

no sooner did it become known that the proprietor of the Eyrie was a duly qualified physician and surgeon than the colonists in his neighbourhood began to solicit his services whenever there was any illness in their families. Their solicitations were responded to, and having once commenced practice in this manner it would not have been easy to discontinue it. His circle of patients grew wider and wider, and ere long it became necessary for him to set up his gig and pay his round of visits with as much regularity as though his livelihood had depended upon his exertions. He became a popular and useful man. The colonists, both far and near, flocked to him for counsel in all their difficulties, and never sought his assistance in vain.

But this state of things was not to last. He had not been engaged in the practice of his profession more than two years when the old Indian woman who had officiated as his housekeeper took her departure to (let us hope) a better world. The Eyrie was thus deprived of one of the most essential incidents of domestic comfort, and it became necessary for its owner to remedy the defect. He locked up his house, put the key in his pocket, left his patients to take care of themselves, and departed, no one knew whither. At the end of a fortnight he returned, bringing home with him a flashily-attired damsel apparently about twenty years of age. So far, all was well. But I regret to say that he did not bring her home with him as his wife.

He resumed the practice of his profession as assiduously as ever. A few weeks afterwards, a benevolent old clergyman from Ancaster, who had heard of the old squaw's death, but who had not heard of the young person who had been imported as a substitute, called at the Eyrie to procure the situation of housekeeper for an elderly and most respectable matron who attended his little church. Imagine the surprise and indignation which the venerable ecclesiastic experienced when his host informed him in what manner he had supplied the place left vacant by the death of his former housekeeper. The doctor hinted, however, that the clergyman's protégé might still find employment in the house in a subordinate capacity, inasmuch as a young stranger was confidently looked for at the Eyrie in about eight months from that time, when the services of a handy and experienced female would be very acceptable. The Reverend Mr. Longmyer, scandalized and insulted, shook the dust of the place from his feet, and was never seen there again.

Sparsely settled as was the district, the story that Dr. King had a young woman to whom he was not married living with him as his wife began to be noised abroad to the injury of his reputation. A man who evidently had so utter a contempt for the proprieties could scarcely expect to be regarded as one whose acquaintance it was desirable to cultivate, even in such an out-of-the-way corner of the world as that was; and the more decorous of the colonists began to withdraw their patronage, and look coldly upon him. It came to be known, too, that he was at times addicted to excessive indulgence in the contents of the cup that cheers and likewise inebriates; and this knowledge did not tend to raise him in popular estimation. Still, when sober, he was marvellously skilful in both branches of his profession; and as he cared not a straw whether he received any recompense for his services or not, he was never wholly without patients.

He proved to be a true prophet, and at the time predicted a child was born to him. It was a fine, healthy boy, but the frail mother only survived its birth a few days. No respectable nurse could be found willing to take up her abode in a house with such an ill reputation, and the infant was consigned to the care of the wife of a labourer at the Ford, with whom it remained until the completion of its third year. The doctor's intemperate habits meanwhile underwent no change for the better, but he did not further violate decency by setting up another housekeeper. He lived alone in his solitary Eyrie, which he never quitted except upon professional business.

When the little son was three years old his father took him home to the Eyrie, and for some time afterwards he lived a life of sobriety, attending to all the child's wants himself; and certainly the little fellow presented the appearance of being well cared for. The doctor seemed to have not the remotest idea that the mere fact of this child's existence was a standing reproach to himself.

He daily showed his disregard for public opinion by taking his son with him in his gig wherever he went, and exhibiting the little fellow to his patients with all the pride of a fond and virtuous father. "Look at my brave boy," he would say: "Isn't he the very image of his father? Won't he play the devil among the girls in a few years?" To be sure, a child of that age could not be left at home to take care of himself, but it was thought that the father might at least have made some arrangement which would have rendered it unnecessary for him to constantly parade the fruits of his misconduct before the public eye. Of the sentiment which gave rise to this feeling Doctor King seemed to be utterly unconscious. He dearly loved his little boy, and almost any day in the week the pair might have been seen riding about the country from house to house: the gigantic father, with his vast expanse of chest, and almost abnormal length of limb, contemplating the pigmy by his side with a complacent satisfaction, as who should say: "Never mind, boy—let the world look askance at us if it will. What care we for the world? Are we not sufficient for each other; and cannot we afford to snap our fingers at the world and everybody in it?"

And thus matters went on for several years, until the doctor's self-sufficiency received a sudden check. His child fell ill, and died. When the little body had been consigned to earth, the occupation of the survivor seemed to have departed. There seemed to be nothing left to him worth living for. He could hardly be said to have reached the prime of life, and had his energies been properly directed he might still have made a career for himself. But he was absolutely devoid of ambition, and could not see that his past life, from first to last, had been a huge mistake. He had a clinging fondness, too, for the wild spot where the happy days of his boyhood had been passed, and could not summon up resolution to leave it. He felt no inclination to form new ties, and saw a solitary, bleak and comfortless old age looming before him in the far distance. A cheerless prospect enough; and for a time he abandoned himself to abject despair. But such a sentiment could not long prevail in the breast of a man with such a tremendous physical organization, and by degrees he resumed, to some extent, his professional avocations. From that time until the period of our arrival in Canada his life was a dull round of eating, drinking, sleeping, prescribing and studying. His *belé noir*, strong drink, occasionally resumed its sway over him, and at such times his custom was to lock himself up in his house, and admit no one upon any pretence whatever. Was it any wonder if his naturally rugged intellect grew stagnant under such a regimen.

It must be understood that up to the period at which the narrative has arrived I had never seen him, and that all my impressions of him were derived from such remarks as had been made about him in my hearing. Those remarks, however, did not in the least resemble angel's visits, inasmuch as they were neither few nor far between. He often formed a topic of conversation in our circle, and scarcely a day elapsed during which his characteristics were not animadverted upon in my presence. He was a thorn in the flesh to Elder Redpath, and indeed to the Jebusitical fraternity generally; and unless their reports did him grievous injustice, he certainly richly merited the character which I had heard bestowed upon him by the Elder—that of "a very wicked man." He was pronounced by the Jebusites, one and all, to be a reckless drunkard, a reviler of religion, and a blasphemous scoffer at everything which godly people are wont to revere. They regarded him not merely as a man to be shunned, but as one to be dreaded—a sort of moral leper. They felt that he had committed the unpardonable sin, and that it would be useless, if not impious, even to pray for him. They literally *quailed* at the mere mention of his name. He was admitted to be the possessor of consummate parts and learning, but it was said that he was a Man of Belial; that he feared not God, neither regarded man; that he prostituted his gifts in the vilest manner, and put forth the whole strength of his intellect to shipwreck the faith and ensnare the souls of all who came within the scope of his influence. And it was undeniable that, notwithstanding his character and antecedents, his influence among a certain portion of the community was considerable—far greater than Elder Redpath could pretend to possess. He was beyond all comparison the best surgeon in