

## The Story That Won Third Place in Short Story Competition

"THE TEST OF COURAGE," by Harold C. Hudson.

White Swan Feather's heart was heavy. He paced up and down before the lodges of the encampment, and sullenly bewailed the fate that had allowed him, a haughty Iroquois, to be captured by his tribe's worst enemies—the Nipissing Algonquins. Spared from the cruel torture-stake on account of his splendid physique, he was treated with scorn and derision by those who were now nominally his fellow-tribesmen. Particularly bitter did ridicule and derision seem to him when uttered by the graceful Wachita, or worse still, his rival, the favoured Flying Hawk.

Wachita was the daughter of the chief of the tribe. She was a typical example of the Indian woman at her best. Of medium height, her figure was attractively proportioned by a perfection inherited from her sturdy ancestors, and developed by her own active out-door life. White Swan Feather had been instantly attracted by her beauty, and had only borne the taunts and insults of the band in order that he might be near the one who had taken his heart by storm. His love she had haughtily scorned, however, with the stinging rebuke that he must demonstrate before all that he possessed undoubted courage, before daring to approach the daughter of the mighty chief, Ohonta.

"O, Manitou of the waters," White Feather implored, "grant me but a chance to show that I am mighty of heart, and worthy of the fair Wachita!"

The mighty falls of the Ottawa roared on, apparently unconscious of the appeal of the wounded spirit. The band was encamped just a few hundred yards from the cataract of the Chaudiere, which Champlain had

seen for the first time but a few years before. The roar of the waters served as a guide to the forage parties as they roamed the Gatineau hills, and the proximity of a struggling settlement of French from Trois Rivières assured them of food and protection in times of famine and danger, for by this time the bitter feud of white man and savage had smouldered itself out. An irregularly-placed row of birch-bark wig-wams, three smoking camp-fires, and several utidy piles of firewood comprised the principal inanimate objects of the encampment. Several busy squaws, and numerous half-clad and repulsive looking children represented the life of the place. The hunters were away and White Swan Feather was left in charge of the camp—the least dignified and most tiresome of occupations imaginable.

But if man's handiwork was not pleasing, Nature's efforts in the surrounding country still retained their pristine charm and beauty. The winding river, ever-narrowing and deepening for its plunge over the precipitous falls of the Caldron, glittered like a band of silver in the afternoon sun. To the east rose the massive cliffs, which two centuries later were to be crowned with the administrative buildings of a great nation, but whose only adornment now was a towering forest of sturdy evergreens and hardy maples. Away in the distance to the north, undulating hills, carpeted with the delicious greenery of the early summer season, seemed to lead into a veritable Promised Land.

But White Feather was in no mood to appreciate the beauties of the scene on which he gazed. His atten-