

brows had nothing mean or treacherous in their depths. "I am camping for a few weeks with some miners a few miles from here, and chancing to come across this settlement, was amazed to find the Indians not only living and dressing like civilised whites, but actually speaking Broad Scotch. I could gain no reliable information from outside parties, and so I came to the fountain head. I trust you will pardon me if I intrude."

"Will you kindly be seated, sir," said my strange host, after I had finished speaking, "and take some refreshment after your walk."

I sat down, and he proceeded to mix a couple of glasses of steaming toddy, one of which he handed to me with grave politeness. We pledged each other in silence. Then he gave me a pipe and some tobacco, saying briefly, "You smoke, I suppose?"

I judged it best to fall in with his mood and did not attempt to force conversation, and for at least an hour we sat and smoked, without exchanging a single word. Several times, on looking at him, I found his eyes fixed on me with a sort of sad curiosity, and when at last he spoke, I fancied his voice trembled.

"Do you know," he said, "that you are the first man of my own station in life to whom I have spoken in twenty years?"

I looked my surprise and pity, and he went on: "There are the miners, of course, but I do not encourage them to invade my domains," and he smiled somewhat disdainfully; and looking at his grand, rugged face and aristocratic bearing, I was forced to admit that miners were no fit companions for him. Still, was not a white man, however rude and ignorant, more companionable than an Indian?

He must have read my thoughts, for he said sadly: "I am as utterly alone as if I were on a desert island. I am a sort of deity to these simple savages by whom I am surrounded. I have lived with them here for twenty years, and taught them what I could, but as for educating them to be fit associates and congenial companions for cultivated white men, the thing is utterly impossible, in

this generation at least. There is no foundation on which to work, and without foundation, you know, no man can build. I have taught them to speak broad Scotch for the pleasure of hearing my native tongue; it is the only link which binds me to the chain of the past."

"But have you neither wife nor child?" I ventured to ask.

"No!" he thundered, with such angry vehemence that he startled me. "I have had neither wife nor child. I never shall have—God pity me! Never dare mention that subject to me again." He strode back and forth through the room with fierce, angry strides, looking, as I fancied, the prophets of old must have looked when denouncing the sins of the people. I felt that any words of apology I could utter would be quite inadequate to make amends for my ill-timed question, so held my peace.

"Forgive me," he said at last, stopping before me and holding out his hand. "There are some wounds which never heal, and you have inadvertently touched mine. You know the old rhyme, 'a shaft at random sent'; and now, will you go away please, I wish to be alone. But come again to-morrow and spend a few days with me. Sometime, perhaps, I may tell you my story," and with another warm shake of the hand he opened the door and bowed me out.

The friendship, so strangely begun, progressed rapidly. I went to see my new friend the next day, and remained with him for a week, but although he treated me with unvarying kindness, and gratified my curiosity to the fullest extent with regard to his present surroundings, even admitting me to the little church where, morning and evening, he conducted service with a rigid adherence to the old Scotch Covenant style, he wrapped himself and his past in a veil of impenetrable reserve which I dared not attempt to unfold.

On the last night of my stay, however, after we had smoked for a long time in silence, he asked abruptly, his piercing eyes noting closely every muscle of my face, "Do you believe me guilty of any crime?"

I was thankful, how thankful I cannot