

him lived his wife, just as heroic, who helped him in everything, from the preaching to working in the garden to make the turnips grow, turnips being the only thing that they could raise in that soil.

But Mr. Hawes was a different man. He is dead now and it will make no difference if I speak of him. Not that he ever did anything that was discreditable nor that he ever said anything that he should not have said. But the Hudson's Bay Company does not like traders that talk too much—nor does any good employer for that matter, I suppose—and it might not have approved Hawes, were he alive, in saying what he said.

He was a quiet little man who could smoke for hours at a time without speaking. He had been a sea captain in the company's service and had learned the art of saying nothing in the course of sailing vessels in and out of the Hudson's Bay. But it was more than mere quietness that possessed Hawes. There was a tinge of melancholy in it.

I began to think that the half-breeds had something to do with it. I dropped a piece of bacon on the "street" one day, just outside the general trading store. It was just a little piece, but you would never have forgotten it had you been the one that dropped it. It was pounced upon before it touched the ground, not by dogs but by three half-breed boys who had been watching me with terrible patience.

That night I talked to Hawes. His young wife was putting the children to bed, and singing a hymn about "Shall we gather at the river—" Old Hawes was in one of his moods and I knew that the hymn was worrying him.

"It must be a big responsibility to see that not only the men you employ get food enough, but that their wives and children are fed, too," I said.

"Yes," he answered.

"Your people seem pretty hungry," I remarked, and told him about the bacon.

"Well!"

"Well—is food so scarce?"

"Where do you think food comes from in this country?" he returned. "Don't you know that pretty nearly every ounce of it has to be carried out here from England? When there were five half-breeds around the post that was not too bad.

There was enough work for them to do to justify the company in feeding 'em. But when there's twenty-five and work for only six, the company can't afford to feed the whole crew—though, Lord knows, it does what it can."

"Can't the men hunt?"

"Hunt!" he grumbled. "There's nothing worth while hunting within a hundred miles of here, and besides—they have lost the knack. They couldn't hunt well enough to keep alive."

"So—"

"So they live around the post, doing chores; feeding the dogs, taking a boat up the coast to trade with the Esquimaux, taking a dog-team up the river in winter for firewood. I don't need so many. If I fed 'em all there'd be no sense in maintaining a post in this country at all. The company keeps me here to trade food for furs. If I feed all the food to the breeds, where am I going to get furs?"

"Yes, but what's to become of them?"

"God knows. They love children, and it's a good trait in 'em, I suppose. But this is no country for loving children. For if you do you can't feed 'em. More brats, less food. I've told 'em often enough to quit this business of havin' children. I've told the Bishop to tell 'em, and he promises he will, but never does. It would be inconsistent with his religion, I suppose. Well—it's little use training for the life hereafter if they can't get enough to *train* on. I've twenty-five. All I need is four. If they don't soon quit bringing more children into the light of this damn country, or unless there's a plague strikes us, or those people down in Canada build one of their high-falutin' railways into this country so as to give my breeds work, there's going to be another story like the story at ——— Factory."

And the next night, in little pieces, and very slowly, I heard the story of ——— Factory, a post on Hudson's Bay, which has since been dismantled. This is the story:

There was a Hudson's Bay post once that began with a poor devil of a white trader, who tried his best for eighteen months to be faithful to the memory of a dead wife, when all he had was a photograph and some hair and a letter she had written him once. But indigestion from his own cooking "got him," and to save