

## The Family Circle.

### CURFEW-TIDE.

"The long day closes.  
The thrushes sing in every tree;  
The shadows long and longer grow;  
Broad sunbeams lie athwart the sea;  
The oxen low;  
Round roof and tower the swallows slide;  
And slowly, slowly sinks the sun,  
At curfew-tide,  
When day is done.  
Sweet Sleep, the night-time's fairest child,  
O'er all the world her pinions spreads;  
Each flower, beneath her influence mild,  
Fresh fragrance sheds;  
The owls, on silent wings and wide,  
Steal from the woodlands one by one,  
At curfew-tide,  
When day is done.  
No more clanging the rookery rings  
With voice of many a noisy bird;  
The startled wood-dove's clattering wings  
No more are heard;  
With sound like whispers faintly sighed,  
Soft breezes through the tree-tops run,  
At curfew-tide,  
When day is done.  
So may it be when life is spent,  
When ne'er another sun can rise  
Nor light one other joy present  
To dying eyes;  
Then softly may the spirit glide  
To realms of rest, disturbed by none,  
At curfew-tide,  
When day is done.

—S. Cornish Watkins, in *Chambers's Journal*.

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### MARJORIE'S CANADIAN WINTER.

BY AGNES MAULE MACHAR.

#### CHAPTER XI.

##### PERE LE JEUNE'S CHRISTMAS.

When Professor Duncan arrived at Dr. Ramsay's on Sunday afternoon, he found an expectant little audience awaiting him there. Gerald had especially requested that the professor should not be asked to tell the story until Sunday, in order that he might be there to hear it; and Ada, who was always glad to avail herself of any opportunity of being with Marjorie, had willingly accepted the invitation to come to hear it, too. Millie was delighted at the prospect of a "quite new" story, and Norman and Effie were rejoicing in the hope of bears and other wild beasts being in a story that was "all out in the woods." So the professor did not get any peace to talk, even about General Gordon and the slow progress of that relief expedition, on which the eyes of the civilized world were just then earnestly fixed; so many reminders did he get about the tale he had promised to tell.

"Well," he said, "my heart seems full of Gordon, and I think a good many of our hearts are heavy enough about him just now! But it oughtn't to be a long step from Gordon to Pere Le Jeune; for the cause was the same and the two men were actuated by the same spirit: the spirit that makes East and West, Frenchmen and Englishmen, Protestant and Jesuit one in serving the same Master and doing His work!"

"Yes, indeed," said Dr. Ramsay; "the longer I live the more I am persuaded that this is the only centre of unity, the only true uniting force."

"But we mustn't keep these young folks waiting for the story. I know, when I was their age, I wasn't so fond of morals as I am now, and it's rather hard to have it put at the very beginning instead of coming orthodoxically at the end," said the professor, with a smile at the expectant faces about him. And then he stretched himself out in his easy-chair, with one arm about Effie, who had perched herself on the side of it, and began his story, looking into the fire in a dreamy way, as if he were looking at the shadows of the things he had to tell.

"I told you then," he went on, "how this Pere Le Jeune and the brethren who were with him, had established themselves at their rude little mission-house of *Notre Dame des Anges*, where in winter the intense cold so penetrated the crevices of their log built walls, that even the great blazing fires they kept up in their wide fireplaces would not keep their ink from freezing unless it was kept close to the fire! It was well for Pere Le Jeune that he had this preparatory training for his next winter.

"He and his comrades were working away trying to get some knowledge of the Indian language from a rascally Indian who had been taken over to France, where he had been baptized and had got a little surface scratching of Christian instruction, with probably a good deal more inoculation of civilized vices an awful misnomer that, by the way! This Indian's name was Pierre, and you may as well remember it, as he is a prominent figure in the story.

"Besides learning all he could from Pierre, whom he used to bribe with tobacco when he began to get tired of his task of instructor, Pere Le Jeune got two little children to teach, and was so happy in teaching them the catechism and the *Pater Noster* in Latin, that he declared he would not exchange them for the most cultivated audience in France. And when the wandering Indians would come to encamp in the neighbourhood, he would stand at his doorway, ringing a bell, as his brother St. Francis Xavier did at Goa, till he had gathered about him a little assembly whom he would teach as best he could, giving them a porringer full of peas when they had said their lessons well, to make them want to come again. As soon as he was able, he translated the Catechism and the Lord's Prayer into Indian rhymes, for you know he had no hymns for them, and it used to give him the greatest pleasure to hear the little redskins singing through the woods, these rhymes that he had taught them.

"But he got on so slowly, in spite of all his efforts, that he thought he must try another plan to get nearer to these Indians whom he wanted so much to persuade to become servants of Christ. And for this end he determined to cast in his lot for a whole winter with one of the wandering band of Algonquins who used to roam about in search of prey on the shores of the Lower St. Lawrence and through the rocky wilderness around the sources of the St. John. Another Jesuit Father—a good man named Pere De Nove, of whom I may tell you another time a very touching story—had gone to stay for a few weeks with such a hunting party, some distance below Quebec, and had come back half-dead with cold and semi-starvation, which was not encouraging for Pere Le Jeune; but he was a stronger man, and thought he could stand it.

"So one lovely day in October when the soft Indian summer sun was lighting up the glowing woods, Pere Le Jeune embarked in one of the Indian canoes and bade farewell to his anxious comrades and to his friend Champlain. He took with him a little store of biscuits, beans and other things of the same kind; and his friends, being of St. Paul's mind, made him take a little keg of wine, in case of need. This wine, however, proved rather a troublesome gift at the very outset: for at their first camping-place on a beautiful island in the St. Lawrence, Pierre managed to get hold of it, and drink enough to make him a raving madman. That night poor Pere Le Jeune had to spend, hidden from this wretch, in the woods, on a few leaves spread on the ground—"a bed," he quaintly remarks, "which had not been made up since the creation of the world."

"I think that would be jolly," broke in Norman, with sparkling eyes.

"Wait till you try it, my boy!" said his father. "It's well Pere Le Jeune doesn't seem to have been a rheumatic subject. I hope he had a blanket!"

"He had his cassock," replied the professor; "and a kind squaw covered him with a sheet of birch bark."

"Well, that was the beginning, and things went on in much the same way. Pierre was the only interpreter that the poor Father had, and as yet he knew but little Algonquin. Pierre's brother, who was called Mestigon, was chief of the party, and very friendly to Pere Le Jeune. There was a third brother who was an Indian sorcerer, and who, being jealous lest his own influence should suffer, did all he could to oppose and annoy the Jesuit, while Pierre, as might have been expected, was but a broken reed.

"The party travelled in their canoes from one point to another, so long as the weather

continued mild, seeking fish, birds and other game. Sometimes a storm threatened their frail barks, and sometimes they would be half-starved while weather-bound on an island. At last they had to lay up their canoes, and take to tramping on foot through the savage wilderness, over swamps, through streams, across rocks and morasses and fallen trees, encamping for a time where game could be found, and then marching on to a fresh hunting ground. As the cold grew keener and the snow began to make the footing more treacherous, the good Father's experiences became harder still. When they stopped at night, after a long day's tramp, he was fain to keep himself warm by helping the squaws to cut their poles and set up their wigwams, as you saw in the picture, while the hunters went off to try to find a supper.

"The wigwam was made by digging out a circular space in the snow, making an embankment round it, in which the poles were planted. These were covered with sheets of birch bark, while a curtain of bearskin hung over the doorway. An opening was left in the roof above the central fireplace, to let the smoke out, and for bedding, the ground was covered with hemlock boughs. As you may suppose, the smoke did not all escape by the hole in the roof, and the birch bark walls did not keep out much cold; so they had to light great hot fires in the centre, and Pere Le Jeune did not know which was the worst, the fire that half-roasted his feet, the keen, piercing cold that penetrated the crevices in the bark walls, or the smoke that often made his eyes smart so much that, when he tried to read his breviary, it seemed written in letters of blood.

"One other annoyance he tells us about very naively, that was the Indian dogs that followed the party, and would seek to share his bed at night or wake him up by careering over his body in search of a stray morsel or a bone. The first he did not so much mind, as the animal heat helped to keep him warm, and as we know he had no warm coverings for his couch of hemlock. But the worst of all was, that sometimes for days together, the hunters could find no game, and as Pere Le Jeune had long since divided his own little store with his famishing companions, they were left at such times with nothing to stay their hunger. At this Christmas time we are speaking of, the smaller game was very scarce and there was not yet snow enough to enable them to hunt the moose on their snow-shoes—their chief dependence in winter. On that particular Christmas Eve, as I told you, they had started without breakfast, and for supper they had to divide among twenty, only a small porcupine and a hare. But as I said, the good Father thought, not as he might have done, of Christmas feasts and wassail bowls in France, but of the two poor wayfarers in the stable at Bethlehem, who, perhaps, he said, were not so well treated as he!"

"I like to picture the good man to myself, that evening, leaving the noisy chatter of the smoky wigwam, where the Indians added to the smoke of the fire that of the long pipes, which at such times were their only solace. I like to picture him going out to meditate in the dark, silent forest, under the light of the Christmas stars, where the only sound that broke the stillness was the cracking of a bough in the keen frost, or the dropping of a twig on the hard crust of the snow. I like to think of the diamond points of the stars, and the soft quivering streamers of the Northern Lights gleaming through the giant arms of the forest-trees, lighting the darkness, and drawing his thoughts from perhaps dreaming of gorgeous Christmas services in great cathedrals, to that simpler but more solemn scene under the open Syrian sky, when the "glory of the Lord" shone round the shepherds keeping their watch by night. Was he not himself like a shepherd watching over his wandering sheep, or better, Marjorie, a ray of the Northern Lights shining in the darkness and waiting to see it dispelled by the full light of the "Star in the East," and the "good tidings of great joy which should be to all people?"

"And then I can imagine him, cheered and refreshed by such thoughts as these, making his way back to the little camp,

where the two wigwams that sheltered the party were visible by the light that streamed through the crevices of the birch bark, from the fire within. Lifting the bearskin curtain, he would enter the smoky atmosphere that made his eyes smart with pain. Then he would make his way by the light of the red glowing pine knots, among the prostrate forms about him, of men and women, children and dogs, till he found a couch on the bed of hemlock boughs, where, lying down, he could still see the stars through the opening overhead. By and by, as he was dozing off to sleep, he would feel a weight laid on his body, or a cold nose close to his face; telling him that one of the rough, shaggy dogs was thus trying to find a warmer corner, nor was the additional warmth it afforded him unwelcome. And then he no doubt thought again of the stable at Bethlehem, where dumb creatures shared the first shelter of Him whom the wise men from the East came to worship as a King.

"Christmas Eve passed into Christmas morning, and the half-numbed sleeper arose but not to Christmas comfort or Christmas cheer. They could make up the fire and keep themselves warm, but breakfast there was none, nor any hope of it, for even the bones of last night's feast had been devoured by the hungry dogs. The hunters took up again their bows and arrows and set out on a fruitless quest. The emaciated squaws sat silent and depressed, or soothed the hungry babes, while the older children tried to forget their hunger or bear it with a grave endurance worthy of little "braves." When the good Father repeated his *Pater Noster*, he dwelt with greater fervor than usual on the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," and he would fain have directed the famishing creatures to Him who hears the young ravens when they cry. But he knew too little of their language yet, and the wretched Pierre would give him no help; indeed seemed, as he says, "possessed by a dumb spirit." So he could but pray for them as he wandered through the forest, trying to appease with what he could find there, the cravings of hunger, which, as he says, makes the wolf come out of the forest, but which drove him farther in, seeking the buds of trees, which he ate "with relish." And then he found some strips of deerskin, such as you have for straps to your snow-shoes, which the dogs would not touch, but which made his Christmas dinner, and which he gratefully called "good."

(To be continued.)

### VANISHED OCCUPANTS OF THE EARTH.

What strikes us most markedly in reading the book of the rocks is, not so much the strange forms which are portrayed in its pages, as the fact that so many of them are extinct. Indeed, except in the very newest of formations, it is extremely rare to come upon any forms which can even approximately be considered identical with any now living on the face of the earth. All are vanished species. What is more, when we once get clear of any formation, it is the rarest possible occurrence ever again to see any of the species of fossils characteristic of it. Each period of the world's history had its own fauna and flora—that is, its own assemblage of animals and plants—and once they disappear they are gone forever. Yet, within the historic period, we know of the extermination of only a few animals and of no species of plants at all. Even then the extinct animals have, in every instance, met their fate at the hand of man. The dodo, a curious bird of Mauritius, and the solitaires, of the Islands of Reunion and Rodriguez, were exterminated by ruthless seamen within the last two centuries. The moa of New Zealand lived long after the Maoris reached these islands. The great auk and the Labrador duck have ceased to exist, from an identical cause, within the memory of man. The Philip Island parrot is a still more recent loss, while the only mammal which can be said for certain to have been utterly destroyed from off the face of the earth is the gigantic sea-cow (*Rhytina*), of Behring Strait, though, when it was first discovered, and took the taste of the seamen, who liked oily beef, its numbers were small, and seemed on the wane. These, and a few other species of less interest, form the total extinctions of which history preserves any record. But in the rocks composing the earth's crust there are the remains of thousands which disappeared ages and ages before man came upon earth.—*Our Earth and its Story*.