

it can strike such a violent blow as to be heard half a mile off. In this way the old sentinel beaver, who is on guard, gives warning of the approach of an enemy, when splash ! every tail disappears, and solitude reigns again. The tail is a great favourite with Indians and hunters, and, when it can be obtained, occupies an important place in their feasts.

The most remarkable constructions of the beaver are the dams and lodges which they build. They are made in order to secure a sufficient depth of water to be secure against freezing in winter. Having selected a spot for their village, or cluster of houses, they proceed to cut down the trees with which to build their dam. They always cut down those up the stream, so that they may float down with the current. They have no cutting instruments but their broad, flat, sharp teeth ; but with these they will bite off great chips, and in a very short time cut down a tree, eight or even ten inches through. They select trees that lean over the water, and having felled them, they trim off the branches, and cut them into lengths eight or ten feet long. These are floated to the site of the proposed dam, where they are built into their place with mud and stones, till a broad and solid wall is made. Where the current is gentle, the dam is carried straight across ; where it is swift, the dam is built with an angle or convex curve up the stream. The little architects exhibit as much science in their construction as could the most skilful civil engineer.

The beavers' houses are built of the same material, a chamber being left in the middle, the only entrance to which is by an opening under the water. The roof is made very thick to resist the attacks of the wolverine or glutton, next to man the most deadly enemy of the beaver. The food of these hard working mechanics consists of the bark of the aspen, willow, birch, poplar, and alder, of which it lays up in the summer a stack near its lodges.

The beaver once swarmed all over Canada and the northern United States, and the traces of the beaver dams and beaver meadows may still, in many places, be seen. But the implacable war of the trapper and fur trader has banished him to the remote regions of the north and north-west. For over 300 years this warfare has been waged, and the trade in beaver skins was one of the great inducements to the exploration of this continent. Tadoussac, Quebec, Three Rivers, Montreal, Frontenac, Fort Rouille (Toronto), and Detroit were the great fur-trading posts, of which Albany and New York were, for many years, the jealous rivals. Beaver skins were used instead of money—one skin being an equivalent for a two dollar bill—rather an in-

convenient sort of currency to carry in one's purse. The pelts, as they were called—hence the word peltries,—were used for making beaver hats—those fuzzy-looking things worn by Uncle Sam in the comic picture—which used to be the favourite head-gear of the dandies of Paris and London. With the substitution of silk for the shiny black hats now worn, the beaver's occupation was gone, and he was allowed, for a time, to live a quiet life. Their fur has, of late, been in demand in Europe for trimming dresses, coats, and gloves, and forthwith a war is renewed in the fur wilds of Canada against the poor beaver. So is the world bound together by the ties of commerce.

The beavers are caught by steel spring traps, like huge rat traps, chained to a marked tree. An Indian or white trapper will visit fifty or sixty traps in a circuit of thirty or forty miles, and will catch one hundred or one hundred and fifty beavers in a season. In 1854-1856, the Hudson Bay Company sold in London 627,655 beaver skins. No wonder the beaver is getting scarce. Skins have varied from \$1 to \$8 apiece. At one time in the last century they were such a drug in the market that an immense stock was burned at Montreal to make the rest worth exportation. The beaver once flourished in Europe, but is now extinct

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### LOVING OR FEARING.



IN a Jewish book called the Talmud, there is a parable which teaches how much better it is to love God than only to be afraid of his anger. This is the story :—

A certain king had two servants, one of whom loved while the other only feared him. The same king was a long time absent from his kingdom. During this time, the servant who loved him took the most diligent pains to keep the palace and gardens in order, and to prepare food to be in readiness for his master to eat on his return. But he who only feared the king never thought upon his master while he was away

At last the king returned, and upon the first servant he smiled, but sternly did he look upon the second, who on his part trembled and turned pale, and then for the first time began really to try and serve his master. Such is the difference between him who loves God and him who merely serves Him from the fear or punishment. One delights to think of Him, the other tries to drive Him from his thoughts.