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THE CANADA PORCUPINE.

BY CHARLES MACNAMARA, ARNPRIOR, ONTARIO.

The abrading and compacting which all language undergoes in the course of time have changed the "porcus spinatus" or spiny pig, of the Latins into the "porcupine" of modern English. Zoological classification among the ancients was based on very superficial resemblances, and so it is not surprising to find that they regarded this short-legged, thickset rodent as a kind of pig. Numerous species of porcupines inhabit the four quarters of the globe. In the Old World, where the family originated, they are all terrestrial in their habits, and some kinds are armed with quills so enormous that they are often used to make fancy penhandles. The porcupines of the New World are mostly tree-dwellers, and one or two of them have prehensile tails. They seem to have come across from Africa to tropical America by some very early land connection far older even than the fabled Atlantis. Most of them stayed in the tropics, only one genus of two species having extended north of Mexico. These are the yellow-haired porcupine (*Erethizon epixanthus*) of the west, and the Canada porcupine (*E. dorsatus*) of the east.

Although popularly called the "Canada" porcupine, we in this country cannot claim the animal as our exclusive compatriot, for it is a familiar resident of the wooded regions of all northeastern America as far south and west as Pennsylvania and Ohio. In eastern Ontario it is abundant, and in the course of a day's drive in the spring before the leaves are out, it is not unusual to see three or four of them in the treetops.

Judging the appearance and expression of animals by our human standards, we are often amazed to find some species, like the elephant or the pig, far more intelligent than it looks. The porcupine, however, looks stupid, and is even more stupid than it looks. A large Canada porcupine, Mr. C. W. Nash tells me, sometimes attains to a body length of three feet; but usually an adult is about two feet long exclusive of the tail, and weighs 25 lbs. to 30 lbs. Its body is thick and heavy, and its movements are slow. Its head is small and pointed, with but scant room for the brain, and the little sleepy eyes are almost lost in the long hair; the nostrils are open, and the lips fail to close