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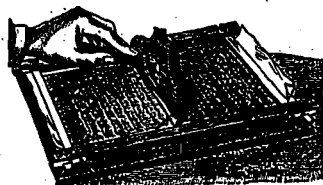
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Editorial Notes.

THE ALASKAN BOUNDARY.

It is none too soon that the Dominion Government have decided to send out a properly organized expedition to determine the proper boundary between British Columbia and Alaska. It is now many years since the British Columbian authorities drew attention to the necessity for such a proceeding, and more than one offer from private sources has been made to undertake the duty. The Dominion Government acted wisely in not acceding to the requests of such persons, whose zeal exceeded their ability to be of material service to Canada. In appointing Dr. George M. Dawson and Mr. William Ogilvie the best interests of the Dominion have been regarded, for no other two men could supply their places. The main element of exploration is through accuracy, and this exactness is obtainable only by thorough scientific observation and practical adjustment. The great part played by astronomy in earth measurement is shown by the history of geographical development since the days of Hipparchus and the Almagest to the present fine measurements of base-lines by such methods as Colby and Bessel elaborated, with such instruments as the altilimith theodolite, micrometer microscope, zenith telescope, etc. No one in Canada is better fitted for practical geodetic observation than Mr. Ogilvie, and much interest will be taken in his reports by those savants who are given to the study of geography and its sister sciences. Regarding the geological features of the Yukon country, as the district is rather improperly called, valuable data regarding the mineral resources and distribution of flora and fauna along the line pursued may confidently be expected from the observing eye and extensive experience of Dr. Dawson, under whose charge the expedition will be placed. Altogether, the work is one of the most important of its kind undertaken for many years, and as valuable interests are at stake, owing to

the absence of any but a conventional boundary, it is a matter of congratulation that the delicate and difficult mission has been placed in such entirely able hands. No doubt the United States government will retaliate by sending out a survey to the same region with a view to gobbling up as large an area of gold-yielding earth as possible; but it will require all the ingenuity possessed by our American cousins to "do up" the gentlemen in charge of our Canadian party on scientific points.

MR. BLAKE AS A BRITISH POLITICIAN.

AN esteemed contemporary gives voice to the sentiments of one of its staff regarding the Opposition leader in language more flattering than reasonable. If Mr. Blake had but five years' experience in the British House of Commons, it is asserted, he would be one of the most prominent men in the world. Furthermore, it is said to still be within the range of Mr. Blake's possibilities to become the greatest lawyer, and afterwards the greatest politician, in the empire. Now, it is not to be disputed that Mr. Blake is a pre-eminent lawyer in Canada, nor that he might win a good professional standing in England; but a wholesale imputation of incapacity is unintentionally thrown upon a score or so of British lawyers, quite as able as our great Grit leader in any of his gifts. As a politician, in a European sense, it is probable that Mr. Blake would not be a success; at least nothing he has yet done will warrant any optimistic view of his latent diplomatic ability. His inability to provide his party with a separate and distinct policy does not seem to indicate the kind of politician Englishmen have been accustomed to see at the head of either party in the British Parliament. Mr. Blake has little of that great personal ambition of political patriotism such as animated Disraeli, nor has he a great genius for dealing in a masterly fashion with every subject, such as Gladstone possesses. He does not possess the grand inspiration of oratory which Bright has, though he has a greater flow of smaller arguments; nor has he the happy faculty of making warm friends and keeping them, even among his own political associates. Altogether, the idea of Mr. Blake ever becoming the greatest politician in the British Empire is untenable, even as an historical dream.

ALTER EGO.

WHAT is termed the *disease of duality* is happily rare; but the present high pressure rate of life is not likely to diminish its occurrence. That a man should suddenly become insane is not uncommon; but the fact that a man is liable to actually lose his identity, and live a life thoroughly different from that to which he has been educated, is to say

the least alarmingly peculiar. Several authentic instances of this freak of human action are on record, and the theory of duality has been advanced to account for some of the many mysterious disappearances which annually occur among humanity in large cities. The last known instance of this disease proved that a man left his home and business without reason, wandered to a strange city, engaged for some months in a new pursuit, and finally awoke to the fact that he was not responsible for what he had done. What terrible results might occur if this disease were not extremely rare is a thought too unpleasant to dwell upon. The ludicrous possibilities are entirely overwhelmed by the tragic and the pathetic.

SEA SERPENTS.

PUBLIC attention has once more been drawn to the mystical denizen of the deep known by the convenient but wholly unscientific name of the "Sea Serpent." This time it is not the impoverished reporter who fills up a deficiency of MS. with a highly-coloured romance regarding the marine monster, but no less a scientist than Professor Proctor, who revives the old theory of Gosse and others, and argues with his usual ability in favour of present examples of old Saurian forms of life still inhabiting the waters of the earth. Professor Owen inclined to the belief that the sea-serpent described by the captain of H. M. S. *Dædalus* in 1848 was merely a large seal. Others believed it to be a huge shark or whale. A few referred it to floating wreckage; and a large majority opined it a case of mistaken identity. However, many instances of the appearance of huge marine animals have from time to time been recorded on oath by seafaring men, and, taking one consideration with another, these stories are not all mere yarns to be told to the marines. Professor Wilson inclines to the theory that sea-serpents do exist, but are probably only abnormal and gigantic members of groups of marine animals already known, such as sea-snakes, ribbon-fish, etc. At present, owing to the disinclination of the unknown leviathan to capture and classification, either of the theories advanced may be taken by those who dislike to be in doubt. Perhaps they are all wrong; but time will doubtless reveal the identity of this very old riddle of sea-life, which has caused Olaus Magnus, Pliny, DeMontfort, Pontoppidan and others so much speculation. At present, as the animal is marine, there cannot be any harm in taking its dimensions *cum grano salis*.

THE JESUITS.

It is to be hoped that the Dominion of Canada will not assist in carrying out the probable scheme for settling the old claim of the Jesuits, which no doubt underlies their recent application for incorporation. It is not unlikely that the Quebec Government will be willing enough to submit to the pressure brought upon it by the Society, and to pay whatever compensation may be demanded; but the Dominion should deal firmly with the matter, and decline to refund to Quebec any part of the money that may be awarded. The history of the Jesuits is a history altogether

unique. The most signal failures have ever overtaken their most determined plans for success. They have been suspected and feared, not only by opponents of their doctrines and practices outside the Romish Church, but also by their co-religionists, from the very beginning of their order. The countries, both civilized and savage, which they have sought to dominate, have in every instance cast them out, and however powerful their personal influences may still be, the potency of their policy as a Christianizing and civilizing agency has departed. They have exercised great influence at striking periods of the Old World's history; but the result of their policy has neither been beneficial nor lasting. As missionaries they have attained heroism by personal sacrifices; but when the motives of their religious adventures are analyzed there is little to admire beyond their blind devotion to the will of their superiors. The present age is not suited to the spirit of the Society, and it would be unwise to foster so sinister an influence by undoing that which was necessary three quarters of a century ago.

THE "SATURDAY REVIEW" ON THE FISHERIES.

DURING the thirty years of its existence the *Saturday Review* has probably done more to embitter public feeling in the United States against Great Britain than all the other trans-Atlantic periodicals combined. Everybody who has reached middle age remembers the bitter, sneering contemptuous tone it adopted towards the North all through the Great Rebellion. It had one or more articles on some phase of the subject every week. They were all clever and sprightly, but nothing more grossly unfair towards a great nation passing through a supreme hour of trial was ever written. The *Saturday* never had a wide circulation in the States, but its hostile articles were copied by the American press as specimens of English sympathy, and thus became known to pretty nearly the entire reading public. By this means numerous dragon's teeth were sown, and they have regularly yielded more or less of a crop. The tone of the paper has ever since been uniformly hostile to everything American. It has neglected no opportunity of saying unpleasant and uncomplimentary things; of commenting upon the eagle's screech and the flapping of the wings of the bird of freedom. Within the last week it has published a most offensive article on the attitude of the United States in the matter of the Canadian fisheries. It represents the American people as "striving to fasten a quarrel on an unconscious nation." Now, we in Canada are decidedly of opinion that we have the best of the argument with reference to this vexed question of the fisheries, and we are disposed, if need be, to stand by our rights. But we are not of opinion that the leaders who direct the administration of affairs in the neighbouring republic are a gang of bullies and swashbucklers, eager to take advantage of our weakness, and of the unenviable state of Great Britain with regard to Ireland. Nor do we believe that American statesmen have deliberately set up against us a claim which they know to have no equitable foundation. It is incredible that the *Saturday's* article is an honest

expression of the writer's belief. If it is, it merely shows that a man may be able to write clever and flippant English without being possessed of much knowledge or judgment. In any case, it is much to be regretted that currency should be given to such libels. The *Saturday* is always bright and readable, but it has never shown any real prescience or perspicacity. One might suppose that its directing mind would see the inadvisability, in this crisis in the affairs of Great Britain, of trying to stir up ill blood between the two nations upon which the future of civilization so largely depends.

JUDICIAL SALARIES.

THERE will be considerable influence brought to bear upon the Government in order to effect an increase of salary for the legal luminaries who sit as judges in our Canadian Courts. From a legal point of view no objection can be urged to such proceedings, because a judgeship is not beyond the range of any hard-working young lawyer's future possibility. The salaries at present enjoyed by our judges are as large as the wages earned by leading thinkers and workers in other professions, and, unless it be a trifle extra for the dignity of office, there is no special reason for any additional salary unless an increase of work is also given. In the Quebec district it is well known that many of the judges are in a state of genteel poverty, and live fully up to their means, if not a little beyond. It is probably the same with some of the Ontario magnates of the bench; but that has nothing to do with the argument. A judge, of all men, should be able to regulate his own affairs so as to be a creditable member of society. Yet the history of the legal profession proves that judges are as frail as their fellow-men in many instances. No matter from what cause the new demand for an increase of salary springs, it should certainly not be granted unless it can be conclusively proved that a judge has not enough to keep him in solid comfort during those long and short vacations which make up so large a part of the legal year.

MR. BLAKE'S RESIGNATION.

THE party quidnuncs on both sides are very much exercised just now upon the subject of Mr. Blake's threatened resignation. The Opposition leader's organ pooch-pooched the notion as long as such a course was possible, but when a copy of the actual letter of resignation appeared in the columns of a contemporary, the fact of such a letter having been written could no longer be denied or ignored. It would really seem as though Mr. Blake had taken action in the matter without consulting or even notifying his organ in the first instance. At the present time those best entitled to judge are strongly of opinion that Mr. Blake will remain where he is at the head of the party ranks, and that some henchman must be found who is able and willing to relieve him from some of the mechanical duties incidental to the leadership. Whether the prospective henchman's name is likely to be Cartwright or Mills or Charlton or Patterson is for the present one of those insoluble problems which of old exercised the brain of Lord Dundreary.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

ADVOCATES of the Imperial federation project are labouring with commendable assiduity, but the project itself is making little or no headway. At the Colonial Conference, which opened in London on Monday last, Lord Salisbury himself accorded a hearty welcome to the delegates, but "was free to say" that he regarded the scheme as being "of a hasty and doubtful character"—"one, perhaps, more for future discussion than for the present." From whom ought one to look for enthusiastic support for such a project as Imperial federation if not from the leader of the Tory party and the head of a Tory Government? But Lord Salisbury quietly sits upon the notion of making a constitution for the whole empire, and does not see his way to anything beyond a customs union and a union for defence. It is clear that his Lordship does not regard the scheme of a general federation of the empire as coming within the range of practical politics, or worthy of a statesman's serious consideration—more especially at a time like this, when he has so eminently practical a question on his hands as the settlement of Ireland. His remarks are likely to cast a damper upon the enthusiasm of some of the most active supporters of the scheme of an Imperial federation.

COERCION IN THE COMMONS.

THE Government party in the Imperial Commons seems to be all powerful at the present moment, and determined to make the most of its power. The Conservatives and Liberal Unionists have apparently arrived at a clear understanding, and the pact between them is not likely to be sundered until the accomplishment of the main purposes for which it was entered into. Not only are Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain staunch to the Government, but Lord Randolph Churchill himself—whose resignation was by some regarded as a fatal blow—declares himself a supporter of his late chief's domestic policy. Such being the state of affairs, there is not much room for doubt that the bill for the coercion of Ireland will be carried by a considerable majority. The closure has been exercised with uncompromising vigour. Even Mr. Gladstone's vehement protest appears to have been wholly inoperative so far as the members of the House were concerned, though it unquestionably produced a marked effect throughout the country. At the time of this present writing, the outlook for the friends of Ireland is certainly not a bright one. As a matter of course the Irish-American press is furious, and some of its representatives even go so far as to suggest that the assassination of a few members of the British Ministry would be a step in the right direction. It is this spirit which Ireland and her well-wishers have most cause to fear. Every suggestion of this nature tends to still further widen the hereditary breach between Saxon and Celt, and to perpetuate the struggle which sanguine people had begun to hope was rapidly nearing its end.

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JOHN CHARLES DENT,

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QUEBEC NOTES.

MR. MERCIER'S treasurer found an empty treasury. He says that when he looked into the strong box all he discovered were a few uncurrent coins. This is probably correct, for the Ross-Taillon administration led a pretty lively life of it, and money was a thing about which the late Cabinet troubled itself very little. Debt, of course, was piled up, and this legacy is left to Mr. Mercier's coalition to wipe out. He contemplates raising a loan of at least three millions of dollars, and the Barings, of London, are said to be the fortunate gentlemen who are to be entrusted with the negotiations. After this a raid of some sort is contemplated on the federal preserves, but in both of these plans to fill the depleted coffers the Premier of Quebec is only following the methods of the Chapleaus, the Mousseaus, the Rosses and the Taillons of fragrant if unhappy memory. His contemplated Congress of Premiers is regarded as a statesmanlike movement by his friends. Certainly the reasons which prompt him to call the convention are urgent enough, so far as Quebec is concerned. More money must be had. The present revenue from every source is wholly inadequate to meet the expenses of government. Direct taxation must come in time, and the date may not be so very far off, but the minister dare not resort to it just at present. No one knows better than Mr. Mercier what the effect a direct appeal to the pockets of the *habitant* would mean. The cry of "No tax" would resound from one end of the province to the other, and the mere attempt to impose it would result in the utter annihilation of him and all his forces—Liberals, Rouges and Rielites alike. Poverty will compel him to do many things, and love of power will stimulate him to resort to all sorts of plans to keep the wolf from the door, but he will hesitate long before he asks the frugal and thrifty backwoodsman to surrender a part of his income to keep alive the Liberal government at Quebec. It would be the same if Mr. Chapleau were at the head of the government. He would no more think of direct taxation than he would of paying a visit to the moon on a witch's broomstick. But some day it must be tried, no matter who is in power, and there are political economists to-day who say that the sooner we resort to that system the better it will be for all concerned. Constant appeals to the federal government only serve to show the weakness of the union, though certainly Mr. Mercier strikes a shrewd note when he says that the basis of 1867 ought not to form the basis of 1887. Twenty years ago when the provinces surrendered their chief method of raising a revenue, the customs duties, the amounts realized per annum were small as compared to what they are to-day. The subsidy from the Dominion Government has not materially increased, while the amount of the duties which are annually collected at the various provincial custom houses has increased enormously. Mr. Mercier insists on the point that

we gave up too much for too little, and he desires the re-opening of the whole question again. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, which have deficiencies of their own to answer for, will probably second Mr. Mercier's efforts to have the Constitution modified. But will Ontario, which has a fine surplus of its own, feel disposed to join hands with the smaller provinces, and insist on a fresh and energetic raid on the Dominion treasury? Conservatives here do not believe that the question can be re-opened at all, and they pretend to pooh pooh the schemes of Mercier and his friends. But the Quebec Premier is resolved to try his plan, and with that object in view he has invited the Provincial Premiers to a grand Council. Certainly the question is one which may be discussed, but it is not well to keep tinkering at our Constitution continually. If we are ever to become a nation we must have higher aims. The provinces, with the exception of Ontario, are in a bad way financially. Quebec particularly has squandered her patrimony. With care the province might have been in as good a position as Ontario to-day. But extensive railroad building, extravagance and corruption melted the receipts faster almost than they came in. Mr. Mercier promises to pursue the strictest economy. So did his predecessors in office. The fact is they all promise that, but while they are saving the pennies the pounds are being shovelled out from the back door.

The disposition is to give the new government a fair chance. Mercier's majority will be about ten. It looks now as if he had come to stay. The opposition has some new blood, but the same old gang is leading. Taillon was a failure as first minister. One of the best-natured men living, and a vocalist of remarkable power, he is at the same time very quick-tempered. He flies into a passion at a moment's notice, and when angry he sulks. A sulky man is not fit to be a leader, and the succession must fall to some other one if the opposition is to be held together. It will never do to fall back on Mr. Lynch, for he is an Englishman and a Protestant, and it is an unwritten law in this province that Premier and leader of the opposition must be Frenchmen and Catholics. Anyway, Mr. Lynch has no capacity for leadership, though he speaks fluently and has the respect of the House. Mr. Blanchet is too heavy to lead. He has neither tact nor magnetism, and his oratory is dull and lacks spontaneity and spirit. Besides he has literally no following. Mr. Robertson is too old, and he is not French. Mr. Flynn is in bad odour with the gentlemen on his side of the House, for he left them in the lurch when Dr. Ross resigned, and it is questionable whether they will ever forgive him for that. Still Flynn is a rising man, and some of these days he will have a place, a recognized place, in this country, but his ground will be at Ottawa. He is politically dead in Quebec, for he has twice thrown his Premier, and deserted him when he needed his services the most. The young Conservatives will not depend on the members of the late ministry for a leader. They will find him among their own ranks if they are wise. Good speakers abound among them, but the abler debaters in the House are on the Liberal side of politics this year. Mercier, Robidoux, David, Gagnon, Lethieux, Shehyn, Murphy, Cameron, Deschenes, Duhamel, Larne and several others are among the most brilliant parliamentarians in this country. On the Conservative side, Casgrain, Desjardines, Fancher, St. Maurice, Lynch, Taillon and Flynn can scarcely be regarded as men of equal rank.

The new government is not at all delicate in its treatment of offensive partisans. The spoils system is being introduced in ample form, and many heads are being chopped off daily, from

messengers in the corridors to sheriffs in the country. The slaughter of the innocents has been tremendous, and the ministers are besieged with office-seekers, and the friends of the dismissed employees, all begging for places. Friends of the new government are beginning to say that the removals have been already too many, and fears are expressed that retaliation at Ottawa may ensue before long. But Mr. Mercier has been in opposition for many years. He must satisfy many friends, and if they must have offices, the nominees of his predecessors must give way. It is the fortune of politics, but civil service reform goes back all the same.

Montreal, March, 1887.

A CANADIAN.

Poetry.

A RONDEAU.

BREAK, mighty sea, upon thy silvery shore!
Thy voice to me sounds of the evermore.
In foam-edged flatness waste thy giant power.
Thy wrath is but the creature of an hour;
A calm, a storm, a tempest, all is o'er.

But can the wounded heart forget its sore,
As lightly as the sands the ocean's roar,
Its surf wreaths and its storm-swept shower?
Break, mighty sea!

Break, mighty sea, and let thy voice adore
The Hand that tempests make and calms restore.
That Hand can heal the wounds that griefs devour,
And guard the soul-like castellated tower.
Forget and rest, Oh heart, forevermore.
Break, mighty sea!

539 King St. West, Toronto.

J. A. CURRIE.

SONNET.—A BACK GLANCE.

MAD, misspent years! if backward ye might move,
How gladly all your waste I would recall,
The ribald chorus; the rude tavern brawl;
The syren-kiss of counterfeited love,
And all the early errors that do prove
How foolish are the fairest days of all,
When reason unto rebel youth doth call
In vain its mask of folly to remove.
Experience is a chronicle most sad,
And chance escapes upon each page we writ
More thickly than the parry-guards of wit
In all the life-told tales that men have had.
To-day is fair; the future bright; but yet
The past is ever clouded with regret.

Toronto.

E. G. GARTHWAITE.

SECRET KIN.

THERE are a thousand secrets in the wood;
There are a thousand pricking in the blood;
There is no passion stirs the human heart
Earth does not tremble with its counterpart.
Nor love nor hate nor birth nor death is ours,
We share with feathered flocks and wanton flowers,
Careless I crush the palpitating grass—
Lingering, there meet and hold me ere I pass
Soft airs, that creep and purr against my cheek,
To hint at mysteries I dare not speak.

—Mrs. D. H. R. Goodale, in the *Springfield Republican*.

Correspondence.

Editor ARCTURUS:

I AM aware that there are scores of people who imagine that they know all that is worth knowing about running a paper; who see defects in every issue of every journal they read, and pamper their vanity (all the while fancying that their opinions find favour with all who listen to them) by telling how such a thing might be improved, or in what respect the editor has gone astray, etc. Now, without laying myself open to the charge of belonging to this class, I would like to make a suggestion to you, or rather, to ask a favour of you.

It is this: Could you, in some (near) future issue, give us a sketch of the proper manner in which to prepare MSS. for the publisher? You will think, now, that I am preferring this request for my own instruction. I am, and I hope you will be able to grant it at an early date. Will you kindly answer through next week's ARCTURUS, and oblige

Yours truly,
READER.

[The editor will have much pleasure in complying with "Reader's" request in an early number.]

THE REAWAKENING.

THESE are the days when Dame Nature begins tapping on our window-panes to whisper to us sweet promises of spring. She tells of melting snow and bursting buds, of willow wands thickly strung with pink-white pussies, and swamp buttercups almost ready to bloom if brought in by the fireside. She bids us listen in the orchards to the tapping of the woodpeckers, the faint squeak of the brown creepers, and, best of all, to the notes of the bluebirds, which are now sounding in every quarter. She tells us that the crossbills and pine grosbeaks have flown away northward, and that the chick-a-dees will forecast no more snow-storms this year. She may even wager half her crown that before the week is gone the whistle of the robin and the harsh cry of the purple grackle will end our morning naps.

Dear Dame Nature, always so full of hope, so lavish with spring-time promises, made one day and broken the next! Yet she is not altogether wrong, for the snows are melting, the buds are coming forward slowly, and bluebirds are here in dozens. Her delusion lies in the belief that, because the snow goes on Monday, the bluebirds come to the orchards on Tuesday, and the robins to the lawns on Wednesday, therefore fresh snow will not fall three inches deep by the next Sunday morning. The birds do not mind the snow for its coldness. The chick-a-dees have been with us all winter; so have the brown creepers, both kinds of nut-hatches, the downy woodpeckers, the blue-jays, the crows, and a few of the robins. It is because it covers up their breakfast tables that the robins and purple grackles scold so over the last snowfall. The leaf buds suffer from it as little as the birds. But this can hardly be said of men, and they are accordingly wary of Dame Nature's smiles, even when the birds and buds seem most to trust them. We know that snow may surprise us as late as early April; that mild mornings often herald sharp easterly winds, and that May day is apt to be anything but a pleasant reproduction of its English original.

Windows may fly up when Dame Nature first taps. Eager ears may listen for the first note of the song sparrow, due this week; but when it is suggested that furs should be packed, furnace fires put out and double sashes taken down, the prudent answer is "By and by."—*Boston Advertiser*.

POLITICS ON THE CANADA LINE.

A TOWN ELECTION IN VERMONT IN 1815.

WE hear much in these days about "wire-pulling," "rings," and political corruption in general, and it may be that it has sometimes seemed to us as though things were getting terribly debased; and we have been prone to look back with wistful eyes to the good old times when our revered ancestors were on the stage of action, and have longed for the unanimity and honest dealing which are supposed to have then prevailed.

I know by my own experience that it is very pleasant to linger over the history of the past; but I apprehend that distance lends enchantment, and that we find it more agreeable living in imagination during the administrations of Jefferson or Madison than we should have found in an actual participation in the doings of that period.

In the extreme northern part of Vermont, within a few miles of the Canada line, is situated a town six miles square, known as Westfield. The village of the town is small, and so are the farms, compared with those of the West. In some places the forest

still remains; yet great changes have been wrought in the town during the last seventy years.

In 1815 there was not a wagon in Westfield, the roads being mere bridle-paths, and so poor that it was hardly safe to ride a horse over them. There were probably not more than twenty-five families in town, and the greater part of these had settled in the eastern half.

Politically, the settlers were about equally divided, one party being known as Federals and the other as Democrats; and though voters were few, political feeling ran high. Among the Federal leaders were Captain Medad Hitchcock, Esq., his son, Thomas, and a nephew Caleb. Prominent among the Democrats were Thomas Stoughton, Jairus Stebbins, James Brown and Walter Stone. Beside these, each side had its corps of adherents ready to cast their votes in support of their party.

The time for holding the "Freeman's meeting" in 1815 was approaching, and the legal voters of the town were duly warned to meet at the house of Medad Hitchcock on the first Tuesday in September (the 5th), at one o'clock p.m., to vote for State officers and a town representative.

The meetings of the town were usually held at Captain Hitchcock's—that being a convenient place for the settlers from all directions to congregate; and furthermore the captain, for his own profit as well as for the accommodation of the public, always kept on hand a barrel of whiskey.

The captain's house stood less than a hundred rods south of where Westfield village now stands. It was a one-story log structure fronting the east. But though the town meetings were warned to be held in the captain's house, they were in reality (when the weather was warm enough to permit) held in his barn—which was a grand one for the times, being a frame building thirty-six by forty.

In view of the coming election, the Federals had settled on Captain Hitchcock as their candidate for town representative, while the Democrats had decided to place Thomas Stoughton in the field. Heads had been counted by the leaders on both sides, and estimates made as to the result of a ballot. Each side knew that the contest would be close—that they had not a man to spare, and both wished that in some way the other might lose a vote.

Aaron Frost was a man of the Democratic faith—a basket maker by occupation, at least a part of the time; and though not of large proportions, either in body or mind, his vote counted the same in the ballot-box as did that of the ablest citizen of the town. The Federals, anxious to further the interests of their party, conceived the idea of having Frost absent on election day. That this might be brought about, Asa Dunham went to Frost and told him that Mr. W—, of Potton, Canada, wished to get some basket timber out of the woods, but that he was a novice at the business; and Dunham asked Frost to go down and help select some for him.

Frost was persuaded; and Monday afternoon, September 4, he and Dunham set out for Potton. They reached W—'s just at nightfall, staying there until morning, when Dunham started for home, and Frost and W— set off on their expedition.

A quantity of timber was selected and marked; time passed, and at length W— (who understood Dunham's scheme) said that he was lost, but that he thought there were some marked trees in such a direction, and that if they could find them they could make their way out.

But a suspicion was arising in the mind of Frost that a trick was being practised on him to prevent his getting to Westfield in season to vote. Irritated by this suspicion, he exclaimed, "You and your marked trees go to the d—! I'm going to Westfield!" and at once set out for himself.

The early settlers did without many things that add to the comfort of the present generation. It was necessary that they should be industrious and economical if they would insure prosperity. There was one couple in Westfield careful and saving to the extent of being penurious—Iddo Stebbins and his wife Susan. They were hard-working people, but did not rank very high in intellectual ability. This, perhaps, does not account for his being a Federalist. Another character was Uncle Tom Stoughton, a shrewd old fellow. Wishing to help their party, he and Walter

Stone (both Democrats) early on election morning went to Stebbins's house. Now it happened that Stebbins had at different times smuggled a few things from Canada—though in this particular he was perhaps no worse than some of his neighbours. Their object as to Stebbins was the same as was Dunham's with Frost—to prevent his voting. That this might be accomplished, Stebbins was duly reminded of his smuggling, and told that the officers had got wind of it; but that they (Stoughton and Stone) had found out about it, and, being his friends, had come to tell him. And as friends they advised him to keep himself where he would not be found until the danger should blow over. This communication had the desired effect. Stebbins and his wife were alarmed; and it was decided that he should secrete himself in a willow tract nearly a mile distant, and, as an additional protection, Rudolphus Reed should go and stay with him.

Reed was a Democrat, and the real purpose of his staying with Stebbins was that he might watch him. Accordingly, Stebbins went to the willows, and there, with Reed as his only companion, he remained until into the afternoon. He had nothing to eat; but he had opportunity for bodily repose, if not too greatly harassed by fears.

But Reed did not intend himself to miss voting for Stoughton; so after the sun had passed its meridian and the afternoon was wearing away, he became anxious to leave Stebbins and go to the town meeting. At length he started off with the remark, "Darn it all, I don't believe any body'll git ye now, Iddo. Guess I'll go down and see what the boys are about."

The great doors of Captain Hitchcock's barn were swung back, the floor had been cleanly swept, and at one end stood a table that had been brought from the house. The legal voters, accompanied by the younger male portion of the town, had congregated in and about Captain Hitchcock's buildings, and were engaged in various ways, some in little groups, talking; others wrestling; and still others, in pitching quoits.

At length, about one p.m., Walter Stone and Thomas Hitchcock, the constable and clerk of the town, emerged from the house and went to the barn, where they took their places at the table.

The men and boys soon assembled in the floor, and Stone formally opened the meeting. Then the momentary hush was broken, and the voting began. The ballots of the freemen were soon mostly in the box—only a half dozen or so were lacking; and the afternoon was before them to while away ere the votes could be inspected and it could be known who was elected—so evenly were the voters divided between the two candidates.

Iddo Stebbins and Aaron Frost were nowhere to be seen. Dunham had told the Federals privately of the supposed success of his mission to Canada, and feeling confident of victory, they were in high spirits. The Democrats also knew something that pleased them greatly, and they also hoped to win the day. And so the two parties laughed in their sleeves at each other without the others knowing it, or once imagining that a trick had been played on one of their own men. Of course the absence of Stebbins and Frost had been noticed; and as time passed and neither appeared, each party began wondering what detained their man, and sent messengers for them.

Stebbins lived only about a mile south of Captain Hitchcock's, and the person who went for him soon returned, but alone. The Federals held a secret consultation, and it was decided to send two men (who had already voted) to look up Stebbins.

The messenger who went for Frost returned with the simple but unwelcome information that he had gone to Canada the day before, and had not returned. The Democrats knew there was no time to send for him.

Dolph Reed made his appearance and voted; but though he reported to his friends that he had left Stebbins all right, they became uneasy, for they knew the Federals were searching for him.

Matters assumed a more serious aspect; the faces of those in both parties lengthened perceptibly; the quoit-players lost interest in their game, the wrestlers tired of their sport, and the assemblage became monotonous. Both parties were deeply anxious, the one fearing that Frost, and the other that Stebbins, would appear.

At length Stone, the constable, demanded, "Gentlemen, are your votes all in?"

All the citizens present had long since voted, and there being no response, the officer said, "We are about to turn the box. Are there any objections?"

Neither party dared longer to risk the possibility of the wrong man's coming, and consequently no one made any objection. The constable then turned the box, and the votes were counted.

All the men and boys had again assembled on the floor, and as Constable Stone rose to his feet to make the declaration, not a sound was heard.

"Gentlemen," said he, "the whole number of votes cast for town representative is twenty-seven. Thomas Stoughton has thirteen and Medad Hitchcock fourteen. Medad Hitchcock is therefore elected by one majority." The Federalists had it!

The barn was soon nearly deserted; but while the men were yet standing before the doors, congratulating each other, or wearing a sombre expression, according to whether they were Federal or Democratic, a man was seen with his coat on his arm, hurrying along the path from the north, very much out of breath. It proved to be Frost, the missing Democrat. Then the Federalist faces grew long, and underjaws fell, while the Democratic faces became expectant.

Scarce a minute later three men were seen hastening up from the south. They proved to be Stebbins and the men who went for him. And now the Federalist chins came up again, and their mouths broadened into a grin, and a shadow fell upon the visages of the Democrats. The men had gone to Stebbins's house, and, after much talk, persuaded his wife Susan to tell what she knew of the matter. It took some time to do this; for she at first took them to be the officers of whom Stoughton had told them.

Neither Federal nor Democrat could say much. One party had played a trick, and the other party had made it "tit for tat" without knowing it; thus the election would have resulted the same if neither party had made their attempts to outwit the other.

Stebbins was half starved, and both he and Frost thought they ought to have some whiskey for their sufferings. The others concluded to have some more with them—the defeated party to cheer their spirits, the victors to honour their victory.

Thus was the purity of the Westfield ballot-box maintained, and the Federal preponderance established on the Canada line.—*M. W. Farman, in the New England Magazine.*

FACTS, FEARS AND IMAGINATION.

THE country on the west of Narragansett Bay has been abundantly favoured with unnatural phenomena, and also to a remarkable degree with the means for investigation of their origin. One amusing incident which came under the writer's observation a few years ago, was the means of arousing an interest which has been kept alive ever since.

A certain house had the reputation of frequently changing tenants. Some of these, upon being asked their reasons for removal, would say the house was haunted, while others, well knowing that to admit such a reason for removal would provoke only jeers and laughter, wisely refrained from such an excuse by pleading other reasons. Enough, however, was known. So it came about that when the last new tenant had vacated the house, that the common remark was, "They have seen the ghost." Becoming myself curious to see it, I one day asked an old woman, who had lived in the neighbourhood a great many years, how long these things had been going on. She was very talkative, and gave a long story about the matter, which was briefly as follows:—

The house had been let for a number of years to tenants whose character was not reputable. About three years previous a man was seen to enter, but was never known to have left the house. The night following his arrival was spent in revelry. The language heard by the passer-by that evening was not as courteous nor as chaste as it might have been, and the revel broke up in a fight.

From these circumstances the old woman had formed a theory that the man had been murdered, and that his spirit still hovered around there.

In passing by the house I observed that the two wires of the telegraph ran very close to the end windows, under the roof, and

that the wind had the usual privilege of exercising its genius upon the wires. Stepping beside one of the poles, my companion and I found that it was then doing finely in the way of providing weird music. Learning that the key of the house was kept in the next dwelling, the favour of entering the haunted precincts was solicited. When the custodian learned our reasons for wishing to inspect the house, he laughed, and remarked that we ought to know that it was the news they were sending over the wires that was making the noise, and not the wind. On being asked his reasons for so thinking, he said that a cousin of his had a friend who once worked in a telegraph office, and he had so stated.

"Very well," was the reply. "Wind or news, that is the true ghost. If we can get into that house, we can prove it."

This appeared to interest him. We then inquired if there had been any trouble before the wires had been put up; to which he answered that there had not.

"The trouble, then, has come with the wire, and will continue as long as that wire runs so close to that window," we added.

He brought the key, and together we went over the house. The investigation fully bore out our theory. I then remarked that this music would seem very different in the night to what it did now—that it would not require much imagination to hear fiddling and dancing, and screams and groans, and everything necessary upon which to build a fine ghost story. I then said to the custodian that if he would come there with me that night, we would find every word of my theory to be true, and, besides, we would have a free entertainment.

The result was, we went that night to the house, and had just such an experience as I had anticipated.

Another source from whence many a story of groans and screams have arisen, while not so readily seen at first, is still as easy to understand when once known. Let wind pass through crevices, especially if in those crevices there happens to be splinters, and one not versed in such matters will be surprised to discover what weird and unnatural sounds will be produced. Many persons of good understanding, even, ignorant of the peculiar mechanical conditions which are the cause of the alarming sounds, are sometimes thrown into a great horror by the mysterious manifestations.

It is a notable fact that most of the haunted houses in the country are those which have become more or less uninhabitable, and are consequently more open to the action of the wind than those in good repair. This consideration at once solves the mystery of many haunted houses.

In the Narragansett country there is another source of phenomena that is readily comprehended when the explanation is once brought to the attention of a reasoner. Whether so common in other parts of New England, we know not, but presume it is not; for if it is so common elsewhere, it must have been remarked upon. Electrical storms are and have been of frequent occurrence here. Those who delight in nature's works can nowhere find grander pictures. We will instance a case where one of these storms was turned to advantage, and with it close this paper.

During the winter of 1816-17 a great revival occurred in this region, and hundreds professed religion, and many expressed a wish to be baptized. The weather was cold, and ice covered the surface of the rivers and ponds. Instead of waiting for warm weather, it was proposed to run the risk of taking cold, rather than imperil the soul by delay. The night before the baptism was to take place, some interested parties repaired to the place where the baptizing was to be, and cut the ice, opening a space sufficient for the purpose. In order to keep the opening from freezing over, the water was to be frequently agitated during the night with poles. The next morning those who had taken upon themselves this task had a wonderful story to tell. The water had not shown any inclination to freeze over during the night, although the weather was intensely cold. All that night music was heard in the air, as if troops of angels were hovering overhead, and had come to this place to bestow, in their celestial way, a blessing on the work to be there so soon accomplished.

This story was by many implicitly believed. Old members of the church confirmed the story, and testified that in going home from meeting that evening the heavens seemed to them filled with

divine music, and of such sweetness and beauty that they were satisfied it was made by the angels.

The fact is now known to most well-informed people, that holes out through the ice will be kept open for days by the natural warmth of the water in the coldest of weather; and that electrical storms will produce sounds in the air that may aptly be termed "Heavenly music."

But to resume: the two facts of open water and aerial music—under the above circumstances—was seized upon by the preacher effectively to stimulate still further the religious fervour of the people; and the result was what is known in local religious history as the "Great Awakening."

THE EAGLE'S NEST;

OR,

THE MARVEL OF SEBASTIAN GEE.

A Canadian Story.

PART FIRST.—THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARK WILFORD.

CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

I EXPRESS no opinion as to the general truth of the proposition that distance lends enchantment to the view. But I am prepared to maintain against all comers that the two females who then stood before us were by no means pleasing objects to contemplate at close range.

They were old. They were ugly. Like the Fatal Three who stopped the Scottish Thane and his comrade upon the blasted heath, they were withered and wild in their attire, and looked not like inhabitants of the earth. The Pig-faced Lady would have seemed a comely gentlewoman by the side of either; but one of them was so surpassingly hideous to behold, that, for the moment, I had no eyes for her companion. Never in my life have I encountered anything, human or inhuman, that I would be so unjust as to compare with that frightful old harridan. Charlotte Cushman as Meg Merrilies was a Juliet in comparison. She was bent nearly double with age, but was evidently free from the physical infirmities incidental to declining years, for she bore a large heavily-laden basket strapped to her back, and notwithstanding her burden she seemed as lithe and active as a tiger-cat. A solitary tuft of foul and matted grey hair protruded from beneath the leathern strap which passed round her head and supported the basket. Her dirty parchment visage was wrinkled and distorted out of all semblance to humanity, and her eyes were two flaming red balls of fire, which flashed as she swiftly advanced upon us with an expression of deadly hate.

We kept close together, hand in hand, and edged to the extreme verge of our side of the road, intending to pass by without any salutation. The hag frustrated our design by placing herself directly in front of us. For a single instant she peered furtively round, as though to ascertain whether any one was in sight. Finding that her proceedings were unobserved by any one except her companion and ourselves, she held up her hand menacingly, by way of injunction to us to stand still. Her companion here addressed her in the native jargon of her tribe, which was of course unfamiliar to us; but we perceived from their tones and gestures that the less ill-favoured of the two was remonstrating with the other against interfering with us. They kept up a chattering for a minute or so, and then the hag, unable to restrain herself any longer, sprang upon and seized me roughly by the arm.

I shrank back, and vainly endeavoured to free myself from her grasp. The devilish malice which shot forth from her glittering old eyes terrified me beyond measure, and I screamed aloud at the top of my voice. She held me as though in a vice, and in another second wrenched my hand from my brother's, and drew from some place of concealment about her person a murderous-looking gully. At this, Norman's screams were added to mine, and the valiant little fellow made frantic but ineffectual efforts to seize the hag by the wrist. She glanced quickly from one of us

to the other with an (if possible) intensified expression of diabolical fury, and then—raised the knife high in air.

Whether or not she entertained any design more diabolical than to frighten us within an inch of our lives can never be known with certainty. The presumption is that she did not, for she had an abundance of time to put an end to the earthly career of both of us had she so willed. But while she stood there with her arm poised in mid-air, as though selecting the most vulnerable point of attack, an unlooked-for interruption occurred. Hurried footsteps were heard approaching, and in another moment our ears were stunned by a roar like that of a wounded lion. My assailant instantaneously relinquished her grasp upon my arm, and almost before she had time to let her hand drop to her side, the Bald Eagle vaulted over the opposite fence into the roadway.

Except that his features were somewhat lighted up with angry excitement, and that he had on a pair of moccasins that were almost new, his appearance and garb were precisely the same as we remembered them to have been on that chill November afternoon six months before when we had first beheld him at the door of "The Shooting Star." Hatless and bootless, with flashing eyes and protruding teeth, he presented, in the abstract, anything but an inviting spectacle. But we had no time, even if we had had the inclination, to criticise his aspect. In such emergencies one can hardly be expected to look a gift horse in the mouth. We at once knew that he was there to defend us, and that with such a champion to fight our battles there was no longer any cause for fear.

To seize the beldame by her scraggy throat, wrench the gully from her grasp, and hurl it over the fence and down the bank from whence he had emerged, were the work of a moment. Terrified as I was, I heard the blade strike upon a stone and rebound away down the bank and out of sight. Then, wheeling her round with the rapidity of lightning, he bestowed upon her a kick which I thought must inevitably shatter her old frame to atoms. Had his feet been encased in the heavy cow-hide boots which were in common use in those parts, her existence would possibly have terminated then and there; but his soft buckskin moccasin rendered the propulsion somewhat less formidable as to its results. As it was, however, she shot, as though impelled by a catapult, into the ditch at the opposite side of the road, ten yards distant. Her basket took to itself wings, and flew over her head into the middle of the road, dispersing its contents in every direction. A gallon-jug of whiskey, coming in contact with a stone, was shivered into a hundred fragments, and a large cheese shared the same melancholy fate. The owner of these creature comforts, however, arose almost immediately, shook herself together, gave a sickly smile as though suffering from toothache, and seemed very little the worse for the ungentle treatment she had undergone. The pair would have made off without more ado, but our protector placed himself before them, and launched out into a loud-mouthed tirade, of which, being delivered in the Mohawk tongue, I could not understand a word; but that it was of formidable import the cowed and frightened demeanour of the uncanny pair bore ample testimony. They attempted to speak, as if to mollify him; but every time they opened their mouths he hurled his anathemas with redoubled vigour. After berating them as surely no two scarecrows were ever berated either before or since, he authoritatively pointed down the road, and (apparently) bade them begone. They hurriedly slunk off, without stopping to pick up such of the former contents of the basket as remained uninjured, and were evidently only too glad to escape from the presence of so redoubtable a foe.

Then he turned upon us, and in no very gentle tones demanded: "What you do here alone—eh?"

My brother acted as spokesman, and narrated how we had started from home for a walk across the fields, and had at length found ourselves in the road, where we had been assaulted by the two squaws without any provocation on our part.

"You two little fools to go from home by yourselves. What you think you would have happened if I hadn't come along? That old witch"—he did not say "witch," but used a word that rhymes thereto—"hates white childer wuss as the debil, and would have slit your gizzards, like as not. Don't you never do so no more. You come along with me; I will take you to your father."

We thankfully accepted his escort, and ran along by his side to the gate, and thence down the shady lane past Aspleigh Hall, and so on to our house; where we found that our father had returned, and had got as far as the porch on his way to search for us.

CHAPTER X.

THE BALD EAGLE ON THE WAR-PATH.

"WHY, Sebastian," began my father, advancing down the garden-walk to meet us, and grasping our companion warmly by the hand—"this is a surprise. How are you, and where have you stowed yourself away all winter? In a hollow tree, like any other old bruin—eh?"

"Been down the river," was the reply—"only got back yesterday."

"Down the river. And only got back yesterday. And pray, where did you get back to yesterday?"

"Back home, in course."

"And where do you call 'home'? Ha, ha! That's asking questions, isn't it? None of my business, I suppose. Well, you have been so long away that I thought you must have taken your departure from among us for good, and gone to the happy hunting-grounds you were telling me about one day. Come in and have dinner with us, and then we'll smoke a pipe, and have a chat together. Where did you pick up those two little tramps of mine? I am sorry to say they have been very naughty indeed, and caused their mother no end of anxiety. I was just starting out to look for them when I saw you coming down the lane. But come in and give an account of yourselves, all three of you." And so saying, my father led the way into the house.

Our guest shook hands with my mother as though she had been an intimate acquaintance of ten years' standing. She gave him a hearty welcome, and seconded my father's invitation to dinner, which was nearly ready. The Bald Eagle neither accepted the invitation nor declined it, but quietly seated himself on the edge of a chair, as though silence gave assent.

"O, Norman," said my mother, noticing the fact that our stockings and pinafores were bedaubed with mud; "where have you been, to get yourself and Mark into such a shocking state of dirt? Go into the kitchen, directly, and ask Sarah to wash you, and make you fit to sit down to table." She had been seriously alarmed at our long absence, and was too thankful at seeing us back again safe and sound to adopt very stringent measures towards us.

"You'd oughter feel devilish chipper to see 'em back agin at all, clean or dirty—that's about how it is," remarked Sebastian.

"Why, sir? Has anything happened? Have they been in any mischief?"

"Mischief! Well, I bet old Mog Two-Fish 'ud 'a' played the mischief with 'em, if it hadn't been for me. I come along an' cooched her jest about ready to slice 'em up, down there in the holler, in the Landin' road."

"The Landing road!" exclaimed my mother, holding up her hands in astonishment.

"Yes; an' if I'd been two minutes later they'd like enough 'a' been sassidge-meat afore now. Don't ye be too hard on 'em *this* time. They've been pretty considerable skeered, I tell you. An' I reckon they'll think twicet about it afore they go off on the tramp agin, gallivanting around the deestrick all by theirselves, as if they was no better nor vagabones like me.—Now; jest you hold your little jaw," continued he, playfully shaking his huge fist at my brother, who was about to speak—"I'll make everything squar' with the old folks. You be off an' git slicked up out in the kitchen."

To the kitchen my brother and I accordingly betook ourselves, and then we frightened our sister almost out of her wits by a vivid history of our morning's adventure. A plentiful application of soap and water, and the substitution of some clean clothing for our soiled garments, made us presentable in the dining-room, to which we soon returned. Sebastian had meanwhile electrified our parents by a no less glowing account of our rencontre; and mother, with overflowing eyes, clasped us both to her breast.

"O, sir, how can I ever thank you sufficiently for your protec-

tion of my darlings? And Norman—Mark—"turning from one of us to the other—"you'll never disobey me again, will you? What an escape you have had!"

"Well, you see maum," remarked our guest, "the fact o' the matter is, there's no saying for certain whether they was in any tremenjis danger or not. That darned old scalliwag hates white folks like pison; an' besides she was charged tollably full o' whiskey, an' had the debil in her as big as a two-headed woodchuck. Mebbe she only meant to skeer 'em; an' then agin, mebbe she meant to carry 'em off down to the Injun settlement. Howsomever, I gin her a pretty strong piece o' my mind, an' told her I'd make the country too hot to hold her if she ever tried it on any more. She'll be all-fired keerful about interferin' with 'em agin; so don't you worry about it maum.—I guess I'll jest step out into the kitchen an' wash my hands a spell. Tain't often as I sets down to dinner with gentry."

While our strange guest was performing his ablutions in the kitchen, we supplemented his account of the adventure by acquainting our parents with our version of the story. Sebastian had already informed them who our assailants were. The old woman who had drawn her knife upon us was the mother of that identical Joe Two-Fish mentioned in a former chapter as having committed a murder at the Landing. She was dreaded throughout the district for her ferocious temper, and for her unconquerable hatred of the pale-faces. She had more than once been in trouble for displaying her savage proclivities, and had served a term in jail at Port Burlington for stabbing a constable at the Ford, and biting his nose off. The other woman was her sister, and was a somewhat modified edition of herself. The Two-Fishes, from the oldest to the youngest, were an ill-conditioned race, and were in bad odour even among their own people. They were irreclaimable barbarians, and clung to their savage usages and traditions with a tenacity against which civilization seemed to be powerless. They were notorious thieves; and the thieving propensity seemed to be a sort of mania with them, for they had frequently been known to steal things which were of no conceivable use or value to them, apparently from the mere pleasure of wrong-doing. As for old Mog herself, the Bald Eagle was wont to declare his belief that she could drink more bad whiskey than any other member of her tribe; that she would steal anything in the world that she could lay her hands on except a red-hot cooking-stove; and that she would like to kill somebody every day of her life were it not for fear of consequences. He probably painted her in colours somewhat too strong; but even after making due allowance for exaggeration, we had abundant reason to congratulate ourselves upon having escaped out of the clutches of such an old vulture with nothing more serious than a terrible fright. We of course promised never to stray from home again; and our mother, rightly judging that we had already been sufficiently punished for our little escapade, forgave us for our disregard of her injunction.

Sebastian emerged from the kitchen with face and hands tolerably clean. Our two hired men made their appearance, and in accordance with the democratic usages of the country we all sat down to dinner together. When my father asked a blessing upon the food of which we were about to partake, our guest inclined his head reverently, and throughout the whole progress of the meal he manifested a propriety and decorum such as could scarcely have been expected from a person of his habits and mode of life. People of more fastidious tastes than we were might perhaps have taken exception to his soiled, greasy sheepskin tunic, as a garb not quite appropriate for the dinner-table; and his bare neck and breast would not have shown to advantage at a fashionable club; but his manner of conducting himself at table was certainly more in keeping with the usages of civilized life than was that of the two Jebusitical chawbacons who dined with us.

When dinner was over, Sebastian and my father lighted their pipes, and sat down in the porch to enjoy a smoke, in the course of which the former recounted his adventures subsequent to the time of his parting from us on the night of our arrival. I at first seated myself beside them, with eyes and ears open; but my father, thinking it not unlikely that some of the details might

be such as it would be inadvisable for me to hear, sent me in to my mother. Our guest did not take his departure until late in the afternoon. After he had gone, my mother heard the narrative at second-hand from my father; but it was not until some months afterwards that the particulars were imparted to me. They were to the following effect:

After alighting from the buggy in which he had ridden with us from "The Shooting Star," the Bald Eagle strode into the interstices of the thicket of underbrush where the two ruffians from the Landing were hiding. Upon reaching the spot where they had ensconced themselves he sternly demanded of them what they did there. They replied that they had been to the Ford, and had stepped aside on their way homeward to rest themselves, and to partake of the contents of a bottle of spirits which they had procured in the village. He told them they lied; that he had overheard their colloquy in the barn; and that unless they left the neighbourhood with all imaginable expedition he would acquaint my father with what he had heard, and have them arrested for the crime they had contemplated. They seemed to be thunder-struck. A guilty conscience is easily imposed upon; it never occurred to them that the evidence was insufficient to convict them of any offence. After deliberating together for a few moments they promised compliance with the demand made upon them; stipulating, however, that before taking their final departure they should be permitted to return to the Landing for certain articles of clothing which constituted the whole of their worldly possessions. They anxiously enquired whether or not he had mentioned to any one what he had overheard, and seemed much relieved when he informed them—untruly, as the reader is aware—that he had not. He ordered them to be off at once, and announced his intention of never losing sight of them until they were fairly out of the district.

The three started to walk to the Landing. When they came to the hollow in the road where Norman and I encountered the squaws, one of them suddenly stooped down, and picking up a huge boulder, hurled it at Sebastian's head with all his might. It struck him just above the left ear with full force, and stretched him senseless in the middle of the road.

When he came to himself, Doctor King was bending over him, and pouring a restorative down his throat. Upon attempting to rise to his feet he found that he was dizzy, and unable to stand alone; so the Doctor carried him home in his gig, dressed his wound, and kept him at the Eyrie all night. The two assailants were no doubt of opinion that the blow had been fatal, as it unquestionably would have been if administered to a skull of ordinary thickness. They would probably have dragged his body down the bank, attached a great stone to it, and sunk it in the river out of sight, had they not been alarmed at hearing the approach of the Doctor's gig. It was quite dark, and the Doctor had seen nothing of them. The latter personage was for going at once to the Landing, and delivering the rascals up to justice; but Sebastian would not assent to such a proceeding, stating that he very much preferred to settle with them himself. He had always been accustomed to redress his own grievances, without invoking the majesty of the law. At the urgent request of his patient, the Doctor promised to keep silence about the affair; and next morning, Sebastian, having apparently quite recovered from the effects of the blow, started for the Landing.

Upon his arrival there, he found that the birds had flown. He learned that they had been drinking at Price's tavern up to a late hour on the previous night, and had not since been seen by any one about the place. By some means known only to himself he contrived to get upon their trail, and tracked them from the Landing to the Ford: from the Ford to Port Burlington; from Port Burlington to Niagara: thence across the river into the interior of the State of New York. At Lockport they for the first time became aware that they were being hunted by the man whom they previously believed they had killed. Knowing the character of him with whom they had to deal, and being no doubt haunted by a vague dread of the consequences of an encounter with him, they adopted all sorts of devices to throw him off the scent. I can readily believe that from thenceforward every hour of their lives, whether sleeping or waking, was passed in mortal fear. I

can imagine how, month after month, they shulked about from town to town, striving to baffle the wily pursuer; and striving in vain; for, twist and turn how they would, ever in their wake followed the footsteps of the avenger. It is probable that the Bald Eagle was conscious of the vague terror that his pursuit inspired, and purposely prolonged the chase in order to prolong their anxiety. At all events, he apparently made no very strenuous exertions to come up with them, else he might have overtaken them long before he did. He laughed savagely as he narrated to my father how, no sooner did they fancy that they had thrown him out, and that they were at last in a place of security, than they would receive an intimation that he was only half a dozen miles off, and making straight for them with unflinching tenacity of purpose.

I am unable to give any further details of the prolonged pursuit. Suffice it to say that, if his own word is to be believed, he at last overtook them. Where the encounter took place he declined to say. He further declined to give any information as to how he had avenged himself. "Never you mind," said he to my father: "they won't cut up any more o' their shins. They deserved all they got. That was an awful clip they gin me, an' I wasn't goin' to let 'em off. If I'd had to follow 'em to the middle o' the earth, I was bound to have satisfaction. My head ain't never been quite plumb since the cussed stone hit me. I find that it has affected my mem'ry. I seem to forgit things I oughter remember. I have small amounts o' money hid around here and there in different places in the woods, an' oftentimes I can't call to mind where to find 'em. I have to keep a written amorum in my pocket to tell me where they be."

"But you didn't kill the men?" exclaimed my father, interrogatively.

"Not likely. But don't you ask any questions, 'cause it ain't nobody's business but mine. Any man as runs agin Sebastian Gee runs agin a chunk."

It was of no use. No additional information could ever be extracted from him on the subject. This much, however, is certain: the two ruffians were never seen or heard of again in the district, and their fate remains a mystery to this day.

Sebastian laid no injunctions upon my father to keep silence respecting so much of the story as he had thought proper to communicate; but it will easily be understood that my father did not consider the subject an attractive one to talk about, and never mentioned it to any one except my mother. As has already been stated, it was not until some time afterwards that I learned, from her lips, the particulars which I have here set down.

CHAPTER XI.

MENTOR AND TELEMACHUS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the Bald Eagle's quasi-denial, my father was very much disposed to believe that the two umquihile sojourners of Burtch's Landing had met with foul play at the hands of the man who had so pertinaciously hunted them down. It would have been difficult, indeed, for any one who was cognizant of such facts as were known to my father to arrive at any other conclusion. It was not reasonable to suppose that such a pursuit as that in which the half-breed confessed to having engaged—a pursuit involving a long succession of toilsome journeys on foot: a pursuit extending over several months, and followed up to the last with all the savage relentlessness of a Corsican's vendetta—it was not reasonable to suppose that such a pursuit had terminated harmlessly. It was by no means probable that he had spent week after week and month after month in tracking his enemies from place to place for mere pastime. He must undoubtedly have had some very definite purpose in view in following up such a trail; and what could that purpose have been unless revenge? He admitted that his labour had not been in vain. He acknowledged that he had overtaken them; and his persistent refusal to give any particulars as to his final encounter with them formed an additional ground for the gravest suspicion against him; more especially when accompanied by his positive assurance that they would trouble no

one any more. The most obvious deduction seemed to be that he had in some secret manner contrived to make away with them, and to cover up his tracks so effectually that detection would be either very difficult or altogether impossible.

From the moment when my father arrived at that conclusion, his sentiments towards his protégé underwent a marked change, and he was for some days greatly exercised in mind as to what steps, if any, ought to be taken in the matter. The mere fact that the two ruffians were two unmitigated scoundrels of whom the world would be well rid, was an accidental ingredient which he felt that he had no right to take into consideration. If they had been foully dealt with, the offence was legally as great as though they had been the most estimable members of society. And if such a crime had been committed, would not he himself become in some sort a participator therein by keeping silence as to what he knew? On the other hand, of what avail would it be for him to speak out? To whom should he speak? Would it answer any good purpose to lay the circumstances before the local authorities, to be dealt with by them as they might think proper? Were there sufficient grounds for arresting the suspected person, and keeping him in custody until the fate of the missing ones could be enquired into? And even if there were such grounds, was it my father's imperative duty to set on foot such a proceeding? In the first place, would it not savour of monstrous ingratitude and bad faith on my father's part to subject to criminal prosecution a man whose own admissions furnished the only evidence against him: whom it would probably be impossible to convict: who might even turn out altogether guiltless: and who, whatever his faults might be, had certainly manifested a most friendly spirit towards my father and his family? If the man had been guilty of the crime of murder, had he not been led into committing it by an ever-watchful zeal for my father's welfare? And in the next place, was it probable that the local authorities of the district, with such scanty information as could be furnished to them, would be able to elicit anything which would throw light upon the fate of the absentees.

My parents held many private colloquies between themselves upon the subject, and discussed it in all its bearings. They were actuated by a sincere desire to do their duty, irrespective of consequences; but they were nevertheless anxious to do no more than their duty, and to screen the Bald Eagle in so far as that might be done with a clear conscience. The final conclusion at which they arrived was that the facts, as known to them, were too vague and indefinite to render magisterial interference imperative, and that it was not even morally incumbent upon my father to take any action in the matter. At the same time, they were not entirely free from certain inward misgivings as to whether this conclusion was a just one; and they were at all events averse to continuing any intimacy with a man whom it was possible to suspect of so heinous an offence as wilful murder. As for my mother, she had conceived a distrust of the man from the moment when she had first looked in his face. That distrust had never entirely left her, and when she had been made acquainted with the substance of his narrative to my father, she shuddered at the thought of entertaining such a guest in her house.

Meanwhile, however, the subject of these discussions continued to visit us frequently; and, notwithstanding a perceptible diminution of cordiality in the manner of both host and hostess, he seemed to have no suspicion that his visits were otherwise than acceptable. Of course they were not positively rude to him. It would have been repugnant to their natures to be positively rude to any person, more especially to one who was evidently well-disposed towards them, and who had so recently established an additional claim to their favour by rescuing their little ones from the rabid fury of old Mog Two-Fish. And the Bald Eagle was not an exacting guest. He was no stickler for ceremonious courtesy. It was sufficient for him that he was permitted to come and go backward and forward as he pleased; and he was apparently unconscious of anything to complain of in the household hospitality dispensed at the Crofts.

He continued, as I have said, to visit us frequently. My brother and I knew nothing of what was passing in the minds of our parents at this time; and to us, at least, his visits were al-

ways welcome, for he was a most entertaining companion. We were much interested in his strange ways, so different from those of any one else whom we had seen. He seemed to be equally interested in us, and was never tired of listening to our boyish prattle. He was demonstrative in his affection for us, and never came without bringing with him some token of his good will. He made bows and arrows for us, and taught us how to use them. He fashioned beautiful little toy canoes for us from birch bark, and ornamented them gaudily with stained quills. He devoted two afternoons to constructing for our delectation a rude wooden cage with three apartments; and the next day he made his appearance with four living tenants for the aforesaid apartments, in the shape of a black squirrel, two chipmonks, and a hedge-hog. The little creatures seemed to be quite at home in their new quarters, and the miniature menagerie formed a source of amusement for us for many a day. Then, he was not averse to receiving amusement from us. In a former page I have mentioned the fact that he could read. He evinced a decided partiality for the contents of some of our story-books. He could spell his way through a few pages for himself, but he generally preferred to have them read to him, as his eye-sight was not very keen at short range. Norman, who was quite a scholar for his years, could read an easy book like "The Seven Champions" without difficulty; and nothing pleased our guest more than to sit and listen to those immortal legends by the hour together. I was at this time about three years of age, and had just begun to learn my letters. Sebastian took great interest in my scholastic advancement, and seldom left us for the day until he had devoted a few minutes to my instruction. I may say, indeed, that he taught me the rudiments of the English language. I learned my alphabet out of the volume of "Parliamentary Debates," which contained a goodly array of capital letters, and the type whereof was large and distinct. It soon came to be a regular thing, every day when he visited us, for this ponderous tome to be brought out from the drawer in which it was kept. He took great pride in his office of Mentor, and seemed to swell with importance when the book was placed in his hands for the purpose of hearing me say a lesson. I was not inapt, and when I acquitted myself creditably he would pat me approvingly on the head, while his eyes glistened with supreme delight. Before summer was over I had made considerable progress under his tuition, and not only knew all my letters perfectly, but could pick out most of the words of one syllable, and spell and define them to his entire satisfaction.

These various manifestations of his affection for my brother and me could not fail to produce an effect upon the sentiments of my parents towards him. They were almost daily witnesses of the harmless, inoffensive life which he led, and as the months rolled by, the rigour of their feelings towards him began insensibly to abate. It did not seem possible to them that a man who took such evident delight in catering to the amusement and instruction of their little ones could ever have been guilty of so grave an offence as a breach of the sixth commandment. They tried to persuade themselves that he had appeased his revenge by merely giving the ruffians a tremendous thrashing, and then letting them go their ways. I am not prepared to say that they ever quite succeeded in convincing themselves that such had been the case; for was there not his own express declaration that the two men would never trouble any one again? They determined, however, to think the best of him, and to hope that he had at any rate stopped short of actual murder. He did not again voluntarily allude to the matter himself. My father made repeated attempts, when the two were alone together, to induce him to give a more explicit account of the transaction; but he was less susceptible than the unjust judge mentioned in the Scriptures: he was not to be overcome, even by continual importunity, and would never be wheedled into saying anything beyond what he had previously stated. And there the matter was allowed to rest.

When the harvest season came round again he became, for a time, almost domesticated with us. He could do a formidable day's work in the harvest-field, and would accept of no recompense for his services beyond his daily food. There was little intercourse and no familiarity between him and the other labourers, with whom he never exchanged an unnecessary word.

When the day's work was done, he would sit down to table and eat his supper with the rest, but when the meal was at an end he would quietly withdraw to a corner of the yard and smoke his pipe in solitude until he felt inclined for slumber. No amount of persuasion could induce him to lie in a bed; a bed being an article which he regarded as a useless and enervating luxury. He declared that he had never slept in one since he was a boy, and that he did not intend to resume the practice at that late time of day. When his pipe was finished, he would betake himself to the kitchen, stretch his limbs out upon the floor with his arm for a pillow, and in less than two minutes his prodigious snores would proclaim that he was sleeping the sleep of the just. He seemed to require but little sleep, and was always astir long before any one else in the house. It was nothing unusual for him to get through as much work before his breakfast as would have taken an ordinary man half a day to accomplish.

When the last sheaf had been gathered in, he went away with the other hands who had been specially employed for the harvest. In a few days, however, he again made his appearance as he had been accustomed to do. My lessons were resumed, and he took good care that I should make up by increased assiduity for the time I had lost by his temporary absence. My progress was such that before many more weeks had elapsed I could read as well as he could, and he was at length reluctantly compelled to resign his tutorial functions into my mother's hands. Throughout the ensuing autumn and winter his visits were somewhat irregular, as he was frequently absent from the neighbourhood on hunting excursions. Sometimes we would see nothing of him for several weeks, and then he would suddenly drop in upon us with a fine haunch of venison on his shoulders—or perhaps a bag of wild rabbits or hares—as a present to my mother.

Nothing of sufficient importance to be recorded occurred during that winter, which had little to distinguish it from the preceding one except that there was much less snow, and that the weather was not nearly so cold. It was quite cold enough, however, and there were several days when the mercury went down ever so far below zero. We were all very happy at the Crofts, and no one was happier than I. Again were the logs piled high in the great fireplace, and the landscapes among the hickory coals were as resplendently gorgeous as ever. Happy, happy days of childhood! What joys does adolescence bring with it to compensate us for those it takes away?

Spring came in early. The bleak winds of March soon blew themselves out, and the first of April found the ground bare. In that month of April an event happened which changed the whole course of my future life. But for that event I would not have had much of a story to tell, and it would not have devolved upon me at this distance of time to take up my pen to recount the weird mystery of Sebastian Gee.

Thus ends the last completed page of this singularly realistic but withal romantic story. The remaining MS. consists merely of headings for chapters, which prove, however, that the author had a clear conception in his mind as to the subsequent course of the narrative. The headings are as follows:—

CHAPTER XII.	THE MAN OF BELIAL.
CHAPTER XIII.	THE HOUSE THAT JAKE BUILT.
CHAPTER XIV.	THE NOBLE SAVAGE.
CHAPTER XV.	ALL IN THE WILD MARCH MORNING.
CHAPTER XVI.	THE CROWNER HATH SET ON HIM.

CHAPTER XVII.

SHE IS A WOMAN; THEREFORE MAY BE WOODED.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SHE IS A WOMAN; THEREFORE MAY BE WON.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BATTLE OF BURTON'S LANDING.

CHAPTER XX.

LIFE AT THE EYRIE.

CHAPTER XXI.

SURFACE INDICATIONS.

CHAPTER XXII.

LIFE IN THE CLEARINGS.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BOUNDING BILLOWS.

END OF PART FIRST.

PART SECOND.

COMPILED from the narrative of Wheaton Scovill, an Incurable, by Septimus Dweley, one of the Surgeons in Ordinary to the Royal Free Hospital, Elmhampton, England.

[Introductory note by Dr. Dweley.]

This is the "trifling exception" referred to in Part I., Chapter I.

PART THIRD.—MARK WILFORD'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

CHAPTER I.

A LETTER.

CHAPTER II.

STEERAGE.

CHAPTER III.

THE CRYPTOGRAM.

CHAPTER IV.

DECIPHERED.

CHAPTER V.

EXPLORATIONS AT THE RAGLE'S NEST.

CHAPTER VI.

DISCOVERY.

CHAPTER VII.

SO FOUL A SKY CLEARS NOT WITHOUT A STORM.

CHAPTER VIII.

THIS LOOKS NOT LIKE A NUPTIAL.

CHAPTER IX.

THE STORM BURSTS.

CHAPTER X.

THE CLOSING SCENE.



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