

possibly the last to be expected. "Pshaw" says Jack, "not worth a rush," so we started to investigate. The house, from the outside, seemed to consist of innumerable additions, in which the main building had become extinct. Every addition was small and took a fresh level; add to this an insufficiency of foundation, and the gentle rise and fall of the flooring was accounted for. The cleanliness, inside and out, was spotless. Snowy floors and tables, pewter that reflected the day's brightness, glimpses of pantries where the shelves looked like some lace-flooned belle, methodical rows of caddies and boxes, and the character of the chief of the interior lay revealed. No idle hands there, no tasks begun and left unfinished. Jack sniffed, and promised himself a cosy supper and toddy after the first big day in the marshes. Every room opened into two or three more, and a vista was afforded which ended in kitchen and yard beyond. A shrill voice came borne on the morning air; evidently these maids lived under martial law. The voice was answered by the occupant of the cage in the window. The parrot put his head on one side in a reflective way; "what'll y' ave," says he, "brandy hot?" "No," says Jack, "I'll take Canadian Club." Then, with a surprising swiftness, and in the exact tone of one from the inside room, "be quick, will you," says Poll.

The yard, clean as the house, was teeming with creatures alive and dead; dogs of all sizes and kinds, chiefly pointers and setters, with a few retrievers thrown in, Rock, Bobtail, Brandy and Soda, all coming forward, some with a warning, some with a welcoming bark. And then there was Rags, the very most knowing Scotch terrier in the country. There were quacking tame ducks and gabbling geese, fowls, and a full-blown turkey-cock with his harem; and upon the broadside of the barn a ghastly collection of crucified wild geese. Spread out, tip to tip, they looked an incredible breadth; some were comparatively fresh, the feathers scarcely spoiled, and varied from that to all stages of composition and skeleton form. The landlady told us two of the birds were from eggs taken out of a wild nest and hatched by a civilized goose, but that as they emerged from goslinghood they became so fierce no one dare go into the yard unarmed. The end of it was her husband shot then and nailed them up with the rest. Aloft in the shed was a glistening mass of dark and beautiful plumage; dark greens and blues, soft greys, and bits of golden brown where partridge and quail hung among the ducks, a few sober landrails, some pigeons, a wild goose or two, an enormous trumpeter, and the long dangling legs of a heron. Such an array, and all belonging to a Toronto man, he of the dog and gun, who was, as the landlady termed it, "a professional." "But a gent from Detroit beat him by fifty."

About the dining room, as everywhere else, a quaint simplicity prevailed, and ducks prevailed still more. In time we might ejaculate *Toujours Perdrix*, but at first flush it seemed almost sacrilegious to see those birds stuffed with sage and onions, stewed, or put to any other indignity of a culinary kind.

The village was after the same pattern, no one in a hurry; the very children went to school in a leisurely way, befitting a place where there was an intermittent boat service and no railway. The river,

the flat-bottomed barges, the general dilapidation, the want of new paint, made the *tout ensemble* a living Dutch landscape, with only one incongruous feature in a modern swing bridge. But it swung heavily and slowly, accommodating itself to its surroundings. Modern cottages with frantic little bow-windows mingled with old log houses; and close by the water's edge was one habitation, taut and tidy, the cabin of some wreck, its small windows gaily curtained and the low, open door revealing a cradle and baby, a healthy looking young woman working about, and in a rack on the wall a gun and fishing tackle. A water-spaniel stood in the doorway, barking at the unfailing brood of tame ducks, which went with every homestead. The river swarmed with these broods, and in them all were gleams of wild plumage. Monstrous snags, some nearly hidden, others lifting a warning finger, together and the narrowness of the stream, seemed to make navigation a problem. A sharp, positively an alert, whistle, warned us of the coming boat; looking up from the sombre shore it seemed a Leviathan. It filled the channel and forced the water inshore, making a commotion out of keeping with all else. As far as eye could reach there was nothing but brown grass and rushes, and at the very limit of the horizon, which seemed lifted in air, a solitary tree and two gaunt windmills broke the line. I asked a boy playing on the shore what the windmills were for. To that side, he said, there were farmlands, and the water had to be pumped off them! He also told us rattle-snake and copperhead stories, and I picked up a small specimen of the latter reptile—need I say dead—crushed and no bigger than a worm, but an undoubted copperhead. The pig was the snakes enemy we were told; one jump and his sharp hoof "did for" a wriggler. We turned homewards, leaving behind us no sight but rush and sky, no sound but the sighing and swishing of reeds.

That swing bridge deserves a word. Leaning on its substantial white rail the view up stream was not a thing of beauty. Ugly sawmills, piles of stacked cordwood, a motely crowd of barges, tugs and scows, some grain-laden schooners; the trim little steam-yacht of mine host, in which he and his sporting friends get to the Sni; a huge creature called the Glenfinlas; some walnut trees overhanging the shore, with now and then a splash as a nut falls in, all this as in a picture, when the bridge-keeper offered me "a ride." In a moment we were swinging round, while at either end of the roadway horses and carts, school children and other patient folk, waited. The keeper, Jim Blake, was communicative, giving many interesting stories of the Flats, its game and its yearly visitors. Like other old people he thought "things are not what they used to be." Every year more land went under water and the river became shallower, and "as fer ducks, they'll never leave off until every feather is blown away." He did not approve of preserving Walpole Island as in places so preserved "there was a man for every duck." The farm where his father had lived, and where he himself was born, was then under water and shot over by sportsmen. He was rather hazy as to whether the land had sunk or the water had risen; but the result was the same, and it all happened in one season. The crops were left standing to rot. And that was sixty years ago.

With the haze of late autumn upon the landscape, and the drone of the old man's voice in my ears, I fell to wondering what it might be in the sixty years to come, this collection of lagoons, sluggish rivers and insecure islands. Are the dream-days of the hunter to pass away? In this region there does not seem much danger of disturbance; the grasses wave defiance at settlements, and while, in the oases of solid earth, villages may rise up and flourish, there will still remain miles upon miles of dun waste where red-head and canvas-back, broad-bill and widgeon can take their chances against the gun, and where the wild-geese, in his autumnal eighty miles an hour, may see little but brown tint and still pools beneath him.

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At six in the morning Jack, abominably cheerful, put his head inside my door. "Glorious morning! Cold drizzle, and they say we're sure to have sleet-snow-and-wind by eleven. You can't come. Ta-ta."

As Jack is still carrying about some of my shot in the calf of his leg, it is probably as well that I can't come.

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"Ya-honk! Ya-honk!"—they know him well;

His meaning none hath need to tell.
He counts them all with anxious eye,
Then southward, like the storm, they fly,
While ever and anon the note
Falls from his red and panting throat
"Ya-honk!"

"Ya-honk! Ya-honk!" 'tis in the night
He takes his wild and weird flight.
He leads his wild wives through the sky
With winkless and unerring eye.
He guides them sure from dark to dawn;
He comes—"Ya-honk! Ya-honk!" he's gone!

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PROFESSOR DRUMMOND'S "ASCENT OF MAN."

Dr. Drummond's Lowell lectures, published under the above title, have already been noticed in the columns of THE WEEK. Nevertheless, in view of other criticisms, some further notice may not be without interest and value. It is not too much to say that, upon the whole, the "scientific" world, in so far as it has given forth any voice, has spoken the very reverse of favourably; indeed it has been said that the lectures are of no scientific value whatever; "that whatever is true is borrowed; whatever is strained, false and inclusive is the author's own." We have some faint recollection of reading, some years ago, when the world was all agog with Darwin's Origin of Species, that similar things were said of the great naturalist by certain savants, and even if science, it may surely be said, that the wisdom of to-day is the folly of the morrow. Certainly in these days, when the horizon of possible knowledge is ever broadening, we are all at the mercy of the specialist; and, most emphatically, the busy life of a Canadian clergyman forbids him to enter thoroughly into any line of scientific research, yet, if he has a sympathy for human kind, few men come more into contact than he with the varied phases of the thought of the day, from the hard-headed, practical lumberman, to whose shanty occasionally comes a stray quarterly, to the philosopher at whose table he may occasionally set. And to those who, with the writer, believe that the work of soul-saving is the building up of character,