

Once in seven years, at least, he demands a sacrifice, and some of our medicine men say it should annually be offered. The corn-spirit has had a vision for a long time, and is angry, we must pacify him, or we shall raise a corn, and there will be a famine in our nation. The Manitou of the Crow has sent you for a sacrifice to appease the offended spirit. Tomorrow you die."

"Will the manner of my death be painful?" Mignon asked.

"A wise ascetic, it will be painful, but not of long duration," said the Crow. "In the land of souls you will forget your sufferings and rejoice to see the corn growing green and tall to feed our hungry children."

"It is horrible!" exclaimed Mignon. Mignon had heard of the terrible ceremonial from trappers worthy of credence. As an instance was fresh in his memory of a young and handsome captive maiden having been immolated to the blood-thirsty spirit. In this case, the arms had been extended and held firmly, while fire was applied beneath them. A certain time, at the expiration of which, her person was pierced with innumerable arrows. The flesh was then cut into small pieces, and a drop of blood from each dropped into hills of the corn.

They pressed forward without stopping, though their progress was slow. The gloomiest night that Mignon ever experienced approached, and with it came a shower of rain, attended with thunder and lightning. Tallbear ordered a halt, watching the heavens with anxious expression.

"The Great Spirit is angry," said Mignon, hoping to turn the elemental strife to his advantage.

"Yes," answered the chief he is angry because the sacrifice is delayed."

"Not so; but for the reason that such a fearful rite is contemplated. While rebuking your wickedness with the thunder and lightning, he at the same time gives you rain to rot your corn, and he tells you that he can make it grow without you aid."

At that instant there was a terrific explosion, and the red, quivering lightning played around them. A ground trembled with the violence of the concussion. A large tree was shivered from its topmost branches to the roots, while an Indian who had been standing beneath it was stricken lifeless. A standing was awed. Ignorant of nature and her laws, thunder and lightning to him had supernatural origin, and indicated the displeasure of the Master of Life.

"Behold!" cried Mignon, "the avenging arm of God! He has turned his hand against you, he has smitten one of your braves. He is just; he does well; to him I commend my soul. I feel man, hear his awful voice and tremble; his mighty arm is rolling through the skies, and the leaves quake. He is over our heads—he is seeing us—his eyes are burning in the air with dreadful vengeance."

While Mignon was speaking lambent flames darting from above played around her pale cheeks. Tallbear recoiled, contemplating her with pallid visage and parted lips.

"Patience woman, thou art a great medicine man," he exclaimed.

"I am," she resumed, with more impressive emphasis, "but a perishable creature like thee, but I have skill in interpreting the will of the Great Spirit. I know what he desires of his children; and there is that within that tells me when his power will go forth in fearful fury to rebuke blood-thirsty warriors and lay low arrogant chiefs. Tallbear, listen! the Master of Life threatens! Hear his stern menace in the afflicted heavens!"

The maiden paused, and peal upon peal shook the mountains, while electrical flashes blazed blindingly around their summits, streaming down into the valley below in red-hot chains.

"It is thus," continued Mignon, with solemnity, "that the God of the white man and the red man manifests his indignation and his might."

He braves themselves prostrate upon the earth, covering their eyes with their hands. Tallbear only remained standing; he bowed his head upon his breast submissively.

"White woman, if the Master of Life is angry, what shall I do to turn aside his displeasure?" he asked.

"I will ask him," said Mignon, closing her eyes and crossing her arms upon her breast; she remained silent a few moments, then addressing the chief:

"The answer is (looking steadily at Tallbear), offer no more bloody sacrifices to the corn-spirit, for there is but one God that provides for all things, and he is the Master of Life."

"Inquire yet again, and ask him what I shall do with the paleface woman?" Mignon perceived that all depended upon the skillfulness of her reply. She was the most delicate and critical point of her purpose. She closed her eyes and crossed her arms again, to form a fitting answer.

"Find a woman among your people who has lost a daughter, and let her adopt this child of the paleface," she said.

The reply was judicious, for the suspicious of Tallbear might have been aroused, had she demanded her liberty at once.

"I will send for our medicine man, and they shall fast three days and see if the Great Spirit will confirm this," returned the Indian.

"The Master of Life speaks but once to man; he never repeats!" exclaimed Mignon, with a dignity and earnestness wondrous to Tallbear.

"That is well; he never repeats," he said, then looking searchingly at his captive, he added:

"And he never denies?"

"And he never denies?" repeated Mignon in the same tone. "But rain to rot the corn, and the power to resist when he has once declared his sovereignty will to man."

"Speak again to the Great Spirit and ask if the prisoner will make an attempt to escape?" Mignon saw at once the subtlety of this proposition.

"I have done," she said; "his presence is departing—his chariot wheels are rolling over the mountains. Be content and humble. Speak to me no more—I am dumb." Mignon turned her back to Tallbear, and assumed her former silent and hopeless attitude. Tallbear walked away and seated himself apart from his braves, apparently in a thoughtful mood.

In half an hour the storm passed; the rain ceased falling, the thunder was heard faintly rumbling at a great distance, while the lightning blazed against the far off sky with diminished brightness.

The party went on again, and in two hours drew in sight of a Crow village, in view of which they halted, it being their custom when they had lost warriors not to enter their village on their return, without an invitation from the friends of the slain. The dogs gave notice of their approach, and in a short time the sleepy natives were wakened, making suitable preparations to receive their warriors, who after considerable delay, were formally invited to enter the town. Mignon, though an object of much curiosity, was treated with respect. The tent which the unfortunate Balaam had succeeded in securing when his mistress left Callard's encampment, was taken from the horse upon which it had been carefully packed, and set up for her exclusive use by Tallbear, who clearly intended to treat her with distinction until her fate should be decided by the "medicine men."

The latter were called together early in the morning. The chief men then assembled with his original intention of sacrificing Mignon to placate the corn spirit; with what subsequently occurred during the storm of

thunder, and his own determination to the matter to those skilled in the ways of the invisible powers.

"No go," he added, "and have I built in some lonely spot, and fast asleep to your custom, and thus learn the will of Manitou of your people?"

Whether it was that the "medicine men" had no faith for fasting three days, or whether they believed they had already mastered the Master of Life had enlightened their minds in dreams and visions; and a little time, if left undisturbed, they would have made known his wishes. The three men accordingly withdrew to a lodge in the distance, and were forbidden to approach the lodge, and shuddered to think what was to be their fate. They could not think of their own souls—of a period of death anxiety to Mignon, who, solitary in her own room, was awaiting the conclusion of the rite. A woman came and set food before gliding out quickly and silently. The captive would have asked sympathetically of her own sex with some faint hope of compassion, but the opportunity was not offered.

Mignon sought the consolations of prayer, and faith. She petitioned God, that courage fervor that her condition was well calculated to awaken, seeking that strength that unshrinking fortitude which only can impart. She endeavored to lift her thoughts and aspirations in that, with which all probability she would soon be parted. She felt like one entering a terrible mystery; death, prayer, even to reconcile her to the change, so hard for the youthful heart to relinquish earth.

"Daughter of the paleface, come!" was the voice.

It was Tallbear who spoke; he had come to the lodge, and the verdict of the medicine men. She found the Indian assembled on a platform near their village, in close neighborhood to a large field of corn. She followed with modesty and melanoly, her beauty and grace attracting much attention and remark. The medicine men were in a circle formed by the principal of the village; next the latter were the while the third and last ring were composed of women and children—a motley, chattering rabble. When Mignon reached the circle where the three prophets were seated, Tallbear addressed them.

"What," he asked, "says the Master of the Crow nation?"

"That the love of life is strong, and all wish to live to enjoy summer and autumn," was the response.

Mignon heard the rejoinder, and though the chief made up her mind for the worst, she revived a little. "Summer and autumn?" These words had a meaning they never possessed. She could not refrain from turning her eyes towards the glorious landscape, the eternal lamp of nature. The rays of her childhood, before she understood the meaning of the word "death."

"A gentle breeze from the west blew on her face and through her hair."

"O, God!" she exclaimed, "why hast thou not enjoyed this forever! Why hast thou not placed the grave before mortals, and called to a baptism of pain?"

"To do," said Tallbear.

"And he added, moreover," resumed the spokesman of the medicine men, "he createth all things, and causeth the dead to grow."

"I am saved!" thought Mignon. "The prophet went on."

"But he might some time for the paleface, he has given it in charge of a spirit whose duty it is to turn aside his displeasure. The paleface woman said that the Master of Life loveth not blood, but it was the God of the white man that said so."

"There is but one God!" said Mignon, who saw her last hope passing away.

"The red man does not serve the paleface," resumed the prophet. "Every nation has its deity, and no two are alike. We follow the voice of the Great Spirit, and no other will hear. Behold what he has given us! Look at the boundless prairie-grounds, the mighty plains, the shadowy green forests where he has bested us, and go after strange gods who have given us neither country or lands, lakes, rivers, nor mountains? White woman, the Indian did not make himself, but one greater made him with all his instincts. He is nature change! Can he be other than himself? He is the Master of Life. See me—rejoice! study me! I am what I am, not by my own will, but by the will of the Great Spirit. He is not so soft and weak like you; he does not love cities and the arts of men. He is the hunter and the warrior. And why? Because it was so decreed an Indian, and I thank the Great Spirit! Thus you see the power that he reconciles me to be what I am, and he is wise. It is so with you. You are true to your nature, and I shall be to mine. The manner and customs of nations differ, but we are all children of the Great Spirit. We seem barbarous to you and contemptible to us. Pale girl, the Master will give him drink."

"Last night the Great Spirit," said Mignon.

"He drinks not water," said the prophet. "Police, capable of being applied by the Crown for the prevention of crime, and the speedy apprehension of offenders deserves your attentive consideration. The increasing wealth and prosperity of the country demand increased protection for property as the advance of civilization demands more and more the strict enforcement of law by the perfect sense of security from outrage. It is to you that I must look for the power of ensuring these great objects. I have spoken of our increasing prosperity, so mark of our power can be stronger than that afforded by our extended lines of Railways, nor is the progress confined to one section of the province, Eastward to St. Thomas and Westward to Guelph and Hamilton these lines are already completed. I may congratulate you on the fact that since your last meeting nearly 250 miles have been got into working order, whilst it is supposed that no less than 250 more will be finished before next year. Legislative reforms are not dead, both in Eastern and Western Canada. One measure at least will be submitted to you having reference to this important subject. It may not be possible in the present session to effect all that you desire, yet I trust that some progress will be made in simplifying the procedure and facilitating the working of our courts by the adoption of practical amendments."

I should see with great satisfaction, the adoption by you of any general measure, which tended still more to abridge your Legislature's labors, in providing for the incorporation and for laying down the conditions of Provincial questions of every kind. I regret, however, that the present session of the Legislature directed to be laid before you, show too clearly the want of improvement in the construction and disposition of our Jails. You will present my best regards to your minister."

"Pale girl, you have courage," said Tallbear, in a low tone. "I would have you if I could, for your voice has a wondrous melody."

it, and your beauty is like that of the spirit-maid in the farland of souls. Maiden, the arrow that enters your bosom will give pain to the heart of all. But the Great Spirit is wise. It is better that you should be taken from my sight," then in a louder voice: "Daughter of the Longlives, we will not send you unprovided to the land of shadows, your horses shall go with you, and your beautiful lodge, that you may have a horse to ride and a lodge to dwell in."

Tallbear waved his hand and the circling horde of warriors, women and children opened before him.

"Look!" said he, pointing through the narrow lane made, "ponder your horses, and your lodge has been taken from you, and is packed upon them. When you reach the country of spirits, you will not have long to wait for your horses; you find every thing as it was in this world, and the black man with the strong arms will be there to attend you; he is waiting you now, when he sees your large horse he will hasten to prepare him for your use, and he will hang your little rifle on the saddle if you should want to hunt the deer."

Mignon saw the animals at a short distance, prepared as if for a journey. The one she usually rode, seeing his mistress, erected his ears and neighed; a proof of affection which called tears to her eyes. With a parting glance at the noble creature that had borne her so uncomplainingly for so many miles, she submitted herself to the commands of Tallbear.

"Place me quickly, and let it be soon over," she said.

The chief led her to the centre of the circle.

"This is the spot, here is a bandage to cover your eyes. Your horse is not big enough to see the bow bent and the arrow pointed; you would shrink and run away, or swoon with terror."

"I will do neither; since it is my duty to die, I will die as becomes the daughter of the great paleface nation!"

There was a general murmur of approbation.

"It is good," said Tallbear. Then in a whisper, "Never had the corn-spirit a more beautiful offering, your eyes are like the stars when the hunter's knife is at its throat, hanging over its small neck. Pale girl you have power over Tallbear!"

The Indian gazed a moment at Mignon with a softened expression—his strong hand trembled while placing her in the attitude deemed fitting; and more than once he hesitated and looked at the horses; some half formed purpose appeared to agitate him.

"Maiden, be firm—the way to the land of souls is towards the west, and your swift horses will fly like birds along the path."

With a heavy breath much like a sigh of regret, the chief left Mignon, who stood with her face toward the open space in the circle. The ribbon or scarf of high colored stuff which covered the lower portion of her person was suffered to fall a little to the left side, while over the breast she placed the gift of Ravensclaw—a raven wrought in beads.

"Let your bowman stand at this, my heart is beneath it," she said, with a calmness that surprised the grim warriors and raised another lump of admiration.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Herald,

CARLETON-PLACE, FEB. 21, 1856.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

Toronto, February 15, 1856.

Today, at half-past three, his Excellency the Governor General proceeded in state to the Chamber of the Legislature, the Parliament building. The members of the Legislative Council being assembled, his Excellency was placed to command the attention of the Legislature Assembly, and that House being present, his Excellency was pleased to open the second Session of the fifth Parliament of the Province of Canada, by the following Speech from the throne:—

SIR, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst., in relation to the proposed amendment of the Act for the better regulation of the trade between the Province of Canada and the United States, and in reply to inform you that the same has been referred to the Committee on Commerce and Trade, and that they will report thereon at the next meeting of the Council.

I have also the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst., in relation to the proposed amendment of the Act for the better regulation of the trade between the Province of Canada and the United States, and in reply to inform you that the same has been referred to the Committee on Commerce and Trade, and that they will report thereon at the next meeting of the Council.

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on us to take care that such punishment does not afford itself fresh opportunity for debasing the criminal and instructing him in vice.

The Board of Audit constituted by the Act of last session, is already at its duty, and will I trust continue to induce a satisfactory examination of the Public Accounts. With regard to the Militia Act the ready loyalty of the inhabitants both in Upper Canada and Lower Canada, has enabled me to authorize the formation of numerous troops, and companies of volunteers. Their conduct and discipline will undoubtedly do credit to the Province. I have, moreover, with the assistance of my Adjutant-General, done my best to carry out your wishes, by organizing the militia.

The Government, in pursuance of the wishes of the Legislature, have taken upon themselves to conclude by fresh arrangement, calculated to secure the line of ocean steamers from the St. Lawrence to England, during the approaching season.

The timber trade being depressed is a source of deep regret to me and others who have at heart the welfare of the Province. I trust we are about to witness its revival, and that the commerce of Quebec and Montreal will suffer but a temporary check.

The accounts of the Legislature Assembly: The accounts of last year, and the estimates of the present will be laid before you.

You will find that, on the whole, our finances are in a satisfactory state. The people at large have reaped the benefit of those reductions in the customs duties which you made last year. The diminution in receipts consequent upon such reductions nearly correspond with the calculation submitted to you by my advisers. A large decrease has been caused by the Reciprocity treaty with the United States more than can be made up by the increased duties and the facility of intercourse between the two countries. It will be the duty of my Council to ask you in the present session for such supplies for Her Majesty as you may see fit to grant.

Honorable Gentlemen and Gentles. The year passed indeed has been one of difficulty and conflict in Europe.

On this side of the Atlantic, by the blessing of Providence, we have escaped the direct evils of war. In no part of the Queen's dominions, however, has deeper sympathy with her arms been shown, or more fervent prayers for their success been offered than in Canada.

Our people watched every turn of the contest, and consisting as they do of men of French and English origin, equal members of the same free community and loyal subjects of the same Queen, they have grieved at the sufferings and exulted in the successes of the Allied armies. In like manner should we please God to establish a firm and honorable peace, Canada, I doubt not, will rejoice at the termination of the war. May it be my lot before the end of the present session to congratulate you on such an auspicious event. At present I have only to leave you in the discharge of your important duties.

The Speech having been read as given above.

Sir Allan MacNab moved, seconded by Mr. Solicitor-General Smith that the Speech from the Throne be taken into consideration on Monday next.

Mr. Brown said that they would be prepared to go on on Monday provided those members not present would be here by that time. If they were not present it perhaps could be postponed till Tuesday.

Sir Allan MacNab stated his wish at once to change the motion to Tuesday if it would be more convenient.

Hon. Mr. Merritt regretted that it should be put off at all. Honorable members should come prepared to go on with the business.

Mr. Brown said that he was prepared, but there were several members not yet present, and they might be here to-morrow morning at the latest.

The motion was then altered to Tuesday, and put and carried.

Sir Allan MacNab moved, seconded by Attorney-General Drummond, that the votes and proceedings of this House be printed by a person appointed by the Speaker; and the person so appointed be one so appointed be permitted to print the same. Carried.

Sir Allan MacNab, seconded by Mr. Attorney-General Drummond, moved the list of Standing Committees—Privileges and Elections—was then presented several persons.

Mr. Hartman presented two petitions from the Council of the United Counties of York and Peel both of which were read. The one prayed the House to abolish sectarian schools, in the other the Council prayed to be relieved of providing pison for the criminals of the County of York.

Hon. W.B. Robinson presented several petitions from the Council of the County of Simcoe—One to compel the Northern Railroad Company to fence part of their line, one in reference to a Prohibitory Law, and the other on the Separate School question.

The House then adjourned until Monday, at three o'clock.

The people of Canada are gifted with no mean ideas relating to "the future progress and greatness of their country." The Britannia Tubular Bridge, in England, is justly considered to be the greatest engineering work of the world; but Canadians have the courage to engage in building a bridge over the St. Lawrence, at Montreal, which when completed, will completely dwarf the now famous Tubular Bridge referred to. Judging from an article on the subject in the Canadian Railway Guide, which contains the report of Robert Stephenson and A.M. Ross on the subject, we believe they will make a bold attempt to execute it at a cost of \$7,000,000. The bridge is designed to be composed of huge wrought-iron tubes like the Britannia Bridge, and the works to carry out the plan was commenced in 1854, some of which are already completed, such as approaches on the north side 1344 feet; approaches on south side, 1033 feet, and two abutments, 484 feet. These are completed, a most permanent structure. The work is 250 miles have been got into working order, whilst it is supposed that no less than 250 more will be finished before next year. Legislative reforms are not dead, both in Eastern and Western Canada. One measure at least will be submitted to you having reference to this important subject. It may not be possible in the present session to effect all that you desire, yet I trust that some progress will be made in simplifying the procedure and facilitating the working of our courts by the adoption of practical amendments."

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We publish, to-day, an advertisement of a Magazine of Natural History, which is about to be commenced in the city of Ottawa. The pages of the Canadian Naturalist and Geologist will be devoted to the Zoology and Geology of the British Provinces of North America. It must be readily admitted; by all, that such a publication is highly desirable; and it is to be hoped the publisher will receive that encouragement which his enterprise demands.

The Citizen very truly remarks that "every young man should know something about the Geology and Natural History of his native country. He should endeavor, in his leisure moments, to make this a large share of his general stock of knowledge, and he will find that in after life thousands of occasions will arise, when he will not regret that he acquired such information. The resources of a young country cannot be speedily developed without the intelligent application of the principles of these branches, and we think it a wise resolution of the Legislature to encourage, by liberal grants, the different institutions devoted to these subjects. There are certain great problems connected with the laws of animal life, the investigation of which is of the very highest national importance. The dreadful ravages of certain species of insects upon the vegetable food of man have frequently plunged nations into the horrors of famine. How to guard against such visitations cannot be known until we shall have attained to a more profound knowledge of Natural History than that contained by the most learned men of the world. So little progress has been made towards the solution of this great question that we are at this moment no further advanced in it than was the human race 5,000 years ago. Of this much only we are certain. The road to it lies through Natural History. The more widely this science is diffused, the greater the host of observers, the nearer we shall be to the desired end. Man has nearly all his friends and foes in the animal vegetable and mineral kingdoms. Some furnish food or shelter, others with clothing, food, or cures for his ailments, while still others destroy continually his subsistence, rob him of his labors, or with their poisons slay him. It is useful knowledge to recognize our friends from our foes, and such is simply the knowledge of Natural History. For these, and a host of similar reasons that might be stated, we conceive that the objects of the proposed new journal are at least good. There is no part of the world in the same latitude more rich in Natural History objects than Canada; but from a pretty extensive examination of the subject we are satisfied that these have not been as fully explored and laid open to the reading world as their importance demands. It would be difficult to point out more than thirty published papers on this subject, so far as it relates to Canada; and these are most of them not easily procured by the general reader. In the Canadian Naturalist and Geologist an attempt will be made not only to collect, review and compile all the information hitherto published concerning the material productions of these provinces, but also to give an account of many new discoveries not yet published before the scientific world."

Some of our contemporaries contain an advertisement issued from the local commissionaire's office, Montreal, for tenders for the execution of works and repairs at the Montreal, St. Helens, St. Johns, Chamblay, Sorel, Isle aux Noix, Coteau du Lac, Rideau Canal, and Ottawa Canal Light Stations. This is a doubtless in anticipation of the war in the east being brought to a close early in the ensuing season. It is not likely Government would immediately disband its extra troops; and consequently, must provide accommodation all elsewhere than at home. The barracks at all the above stations are therefore to be put in immediate repair, and we may expect to have some ten thousand men sent to this country should the war accede, as it is said he will, to the negotiations now on foot.

These works, we learn from the Transcript, will cost a large sum of money to make them habitable; and if it be true, that "coming events cast their shadows before," we are not likely to be abandoned by England for some time to come.

The Toronto papers give a melancholy picture of the Western capital. "The Globe" says: "the frequency of the robberies that have lately taken place in our city, and the boldness with which they are executed, causes no little alarm among our citizens."

And the "Old Countryman" blackens the picture still more. He says "If the present state of things shall be permitted much longer the Governor General must be a bold man to hold the meeting of Parliament to be held here. The number of offences against person and property are increasing so fast in audacity and frequency, that decisive action on the part of the City authorities is imperiously called for. If this month shall pass over without bloodshed, it will be of God's mercy and not man's forethought, forbearance or charity."

T. B. Macaulay, Esq., has issued a farewell address to his Edinburgh constituents. He therein states that his health has long been in a very delicate state; that the experience of the last two years has convinced him that he cannot ever again reasonably expect to be able to fulfill the duties required of him by the public; and that by trespassing longer upon the indulgence of his constituents he should prove himself entirely unworthy of it. He had, therefore, applied to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, and believed the new writ would be issued on the first day of the session. We are sure it is the earnest wish of all, that his retirement from active duties will prove beneficial; and that the hon. gentleman's health will be so far restored as to enable him shortly to resume his History of England—the remaining volumes of which are looked for with so much anxiety and interest.

A man named Johnson, residing in the vicinity of Thamesville, while in London on Tuesday last, committed suicide, by hanging himself. It is said he was a man of intemperate habits.

CIVIC DIGNITY.—From a contemporary we learn that the members of the City Council of Chicago have voted \$1,000 to buy themselves gold-headed canes!

MODERN EMPIRICISM.

(For the C. P. Herald.)

Mr. Editor.—In my last, I endeavored to show, that, where persons uninformed as to the nature and cure of disease, attempt to act upon the decisions of blind chance or bold presumption, the results can hardly be expected to be satisfactory. In this chance warfare, where the