

chard back of the house. There was a chorus of cackles and flapping of wings. In a moment the boy had run over to the orchard, and he saw that the whole flock of chickens were inside of the fence. The gate had been left open and the chickens were chasing butterflies and eating caterpillars and worms.

'Those same old hateful chickens!' he exclaimed. 'I think now Uncle Henry will agree with me that they have no place on a country home. I'll chase them out, and then tell Uncle Henry that he needs to shut his stable door or the stable isn't much use.'

It was no easy matter to drive the chickens out of the orchard, for they seemed to run everywhere except toward the open gate. They scattered in every direction and cackled so loudly that the noise could be heard a long distance off. Some few did run out of the gateway back to their yard, but others hid under bushes and in the briars, so that Charley was all in a perspiration trying to shoo them all out of his garden.

Finally the noise attracted those in the house, and Uncle Henry came running out in great haste. 'What is it?' he shouted as he saw Charley. 'Is there a weasel or a dog after the chickens?'

'Neither,' replied Charley, stopping to mop his brow. 'I'm after them. You left the gate open and they are running all over the orchard.'

Then, as Uncle Henry said nothing, Charley added: 'Do you leave the door of the stable open when your pony is inside, uncle?'

For a moment there was silence. Then Uncle Henry smiled and answered: 'Why, no, not if I want him to stay inside. But sometimes you want the pony to run out and exercise. Now these hens need exercise, or they won't lay eggs. I haven't any good place for them to exercise in except the orchard. So I leave the gate open once in a while and they think they are getting on forbidden grounds, and they come in here and eat the worms, caterpillars and grubs which are attacking my trees and bushes.'

'Oh, then you left the gate open purposely?' said Charley, with a crestfallen air.

'Yes, and you will see why if you come up and examine what the hens were cackling about, I'm sure they had a rare treat of some kind. I know their cry of discovery.'

They walked across the orchard, and under one of the plum trees they saw the ground covered with crawling, wriggling grubs and worms. The chickens had been feasting on them, and many had been slain. Charley looked at the sight for some moments in silence. Then he said, 'I believe chickens are of some use on a farm after all.'

'Yes, in their proper place,' was the quiet answer. 'For that matter, everything is that is in this world of ours.'

[For the 'Messenger.'

Frightened by Indians.

A TRUE STORY.

The time at which my story opens is somewhere about the year 1878. In the early autumn of that year two families of Micmac Indians had their wigwams near our home, which was in the eastern part of Nova Scotia, in the County of Shelburne. It was not an unusual occurrence for the Indians to encamp near a settlement of white people for the purpose of trading their baskets, and they were generally on friendly terms with the whites. At that time I was a child of nine years of age. My home was with my grandparents, whom I will call by the name of

Pratt. My grandfather, a fisherman by trade, made one of the crew of the schooner 'Matchless,' making weekly trips for fresh fish. He usually arrived home early on Saturday evening, spent Sunday at home, leaving again on Monday morning.

Our house was a small low building, formerly occupied as a schoolhouse, and contained only a kitchen, a very small bedroom and a tiny entry. My grandfather had at this time begun the building of a new and larger house, which rough structure stood a few feet from the door of the old one.

On the Saturday evening in question my grandmother and I had our supper at dusk, and then I went to bed in the tiny bedroom, from which, opening, as it did, right off the living-room, I could see plainly as I lay in bed all that passed there. After I had retired, my grandmother washed the dishes, rearranged the table for her husband's supper and replenished the fire, that the supper might be kept hot. Just then we heard the shuffle of feet on the doorstep, a clumsy rattling of the latch outside, and the two Micmacs walked into the room. My grandmother saw at once that both were under the influence of strong drink, and, though she would not have had them guess the fact, she was terribly alarmed.

'Good evening, Mrs. Pratt,' said one of them. 'Mr. Pratt is not at home, I see.'

'No,' said my grandmother, 'yet I am expecting him every minute.'

'You need not look for your husband to-night,' said the Indian, 'for we have just come from the harbor, and the vessel is not in sight of land. The people say it is too calm, and she can't get in to-night.'

At this piece of information grandmother became still more frightened, as it gave her to understand that the Indians knew that she would be alone, and she feared they meant to do her harm.

After telling her this they sat down near the fire and began to jabber in the Indian language, making gestures and talking volubly for some time, I sitting bolt upright in my bed in the little bedroom watching every movement with fear and trembling.

After talking and gesticulating for a time in this fashion, they turned to my grandmother and demanded supper, saying: 'The white woman give us supper, and we will give her basket,' indicating a basket they had brought in with them.

She at once proceeded to get them supper, while they still kept up their incessant jabber, as if they had some subject of interest to discuss. After she had bid them sit up to the table she told them to help themselves, and asking to be excused to attend to some matter outside, she left the house. Imagine my feelings when I heard the door close behind her, leaving me with those two drunken Indians. I sat up watching them, every moment expecting they would see me, and perhaps massacre me, for they seemed more inclined to talk than to eat, leaning across the table to jabber, not one word of which could I understand.

After a time which seemed to me very long, grandmother came back into the room. A few minutes after her an old lady came in, a neighbor, who said, as she entered, 'Good evening, has Mr. Pratt got home yet?'

'No,' answered my grandmother, 'and these men tell me he will not be home to-night, as it is so calm.'

My grandmother seemed surprised to see the lady, and said it was unusual for anyone to be coming in at this hour.

'Oh,' said our visitor, 'I knew Mr. Pratt was expected at home, and thought I would come in and see what news.'

Soon after her arrival, our unwelcome visitors took their leave, and grandmother and I were glad to accept the invitation of our neighbor to return with her to spend the night, for fear of the return of the Indians; but we were never troubled by them again.

I afterwards learned the strategy which my grandmother worked to assure our safety, as well as to avoid letting the Indians know how much she feared them. After seeing them occupied with their supper, she left the house and hurried at once to the nearest neighbor, who lived nearly one-fifth of a mile away. Arrived there she found the family, consisting of an old lady, her son and his wife, at prayer preparatory to retiring for the night. Bursting in upon them, she exclaimed, 'Don't stop to finish prayers,' but come with me. The Indians are at our house, and I have left the child alone in bed.'

Arising from their knees, the man took his shotgun from the wall, and with his mother prepared to accompany my grandmother to her home. Arriving at our door, my grandmother told them her plan, which was for the man to take his stand with his gun inside the new house, to await a signal from her, that the lady would wait outside, letting my grandmother enter alone; that then she would come in as if to make a call, and my grandmother accost her on entering as if surprised that anyone should call so late in the evening. So thus she planned to disarm suspicion on the part of the Indians. That night will long be remembered by myself as well as by those three neighbors, who are still living, although my grandmother is dead, and the home is occupied by strangers. The little house in which we lived still stands at the side of the newer one, and is used as an outhouse, though it has weathered the storms of nearly, if not quite, seventy years. This is a true story, an incident of my own childhood.

Fish Leather.

Fish leathers are now being largely manufactured. The skin of the porpoise makes a soft, waterproof leather which has been made into boots. Other fish leathers are thus spoken of by 'Footwear Fashion':—

The skins of some sharks are studded with horny protuberances which are so hard as to take a polish like stone. They are waterproof, and are used for covering jewel boxes and cardcases, as well as for a great variety of ornamental articles.

The hide of the 'diamond shark' is employed for covering the sword grips of German officers. A Paris manufacturer has made a reputation by tanning the skin of a species of Malabar shark into morocco; and the green leather called 'shagreen,' made from the skin of the angel shark of the Mediterranean, has long been a familiar article of commerce.

Good leathers can be made from the skin of the cod and salmon, and the hide of the wolf fish is being largely used for cardcases and shopping bags. In Egypt fish skins from the Red Sea are utilized for shoe soles, and eel skins are extensively employed in Europe for binding books, while in Tartary dried and oiled skins serve as a substitute for glass in windows.

Sturgeon skin affords a handsome ornamental leather, and the hide of the armored garfish is much valued, being covered with horny plates which may be polished to an ivorylike finish. Along the Yukon River, in