

[FOR THE CRITIC.]  
TO WINTER.

Rough Winter laughs loudly with glee,  
He shuns his hoar locks o'er the earth;  
He ruffles the terrible sea,  
And roars in his resolute mirth.  
The cold lifeless north gives him breath  
Ere he locks up the lake on the plain;  
He carries destruction and death,  
And heralds gaunt misery's train.

His voice, through the forest, at night  
Walls and raves to the trees, as he flies  
Like a curse; and he scatters a blight  
To wither the loved thing which dies;  
Yet he laughs all the while, and he sings  
Of a fisherman's bark, like a speck  
On the waters, and stretches his wings  
To overwhelm it with ruin and wreck.

White Winter; he mocks at the sun  
Until the winds blow from the south;  
Then he knows that his reign is nigh done,  
And surlily closes his mouth;  
He creeps to his cold icy home,  
And nurses his wrath, as he dreams  
Of the short days and long nights to come,  
When he shall ride on with loud screams.

H. M.

## [FOR THE CRITIC.]

## THE NORTH-WEST INDIANS.

## IV.

The Indians have a most wonderful faculty of color, with which they all seem to be gifted; and to this they add a method of treating what they copy from nature in a conventional manner truly delightful to contemplate. Give a squaw some delicate flower to work out in beads and she will do it in her own way, not producing a servile copy, but retaining the distinctive character and shades of color so that there is no mistaking them. A friend of mine, who did not understand this method of treating flowers for the purposes of art, once said on seeing some bead work on a pair of moccasins, representing a prairie-rose, that it was a very crude attempt at imitation and not at all like the original, but that is just where he made the mistake. An exact copy it certainly was not, but throughout the design, the rose characteristics were clearly defined, making it more acceptable in its place as an ornament than if the original had been transferred *in toto*.

To this color faculty may also be added one of imitation, as I have stated; and an intricate design they can copy to the minutest detail without any mechanical help or measurements, but mainly by the unaided eye. This is not so much to be wondered at, when we consider that through generations their perceptive faculties have become enormously developed, to the entire exclusion (we may say) of their reasoning faculties.

The squaws decorate all manner of objects with their bead work—moccasins, leggings, tobacco pouches, firebags, knife-sheaths, articles for head gear, and other parts of their dress, etc. I was shown not long since a very handsome deer skin coat, part of the uniform of the Battleford Rifles. On the front were two rows of bead work, each about 3 or 4 inches wide, running from the collar to the waist. The deer-skin collar fitted close about the neck like that of an ordinary tunic. Around this, and falling on the shoulders, was a broader one of bead work, and the wrist bands were of the same, all this bead work was composed of flowers, with stems, buds, and leaves, worked on black cloth and sewn on the coat. The base or ground-work of the design was of a dark blue shade of smaller beads which allowed the flowers to stand out as it were from the background. At all the seams of the coat, which were down the backs of the sleeves, and in front and at the back of the body, long shreds or ribbons of deer-skin hung down.

It would appear from the description to be somewhat bawdry; but far from it. The artistic bead work on the buff ground of the deer-skin, and the restless motion of the shreds at every turn of the body gave it a picturesque and lively air, suggestive of the prairie wilds, and the individual who wore it would seem to take on and inspire a peculiar recklessness; one would sooner meet a more orderly soldier as a foe, than one clothed in this garb. All deer skin clothing, such as coats, leggings, etc., is made in this manner, with the shreds or ribbons at the seams. It strengthens the article by allowing the skin to be more thoroughly sewn, and at the same time gives effect to an otherwise crude-looking dress.

Another practice peculiar to these people, and in which they were formerly great adepts, is body painting. It is practiced by those not directly under civilizing influences, and more or less by all at their feast, the "Sun-dance," "White dog feast," etc. I have not had the pleasure of meeting an individual in full dress of paint and feathers, nor would any one express a wish for a second interview. I have not many with their faces disfigured in this manner, quite enough to convince one that an individual in nature's full dress, and looking like a demon, would not be very entertaining.

The squaws paint their faces also on certain occasions, and in this respect they have anticipated our white sisters who pencil their eyebrows and adorn their cheeks with rouge. They have not yet taken to wearing bangs or to charming the young bucks with smiling rows of white ivory (porcelain) other than their own. Future generations will probably see these advanced ideas of ours, together with many others, adopted by them. But where will the Indian then be? Extinct? No! but absorbed into the white blood of the country.

The young buck or squaw having obtained the colors necessary for paint-

ing, commences by putting a finger into the most striking tint and applying it around the eyes. Then bars are made to radiate from these joints to different parts, no portion being left untouched. The eyes are generally made the foci in this decorative business as they naturally are of the face, and any one looking at a face in this condition is led by the bars to follow them directly to the points of intrusion—the eyes. They follow no particular design after the eyes are marked but just daub it on. Yellow ochre, vermilion, or red, black, and bright green are the prevailing colors. I don't know whether they are all mineral. The green is frequently very bright, and with the red affords quite a contrast for prominent points.

A relative of mine many years ago, who was in the employ of the Imperial Government on Lake Superior in connection with Indian affairs, relates an amusing anecdote. The presents, such as blankets, etc., in those days were distributed by the Home Government through the Commissariat, now Control Department of the army. A small schooner was used in that district for purposes of transport or frequent excursions had to be made to Manitoulin Island which had been set apart for the Indians, and named after "Manitou or Great Spirit," whom they worshipped in a mystic manner. On one of these visits a young buck managed to intercept the schooner before it reached the land, and as time was probably hanging rather heavily on the hands of the officials on board, the young savage was persuaded to submit his face for chromatic decoration under the hands of my mischievous kinsman, who was also somewhat of an artist. Being shown on a palette, the magical effects of a few tints from an oil-color box, the young buck became at once eager for business to commence. After the operation had been completed, much to the satisfaction of all parties, and with all the skill the artist could command, the Indian set out in his canoe for the shore, and soon dropt out of the memory of those on board. In a few days, however, they received another visit from the same individual with three others, who all had to be put under the artist's hands at their earnest request, before they would leave the schooner's deck. This done, it was thought, all comers would be satisfied; but the artist reckoned without his host—the Indian character was new to him. The next day a chief with fifteen or twenty followers came down on a business visit to the now famous artist. This was too much of a good thing. The official began to think of giving up his official life and entering on a new career as "Painter in chief to the Indians of Canada, appointed directly by Manitou." And besides, the artist's color-box would be emptied and it could not be replenished in these wilds, and the future pleasures of amateur painting would have to be foregone till arrival at some civilized point. A happy thought struck him. They had some paints on board which had been left when the schooner was last touched up; and vermilion amongst them. Just the thing! A plate was produced with some of the colors on it, and operations commenced at once on the chief. Night drawing near, they were dismissed, hinting however, they could be on hand at an early hour next morning. That night the schooner left the place, saving the paint and the artist's feelings, which were inclining slightly towards profanity. If he or any one painted Indians at the present day he would be accused of bringing them back to barbarism, so different have ideas become. When they paint now, especially the whole body, it would seem as if missionary and other civilizing influences had gone for naught, and that they have fallen right back into savagery. A thoroughly civilized Indian seldom if ever cares to paint.

In writing an article on the North-West Indians, I had merely intended to touch on the subject in a very cursory manner, but find it has now lengthened out to one more fitting a magazine than a weekly paper, and has, no doubt, proved tedious to many readers who do not take an especial interest in these matters. To myself and many others, the Indian, in his past and present, and all that we can learn of him as an Ethnological study, is extensively interesting; and as we see them now on the dim horizon, retreating as the setting sun before the march of a more fitting race, and one higher in the scale of development, it strikes us with sudden wonder that there is an intense mystery about all this, and makes us feel at times that we too are doomed, and that our displacement from that horizon is not too far distant. Come what may, we know one thing, there is beyond, a hope of immortality, whatever changes take place here.

In closing this article, I will just refer in general to the principal points in the Indian character, the keynote, I may say, on which should hinge all administration in connection with his advancement.

Naturally, like all native races, they are governed more by instinct than reason, and it is a wonder, when we consider this, that they are able to conform in the slightest degree to what we desire of them. We who are educated through generations of ancestors hardly understand what the true meaning of an unbridled instinct is. With them it is the mere impulse that compels them to do or act according to their feelings; in fact, the governing force of their lives. Whatever reasoning powers they possess, act, as it were, intuitively, and all towards the one principle of instinct. This it is that makes the uncultured Indian so simple and impulsive, when he is good perfectly so, but when bad, a very demon. They are perfect adepts in the art of diplomacy, understanding the motive of the white man, or each other, as far as general character is concerned, and able to hide their true intentions under such a natural cloak of apparent friendliness that they can deceive the keenest individual. They may swear friendship, and mean the reverse; or mean what they say, without change in their countenance, or bearing towards you in either case. So astute are they that they will not become too servile or obsequious when they mean mischief (as the white man does), but assume an even tenor, for fear it would arouse suspicion. Of course, one or two may let out, but I speak of their character in general, and I think this faculty of the Indian's being able to hide the true motives of his mind without any restraint on his part, is not taken sufficient note of. We are too apt to take in all they have to say in regard to their friendship, and place implicit confidence in it. To lie with them is natural; it is not telling an untruth in