

rock up to nearly the top. So the canoe slipped down it sideways into the white water and by the greatness of that man's skill he was not upset.

"After that he paddled and portaged all the way to the Lake of Warpaint without seeing any more of the Windigo. He knew very well that it would not give him up, but there was a party of people at the lake who were camped beyond the Narrows.

"When he arrived at the lake it was after sunset. By the time he had paddled to the middle night had fallen, a storm rose, the waves beat, and as autumn was well advanced the wind and frost were piercing to the point of death. He was making for the head of the cape, and as he was exhausted it was his intention to land there, leave his canoe in the bushes, and walk down the length of the Point, through the woods, until he came to the Algonquin camp at the Narrows. At that time there was a great pine at the very end of the Point on the height of the precipice, which pine lasted there until a few years ago, and had pictures cut on it of Windigo and the Algonquin in his canoe. The warrior saw from a distance, as he approached paddling, that there was a fire on the Point under the pine-tree. As he came nearer and nearer he saw some one at the fire. At length as he arrived a little way from the shore, he saw it was the great Windigo who had made the fire, and by its light could see him walking round and round the pine-tree warming himself and waiting for the man to land. To save himself from being eaten the Algonquin had to stay out in the middle of the lake in his canoe all night in the midst of the cold storm. But whoever sees a Windigo must die. The Algonquin soon died. This is why the cape was called Point Windigo and why the pictures were cut on the pine. In the times of the Catholics the name was changed to Point Manitou."

The Canard Blanc, in the abrupt Indian manner, covered his head again with his blanket and lay down to sleep. Another loud crash in the forest sent a shudder through the strangers. They silently dropped back on their couch of spruce twigs, and the shadow of Cheegwis, taking another prow around the tent, was seen upon the door, distinctly outlined in every hair.

ALCHEMIST.

THE TRAMP'S CHRISTMAS EVE.*

"To h—l with Christmas. What's Christmas to me? If you were as cold and hungry as I am, and had no boots, and slept in the station you'd say that too." Such was the growl which an elderly-looking, half-starved tramp uttered as he walked up the street on Christmas Eve. The words were muttered to himself because he was alone, but he meant them for the crowd. He saw all the people whom he passed smiling and happy. The shops as usual were all lit up, and there were all the bustle and hurry which characterize that festive season visible in their bright faces. Young laughter rang out in the frosty air, and above all in the sky twinkled the bright stars as brightly as if they were intended to add to the illumination. The tramp was a pretty seedy specimen. He wore a coat which once had been fairly decent. He had no overcoat. His hat was shocking and his boots had holes. As he walked along he shivered every now and then, and it was plain he moved with pain. At first glance he was not different to the ordinary specimens of his tribe. A second examination would have shown that perhaps in some bygone day he had been something better. His face had not quite lost its expression of respectability. If a ruffian, he was not a truculent ruffian—he was a very unpicturesque one at all events. The passers-by, if they thought it worth while to be curious, said, "Poor devil," and then forgot all about him. The big constable at the crossing of

the streets kept him in sight as a natural foe. So altogether the man might be excused for not feeling exactly in a frame of mind suited to the season. When he uttered the words above quoted it was fairly early in the evening. He felt in his pocket for the hundredth time to see he had not lost a ten cent piece he had found earlier in the evening. When he saw it he stooped and picked it up as a hawk would a chicken. He had also in his pocket a meal ticket or two received from the secretary of his national society, so he was sure of a meal and a bed. Ugh! such a bed! His soul sickened when he thought of what he had to face. What should he do? How could he escape it? He and misery had been for long companions, but this evening when everybody seemed so jolly his wretchedness came home to him more than usual. He turned and went back down the street. It led to a black and turbid river, over which it crossed by a bridge. He reached it. The bridge was all lit up on both sides, and crowds were crossing and recrossing. The tramp stopped in the middle, looked over the parapet, and saw below the dark river with blocks of half frozen slush and ice sluggishly floating down. He shuddered, looked back at the bridge with its brilliant lamps and its moving throngs of passengers. The contrast seemed to paralyze his movement. "Too soon," he muttered, and turned up the street again. As he looked up the street he had come down and saw the long line of illumination his heart failed him. He turned off into a quieter road and plodded on. Soon he came into a region where the lights shone through the window. Door bells were being rung and parcels being delivered. Every now and then a burst of music came either through a half-opened door or through the closed and curtained windows. Suddenly he stops. "What is that? My God, that is the very tune." He puts his fingers in his ears and hastens on. The evening gets colder, the wind is getting up, the stars commence to be clouded over, and specks of snow shine in the rarer gas lights. "It is too cold here, let me get back to the crowd." He turns once more and by another road finds his way back to the street where we first saw him. He passes a stand where they sell hot coffee. He has resisted bar-rooms and taverns. From long experience he knows how short a time hot whisky or grog keeps you hot. But hot coffee is different, and he buys a cup which he pays for out of his ten cent piece. Lingeringly he drinks it and he gets his change. Now he knows his bed is out of the question, but the coffee has warmed him up. The coffee woman being poor herself has taken a quiet stock of her customer, and saying to herself, "Its Christmas Eve," not only gives him a good extra mug full but adds out of her own good heart a chunk of bread. Slowly he drinks and slowly he eats, but too soon it is done. He puts down the cup and slinks away. The other customers and the coffee woman exchange significant looks, and then they too think no more about him. When he comes back to the main street he looks in at the shop windows. The jewellers make a grand display. He sees within his reach, if he could get at them, the means of warmth and food and rest, but they are not for him. The constable sees the expression of his face and "Move on, now" keeps him going. With aimless steps and spiritless movement he loiters along. All of a sudden he turns down a side street where he knows he can find a "dive" where he can get a drink. This time he is going to take spirits and he gets them. When he goes in it is into an atmosphere reeking with smoke and foul language. He gets one drink, then another, and his money is gone. He comes out into the night air and the poison he has taken acts on an enfeebled mind. He seems to himself to see strange visions. He sees a boy at school, a gentle, patient mother; she disappears, the boy is a man. What was the tune he heard? Where was it he used to hear it long ago? It comes back to him. A young girl sitting on the door-step singing it with careless glee. Where is she tonight? Faces come and go before him. They seem to be calling him on. One of them has a cold scheming underhand expression. He knows it well. That was the man who ruined him, and has brought him where he is. Now he seems again to call him and to mock him as he mocked him long ago. "D— you, I will make you stop." He grasps at him. Where is he? What is this he has hold of? It is the railing of the bridge. One look around and he sees the crowds have gone; the lamps are flickering in the wind; nobody is near; he looks to heaven; the stars have veiled their faces; a leap on to the parapet followed by a plunge into the icy stream and this was the end of the Tramp's Christmas Eve.

R.

* This record has been furnished by one of the Tramp fraternity. It is founded on facts known to the writer and communicated to the editor. If the tone of the contribution appears to be too morbid, or for any reason unsuited to a time when among ordinary people peace and happiness reign supreme, our readers may for that very reason be led to an acquaintance with the sorrows of a terribly large proportion of their fellows who are not ordinary people, and who feel their troubles all the more keenly because they see more clearly than usual at such a season what they have lost and what they are hopeless of regaining. Optimism where it ignores the gospel of despair may be pushed too far.