

Out on the tide flats splashed the deer. Right on its foamy track bounded the snarling brutes. To add to the poor thing's terror an Indian canoe shot out from the rancherie on the east bank, and took up the chase as fast as paddle strokes could urge it. About every twenty-fifth stroke the paddle was laid down and "ping" sang the rifle. Luckily, although the deer was a scant hundred yards from the rifle, and fifty from the dogs, the bounding of the animal and the rolling of the canoe made aim difficult, but the dogs were gaining, so we took a hand in the game and leaped into our canoe which we had left that morning on the flats. With might and main we urged the light cedarboard craft while rifle snapped and dogs bayed. Finally the pack caught up and the deer disappeared beneath a mass of churning heads and waving tails. Into this mass the Indian's canoe darted. With outstretched arm and flashing paddle he belabored that snarling pack. He had heard our cry, "Isk-kum nan-itsh mowitsh mah-kook" (take care of the deer, we buy it) but, when we arrived, it was hard to tell which was deer and which was dog, and, by George, which was Indian, as a few of the starving pack were off the shallow flats right into the canoe. Our paddles joined in the fray, and we soon beat off the mongrels and picked up the exhausted deer. It lay in the bottom of the canoe without a motion, but before we got ashore we had to tie the feet with bits of old burlap and bowline, as it recovered very much indeed. What a dainty plaything that Blacktail fawn became. Within a week it learned to search my hunting coat pocket for lump sugar or carrot, but even these dainties would not keep it away from Fritz. It followed him like his own shadow whenever he entered the wire enclosure we kept it in. Once it escaped at night and wandered along the lower edge of the high tidal cliffs. We found it next morning straddled, half drowned, across a tide-washed pile of flotsam, and it whistled and bleated for us, and actually tears ran down from its great brown eyes when Fritz passed his arms about it. The first thing in the morning and the last thing at night was a visit to "nimrod," and, of course, we did not go empty-handed. On Christmas Eve, as we were returning from a friend's home, Fritz ran into the deer yard and opened the pen. A few steps ahead of me, in the lantern light, I saw him raise his arms and fall into the straw with a loud wailing cry. I darted in and knelt beside him. His arms were around Nimmy's neck, his tears were falling on the shapely head. Alas! poor Nimmy, he had fallen before our over-feeding and kindnesses, and, on this eve of the sacred day, had died—"all alone while we were enjoying ourselves," as Fritz sobbed out.

Temperance is reason's girdle and passion's bridle, the strength of the soul and the foundation of virtue.—Jeremy Taylor.



While the footing is not easy. North Thompson Valley, B.C.

How the "Axe" Fell at Semlo

Written for The Western Home Monthly by Charles Dorian

TRAINMASTER McGuire blinked when he read the message handed to him by the operator at Benlow. It ran: "Go to Semlo and report to trainmaster Hughes as his assistant. All trainmasters' positions abolished effective this date."

He turned to the operator to ask for an explanation, thought better of it, paced the station platform until the train for Semlo arrived and departed in supreme dudgeon.

To the conductor who read his pass he nodded curtly instead of indulging in his wonted family talk.

"All trainmasters' positions abolished," he mused. "Hughes is one and I'm his assistant—h'm. Guess the other two trainmasters have been let out. Maybe it's lucky I've got a job at all. But Hughes is only a kid and away junior to me. This is war!"

He knew that he dared not protest in these days of drastic staff reductions and alterations but he would show Hughes that he'd have a Devil's own time of it with him as assistant.

"How d'ye do, Mr. McGuire?" greeted Hughes upon his arrival at Semlo. Hughes never used to say "Mister" and this aggravated him now.

"Mister, be hanged. What're you misterin' me for? I'm not your boss."

"I thought you was," said Hughes, insolently.

"You're his boss," calmly responded Hughes. "I've no jurisdiction in the matter."

"Boss, be blowed—you're my boss. What you talkin' about?"

Here the operator handed him a red envelope marked "confirmation of telegram." Before opening it McGuire recommended a choice location in Hades for Hughes. Hughes paid no attention to him but continued his conversation with the operator.

"It's certainly a shame," he said. "So many of the best men laid off. In lots of places no heed was paid to seniority—simply the worst men went. Here the senior ones stay regardless of ability."

McGuire broke open his message and read it and for the second time that day he turned upon an operator to begin a tirade, thought better of it and instead smiled broadly. "What d'ye know about that?" he asked Hughes, handing him the telegram, which read:

"J. G. McGuire, Superintendent, Benlow—

Go to Semlo and report on trainmaster Hughes as possible assistant. All trainmasters' positions abolished effective this date."

"Know all about it," replied Hughes. "Our Superintendent is now Superintendent of Terminals; Mr. J. G. McGuire is promoted to Superintendent and J. C. Hughes runs a pretty good show of being Assistant Superintendent effective this date."

McGuire fished the other message out of his pocket and asked Hughes what he knew about that also.



A Black Tail Buck

"You think that way and I will be. What d'ye want me here for?"

"When you calm down come around and talk to me," said Hughes, haughtily and walked away.

"Just as I thought," commented McGuire. "A fresh case of swelled head. I've a mind to throw up the job right here. This knucklin' down to a cub isn't goin' to agree with me. I would resign if times weren't so rotten. Such is war. If Hughes was a German I'd feel justified in choking him."

He noticed that the train he came in on was still in the station. He glanced at the trainmen and carmen blankly until one of the trainmen came up to him and spoke.

"Mr. McGuire, we've got a case of all pipes frozen and plenty of water in the expansion drum. What had we better do?"

"Go and ask Hughes, he's your boss. If it was up to me I'd fire you for not knowing your business. Lots of good men walking around looking for your jobs."

"But Mr. Hughes just sent me to you," offered the trainman.

"Oh, he did, did he? Well, go and light a fire in the Baker heater as you should have done long ago, then start the train and point out Hughes to me."

"There he is talking to the operator," indicated the trainman.

McGuire found him double-quick.

"What d'ye mean, Hughes, sendin' that dawdlin' train hand to me—what did you want me to do with him—preserve him in alcohol?"

"Oh, operator Bell, here has had the operator at Benlow sweating blood over his error. You never saw anyone more penitent. He's not married long and it would be a hardship for him to lose his job just now."

"Oh, we won't talk about losin' jobs—I'm too worried over my appetite just now—haven't had a bite since morning."

"Neither have I—been wonderin' what you'd think of me for Assistant. Guess we'll go and make it a banquet for two."

Denying the Master

Can the man who spoke those words of denial be the same man who stood up before the crowd on the day of Pentecost, the man who said to the impotent beggar at the Gate Beautiful, "Silver and gold have I none; but what I have that give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk?" Yes and no. Peter of the denial is Peter in the grip of the devil, whereas Peter of the day of Pentecost and of the Acts and the Epistles, is Peter cleansed through penitence, filled with God's spirit, and held fast in his Saviour's grasp.

Peter not only possessed the advantages, but was liable to the dangers of his big nature. Forceful, commanding personalities, whose nature is strong and vigorous, may go far either way—up or down. They don't do things by halves. When they yield themselves to God they do it whole heartedly, and the Christian

community in which they live and work feels the forward impulse of their adhesion to the Christian cause. They are men who do that little bit extra beyond the normal, which tells so much. It may be a little bit extra in effort, or in sacrifice, or in courage. In character, too, the forcefulness of their personality lifts them a notch or two above the average man. But they have dangers corresponding to their advantages. When, for example, they are despondent, their despondency is often of the darkest and blackest hue. And when they leave the paths of virtue, they are never content with the edge of the morass; they insist on going right into the midst of it. Such a man I judge Peter to have been. When such a man falls, he falls grievously.

(i) (a) By adopting Christ's standard of thought and action on Sunday, and the world's standard through the week. We deny our Lord when we teach one thing in the pulpit and the Sunday School class, and act an entirely different thing in our social and commercial relationships—perhaps laughing off the contradiction by the aid of some maxim like "Well, business is business," or "All's fair in love and war." Christianity only knows one moral code, and it is for all the days of the week alike. From the moral standpoint there is only one kind of true Christian, and that is the New Testament kind.

(b) By open infraction of the moral law. One of the saddest things that happen in connection with Christ's Church is when some highly-placed official sinks to embezzlement or adultery. At once the enemies of Christ are given an opportunity to blaspheme, and often they are not slow to take the chance. They say

"There's a Fine Christian For You—

a canting, psalm-singing humbug!" It is very sad when a man loses his eyesight through a boiler explosion or is stricken down in middle life by incurable disease, but moral degradation is sadder still. The blind man and the helpless invalid may keep their honor intact, but when the Christian's honor is gone he has denied his Saviour, and he has crucified afresh the Lord of life.

(c) When in Rome doing as Rome does, e.g., throwing a five-franc piece on to the roulette table at Monte Carlo, and seeking to stifle the reproving inner voice by remarking that everybody does it, that it is the recognised thing to do.

(d) By silence. When Christianity is spoken of slightly in your circle, does your tongue ever cleave to the roof of your mouth? Why? Because of your fear of man.

Your Fear of Ridicule?

Never let us be silent at such times. Let us blurt our testimony, however simple and however halting. Why should we be ashamed of our Lord? Why, indeed? As Livingstone said, "He has ever been 'a Gentleman of the strictest honor.'"

(ii) Denial is apt to move from less to more. In the case of Peter the first denial was the simple statement, "I know not what thou sayest," the second was accompanied by an oath; whereas the third was preceded by a bout of cursing and swearing. Note the tendency of one wrong act to bring others in its train.

(iii.) Hints for the avoidance of denial. (a) Beware the first suggestion of evil. Is it too much to say that the way was prepared for Peter's denial when he followed his Lord "afar off?" Pay heed to the earliest symptoms of coldness or indifference or slackness in your devotion to your Lord. As soon as you detect it throw yourself in humble penitence before your Saviour, and seek His pardon and restoring grace.

(b) Avoid the spirit of vaunting. Peter had been too boastful, much too vehement in his protestation that nothing would cause him to stumble and he was ready to die for his Master. In spite of all this the curiosity of a maidservant laid him by the heels. "Pride goeth before a fall." There is only one spirit in which the heavenly pathway can be trod. We must "walk humbly with our God."