

on some theological doctrine, and keep hammering at it until we others either dropped asleep or got up and left him to his monologue. He had only been one year reading divinity, and he had all the zeal of a novice in expatiating on what he had learned. It must be admitted that he was often very trying to the patience, and even the temper, of his companions.

Jim Grew, who was really the chief of the party, although hired as our guide, cook and general utility man, was a splendid specimen of manhood, notwithstanding that the snows of sixty winters had whitened his hair and beard. He stood six feet in his moccasins (when he wore them—which, of course, he did not in the woods), and he was as straight as an arrow and as lithe and active as a panther. This, undoubtedly, was the result of a life spent entirely in the open air, regulated by the laws of temperance—which obtain nowhere so absolutely as on the lone prairie or in the forest primeval—and of the constant exercise enjoyed in the work of securing the spoils of wild animals, on which he had depended for his subsistence and the materials for trading. He was accomplished in all woodcraft. An expert hunter of all manner of game with rifle or trap, he was also an axeman of unparalleled skill. There was apparently nothing—certainly nothing in the shape of rough carpentry that I could think of—that he could not fashion with that axe of his, from a log cabin or a 'shack' of cedar 'shakes,' to any primitive article of furniture that might happen to be needed. Around the camp fire, as we smoked our pipes before turning in, he was the most delightful—and, I am positive, the most truthful of raconteurs, drawing for his narrative on the chequered experiences of his life in the woods and on the prairies, among the various tribes of Indians, and in pursuit of big and small game in various parts of the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Very often these reminiscences of his began, drolly enough, with the introductory phrase: "One day, me and another Indian," and if any of his audience smiled at the inference naturally to be drawn

from the expression Jim allowed no other indication of his consciousness of the joke against himself to appear than a twinkle in the corner of his eye, but continued gravely with his story between the puffs from his briar.

As might be expected from a man who had, for so many years, been alone—at least, so far as white companionship was concerned—in the wilderness of wood or prairie, face to face with nature, Jim had deep, though unobtrusive, convictions on the subject of religion. It was not, perhaps, the religion of any particular church—indeed, I am sure it was not—but it was a creed founded on the Bible with the book of nature as its companion volume and commentary. Of theology, in the commonly accepted sense of the term, he knew little or nothing, yet, as I had afterwards reason to know, when I came to be closely intimate with him, on subsequent hunting trips, a more devout and simple-minded Christian could not be found anywhere. Hence, I think—nay, I am sure—that he used to get very tired of Melville's interminable reproductions, for our benefit, of the lectures he had heard the winter before at Knox College.

As for myself—the last of the trio—I was, and am still, simply one of that numerous, and not particularly in any way notable class of men who are condemned—for their sins, doubtless—to dig a more or less precarious living out of an ink bottle.

However divergent—as already stated—we three were in our normal modes of life and thought, in our callings and pursuits, we were, nevertheless, as one in our love for life in the woods, "far from the madding crowd," in the bosom of the foothills of the grand old Rockies; and, with the one drawback of Melville's theologic prosing, a most delightful time we had of it. Game of all kinds was abundant, and Melville, who, very properly, devoted himself to the apostolic occupation of fishing rather than to shooting (he was a very poor shot, by the way), got the finest kind of sport in the stream that ran past our headquarters.