



"ALWAYS SEEMING TO GO STRAIGHT AHEAD"

called. The white sand of the river bed can be seen through it, and it splashes white under the stroke of the paddles. The stream was alive with birds on their way North, returning from Old Mexico, the Gulf States, Central and South America.

Half an hour down from Blue's Bridge we passed under the nests of a colony of blue heron, located in the cypress tops. There may have been a dozen birds in this colony. The parent birds stood nearly five feet high. The great blue heron act differently at nesting time than at any other season of the year. They fly wildy straight up into the air, it may be, or scurry about on quick moving wings, and are quite unlike the solitary blue heron we see in summer at the North, as with droning flight he trecks across the open country in quest of a bog in which to stand and fish. The nests of blue heron are a rare sight. Men who have lived (here about) all their lives have never seen them. Men from the North have come here to study the habits of these birds during the mating season, since their habitat has become known.

At one point we came upon a group of giant pines whose tops were one hundred and fifty feet in the air and whose trunks summed up ninety feet to the first limb. Any one of these trees would have made masts for ships that sail the world around. A pair of these trees, sentinels for the rest, faced each other on opposite sides of the stream. It seemed to us as we passed under and between them that their tops touched. Great original trees that date back to 1492 are only to be found in the "silent places." They are never within easy reach. In size and beauty these trees reminded us of the "pink pines" of Oregon, from which our supply of masts for wooden ships

and the American three-masted schooners have been obtained for forty years.

It was near these giant pines we came upon a gang of wild turkeys. This great pheasant, the most beautiful and striking game bird of America with its bronze and brown plumage fringed with black, still nests along the Lumbee and is often seen by canoeists at short range. The sight of wild turkeys is worth a voyage of the river. A still paddle, a still canoe, with still people in it, makes this thing possible. We were close upon them before they knew it. The turkeys were feeding in the wild cane on a sandy point. Up they went, a gobbler and five hens. They lit in trees within fifty yards of us. The gobbler began strutting back and forth on the limb he had caught on. We men folks have been made lords of creation by the hen folks and why shouldn't we assert our rights and strut? Simon, our man Friday, who was bow oar in the canoe and who knows the language of all the wild things of this region, told the writer afterwards of the conversation that went on. Simon is no nature fakir. He believes in nature, superstition and in God and the Bible as he understands them, and we believed in him. Simon could tell you what the shutter on the old corner grocery store, says, as it swings to and fro in the night wind. He would tell you that the wheels of his timber cart, going "kluger, kluger, kluger," as they slipped in and out on the axle trees, were finding fault about being overloaded. According to Simon, the hen turkeys with one accord exclaimed "What's that, what's that, what's that?" A big frog in a "logan" who saw the canoe as it passed, and its occupants, croaked in reply, "Boat, boat, boat!"

(Concluded on page six)

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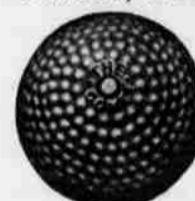


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