# On a Pontoon

For the first time in five years Whitcomb admitted to himself that he was tired, that he had at last wearled of throwing impossible tresties across impossible canyons, of climbing the unclimbable and accomplishing that which neither nature nor man ever had meant to be accomplished.

He leaned against the rope which served for a railing on the old pontoon bridge and looked up the canyon, where the massive iron structure that was the work of his brain was silhouetted against the sky. It was an April afternoon in the mountains, a Sunday afternoon, so that the ring of steel, the puffing of engines, the shouts of workmen, were stilled. The gulch was as penceful as it would be six months hence, when the army of laborers would depart, leaving only the great, sflent bridge to mark their occupancy.

Whitcomb was frank with himself. He did not deny in these meetings with himself face to face that this restlessness had appeared because of the presence of the camping party at the Bide-a-Wee bunting lodge up in Smith's peak. Not that he had actually met the party as a whole. The men had wandered down to the bridge, had asked many "fool" questions and wandered back to the camp. At a distance he had seen women in well made riding habits and outing gowns who had given him a horseback thrill. Suddenly he wanted to get back to the hand of swallowtailed coats and shimmery frocks.

Whitcomb sighed and looked down at his cordurous and hunting boots discontentedly. The pontoons rocked, and a horse's hoofs sounded suddenly at the end of the bridge. Coming toward him was a girl leading a sturdy little mountain pony-a girl with a bare head, where the sun glanced and glim-



ABM.

mered on masses of copper colored hair, a girl with flawless skin and eyes like sand hill violets, a girl whose every slender line breathed health and

The girl in her turn saw a broad shouldered man, dark with tan, above which his blond hair shone curiously. The corduroy hunting suit was strangely becoming to him. The girl stopped before him.

"Can you tell me," she asked, "if there is a quicker way for me to get back to the Bide-a-Wee lodge than by the long Smith road?" "Yes," he answered, "there is, and if

you would not mind waiting for me to get my pony I'll set you on it. I never could direct you from here."

To his surprise and delight the girl acquiesced readily, but as he turned to fetch his broncho, which he had left grazing on the shore, he gave a gasp.

"Great heavens!" And, throwing his arm about the amazed girl, he leaned as far out with her as the rope rail would permit. Entering the bridge at a mad pace, the white bell mule leading, was the herd of mules used in building the trestle. There was a bombardment of hoofs that drowned the girl's frightened cry. The pentoon sank a foot into the water. There was a roar of trampling feet and a rending crash of the floor as the herd passed so close that both their faces were . stung by the lashing tails; then silence again in the valley, except for the sounds of retreating hoofs up the mountain road.

"Careful, careful!" cried Whitcomb as the girl drew herself from his arm. "We are afloat!"

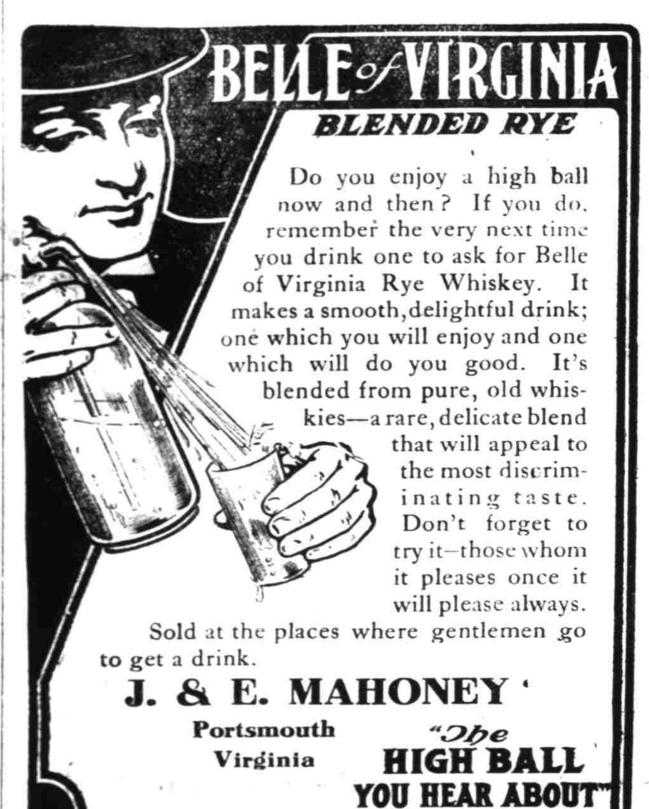
The strain on the old bridge had been too great. The worn flooring had parted, and, still clinging to a bit of the rope rail, the man and girl were floating rapidly downstream on one of the pontoons. This little raft rode well out of the water, and the river, swollen by the spring freshets in the mountains, towed them along at a smart pace. The two looked at each other and suddenly smiled.

"There is really not much danger," said Whitcomb. "It's five miles down the tapids, and two miles below here me river narrows so that I shall have so trouble in lassoing a 'land mark' with these bits of rope. In the mean-(Continued on fifth page.)

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in effe	et October 28t	<b>h, 190</b> 6
Leave	Leave	Leave
limington 7	Wrightsville	Beach
x 7.00 a m	x6.30 a m	
x 8.30 a m	x8.00 a m	
10.00 a m	xx9.00 a m	10 45 0 2
11.30 a m	11.00 a m	10.45 a m
1.30 p m	12.30 p m	12.15 p n
3.00 p m	2.25 p m	2.15 p n
5.00 p m	4.25 p m	4.15 p n
6.30 p m	5.55 p m	5.45 p n
8.00 p m	7.30 p m	

xDaily except Sunday. xx Sundays this car will leave Wrightsrille at 10:00 a. m. instead of at 9:00 a. m. Cars leaving Wilmington at 7 a. m., 8.30 A. m., 8.00 p. m. and 9.30 p m. will not run be yond Wrightsville unless there are passen gers for the Beach.

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		No. 48	.No. 43	
	Lv Wilmington	9.00 a ml	6.35 D	
	Ar Goldsboro	112.23 p m	19.32 p	
ı	Ar Rocky Mount	1.49 p m	11.15 p	
ì	Ar. Weldon	5.08 p m	2.32 D	
	Ar Norfolk	6.05 p m	4.00	
	Ar Wilson	1.07 p m	10.25 p	
1	Ar Welden	15.08 p m	2.32 8 3	
	Ar. Petersburg	7.12 p m	4.27 8 1	
	Ar Richmond	8.00 p ml	5.10 m	
	Ar Washington	11.40 p m	8.50 a	
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Ar Wilson .... | 11.40 p m | 2.15 p m Ar Goldshoro ... | 6.58 a m | 3.12 p m Ar Wilmington ..... 10 30 am 6.10 pm

SOUT	TH SOUT		
k <del></del>	Dany	Daily	Dally
Ly Wilm'ton	1-5.40 an	13.35 pm	6.35 pm
Ar Florence	1 9.35 am		
Ar Celumbia	112.45 pm	11.10 pm	an
Ar. Ch'lest'n	1.40 pm	11.37 pm	7.05 arts
Ar Savannah		2.55 am	
Ar Jack'ville	1	8.40 am	
Ar Tampa	1	7.10 pm	

NORTHBOUND.					
		Daily	Daily		
Ly Tampa		1 9.00			
Lv Tampa Lv Jacksonville		8.55	am   8.65 p		
Ar Savannah		112.55	pm 1.15 a		
Lv. Charleston			pm 6.15.a		
Ly Columbia		4.30	pm 6.45 a		
Ly Columbia		1 8.10	pm 9.25 a		

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