Tohomish has shown his heart. His words are ended."

He resumed his seat and drew his robe about him, muffling the lower part of his face. The matted hair fell once more over his drooping brow and repulsive countenance, from which the light faded the moment he ceased to speak. Again the silence was profound. The Indians sat spell-bound, charmed by the mournful music of the prophet's voice and awed by the dread vision he had revealed. All the superstition within them was aroused. When Tohomish took his seat, every Indian was ready to oppose the calling of the council with all his might. Even Mishlah, as superstitious as blood-thirsty, was startled and perplexed. The war-chief stood alone.

He knew it, but it only made his despotic will the stronger. Against the opposition of the council and the warning of Tohomish, against *tomanowos* and *Spee-ough*, ominous as they were even to him, rose up the instinct which was as much a part of him as life itself, – the instinct to battle and to conquer. He was resolved with all the grand strength of his nature to bend the council to his will, and with more than Indian subtility saw how it might be done.

He rose to his feet and stood for a moment in silence, sweeping with his glance the circle of chiefs. As he did so, the mere personality of the man began to produce a reaction. For forty years he had been the great war-chief of the tribes of the Wauna, and had never known defeat. The ancient enemies of his race dreaded him; the wandering bands of the prairies had carried his name far and wide; and even beyond the Rockies, Sioux and Pawnee had heard rumors of the powerful chief by the Big River of the West. He stood before them a huge, stern warrior, himself a living assurance of victory and dominion.

As was customary with Indian orators in preparing the way for a special appeal, he began to recount the deeds of the fathers, the valor of the ancient heroes of the race. His stoicism fell from him as he half spoke, half chanted the harangue. The passion that was burning within him made his words like pictures, so vivid they were, and thrilled his tones with electric power. As he went on, the sullen faces of his hearers grew animated; the superstitious fears that Tohomish had awakened fell from them. Again they were warriors, and their blood kindled and their pulses throbbed to the words of their invincible leader. He saw it, and began to speak of the battles they themselves had fought and the victories they had gained. More than one dark cheek flushed darker and more than one hand moved unconsciously to the knife. He alluded to the recent war and to the rebellious tribe that had been destroyed.

"*That*," said he, "was the people Tohomish saw passing over the death-trail in his dream. What wonder that the thought of death should fill the air, when we have slain a whole people at a single blow! Do we not know too that their spirits would try to frighten our dreamers with omens and bad *tomanowos*? Was it not bad *tomanowos* that Tohomish saw? It could not have come from the Great Spirit, for he spoke to our fathers and said that we should be strongest of all the tribes as long as the Bridge of the Gods should stand. Have the stones of that bridge begun to crumble, that our hearts should grow weak?"

He then described the natural bridge which, as tradition and geology alike tell us, spanned at that time the Columbia at the Cascades. The Great Spirit, he declared, had spoken; and as he had said, so it would be. Dreams and omens were mist and shadow, but the bridge was rock, and the word of the Great Spirit stood forever. On this tradition the chief dwelt with tremendous force, setting against the superstition that Tohomish had roused the still more powerful superstition of the bridge, – a superstition so interwoven with every thought and hope of the Willamettes that it had become a part of their character as a tribe.

And now when their martial enthusiasm and fatalistic courage were all aglow, when the recital of their fathers' deeds had stirred their blood and the portrayal of their own victories filled them again with the fierce joy of conflict, when the mountain of stone that arched the Columbia had risen before them in assurance of dominion as eternal as itself, – now, when in every eye gleamed desire of battle and every heart was aflame, the chief made (and it was characteristic of him) in one terse sentence his crowning appeal, —

"Chiefs, speak your heart. Shall the runners be sent out to call the council?"

There was a moment of intense silence. Then a low, deep murmur of consent came from the excited listeners: a half-smothered war-cry burst from the lips of Mishlah, and the victory was won.

One only sat silent and apart, his robe drawn close, his head bent down, seemingly oblivious of all around him, as if resigned to inevitable doom.

"To-morrow at dawn, while the light is yet young, the runners will go out. Let the chiefs meet here in the grove to hear the message given them to be carried to the tribes. The talk is ended."

CHAPTER II
THE WAR-CHIEF AND THE SEER

Cassandra's wild voice prophesying woe.

Philip Bourke Marston.

The war-chief left the grove as soon as he had dismissed the council. Tohomish went with him. For some distance they walked together, the one erect and majestic, the other gliding like a shadow by his side.

At length Multnomah stopped under a giant cottonwood and looked sternly at Tohomish.

"You frightened the council to-day with bad *mimaluse* [death] talk. Why did you do it? Why did you bring into a council of warriors dreams fit only for old men that lie sleeping in the sun by the door of the wigwam?"

"I said what my eyes saw and my ears heard, and it was true."

"It cannot be true, for the Great Spirit has said that the Willamettes shall rule the tribes as long as the bridge shall stand; and how can it fall when it is a mountain of stone?"

A strange expression crossed Tohomish's sullen face.

"Multnomah, beware how you rest on the prophecy of the bridge. Lean not your hand on it, for it is as if you put it forth to lean it on a coiled rattlesnake."

"Your sayings are dark," replied the chief impatiently. "Speak plainly."

Tohomish shook his head, and the gloomy look habitual to him came back.

"I cannot. Dreams and omens I can tell, but the secret of the bridge is the secret of the Great Spirit; and I cannot tell it lest he become angry and take from me my power of moving men with burning words."

"The secret of the Great Spirit! What black thing is it you are hiding and covering up with words? Bring it forth into the light, that I may see it."

"No, it is my *tomanowos*. Were I to tell it the gift of eloquence would go from me, the fire would die from my heart and the words from my lips, and my life would wither up within me."

Multnomah was silent. Massive and commanding as was his character he was still an Indian, and the words of the seer had touched the latent superstition in his nature. They referred to that strongest and most powerful of all the strange beliefs of the Oregon savages, – the spirit possession or devil worship of the *tomanowos*.

As soon as an Oregon Indian was old enough to aspire to a place among the braves, he was sent into the hills alone. There he fasted, prayed, and danced, chanted the medicine-chant, and cut himself with knife or thorn till he fell exhausted to the ground. Whatever he saw then, in waking delirium or feverish sleep, was the charm that was to control his future. Be it bird or beast, dream or mystic revelation, it was his *totem* or *tomanowos*, and gave him strength, cunning, or swiftness, sometimes knowledge of the future, imparting to him its own characteristics. But *what* it was, its name or nature, was the one secret that must go with him to his grave. Woe unto him if he told the name of his *totem*. In that moment it would desert him, taking from him all strength and power, leaving him a shattered wreck, an outcast from camp and war-party.

"Multnomah says well that it is a black secret, but it is my *totem* and may not be told. For many winters Tohomish has carried it in his breast, till its poisoned sap has filled his heart with bitterness, till for him gladness and warmth have gone out of the light, laughter has grown a sob of pain, and sorrow and death have become what the feast, the battle, and the chase are to other men. It is the black secret, the secret of the coming trouble, that makes Tohomish's voice like the voice of a pine; so that men say it has in it sweetness and mystery and haunting woe, moving the heart as no other can.

And if he tells the secret, eloquence and life go with it. Shall Tohomish tell it? Will Multnomah listen while Tohomish shows what is to befall the bridge and the Willamettes in the time that is to come?"

The war-chief gazed at him earnestly. In that troubled, determined look, superstition struggled for a moment and then gave way to the invincible obstinacy of his resolve.

"No. Multnomah knows that his own heart is strong and will not fail him, come what may; and that is all he cares to know. If you told me, the *tomanowos* would be angry, and drain your spirit from you and cast you aside as the serpent casts its skin. And you must be the most eloquent of all at the great council; for there the arm of Multnomah and the voice of Tohomish must bend the bad chiefs before them."

His accents had the same undertone of arbitrary will, of inflexible determination, that had been in them when he spoke in the council. Though the shadows fell more and more ominous and threatening across his path, to turn back did not occur to him. The stubborn tenacity of the man could not let go his settled purpose.

"Tohomish will be at the council and speak for his chief and his tribe?" asked Multnomah, in a tone that was half inquiry, half command; for the seer whose mysterious power as an orator gave him so strong an influence over the Indians must be there.

Tohomish's haggard and repulsive face had settled back into the look of mournful apathy habitual to him. He had not, since the council, attempted to change the chief's decision by a single word, but seemed to have resigned himself with true Indian fatalism to that which was to come.

"Tohomish will go to the council," he said in those soft and lingering accents, indescribably sweet and sad, with which his degraded face contrasted so strongly. "Yes, he will go to the council, and his voice shall bend and turn the hearts of men as never before. Strong will be the words that he shall say, for with him it will be sunset and his voice will be heard no more."

"Where will you go when the council is ended, that we shall see you no more?" asked Multnomah.

"On the death-trail to the spirit-land, – nor will I go alone," was the startling reply; and the seer glided noiselessly away and disappeared among the trees.

CHAPTER III
WALLULAH

Ne'er was seen
In art or nature, aught so passing sweet
As was the form that in its beauteous frame
Inclosed her, and is scattered now in dust.

Carey: Dante.

Multnomah passed on to seek the lodge of his daughter Wallulah, a half Asiatic, and the most beautiful woman in all the land of the Wauna.

Reader, would you know the tale of the fair oriental of whom was born the sweet beauty of Wallulah?

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.