

Skookum Chuck Fables eBook

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Page 1

Of the Rolling Stone

Once upon a time in a small village in Bruce County, Province of Ontario, Dominion of Canada, there lived a man who was destined to establish a precedent. He was to prove to the world that a rolling stone is capable at times of gathering as much moss as a stationary one, and how it is possible for the rock with St. Vitus dance to become more coated than the one that is confined to perpetual isolation. Like most iconoclasts he was of humble birth, and had no foundation upon which to rest the cornerstone of his castle, which was becoming too heavy for his brain to support much longer.

His strong suit was his itinerate susceptibility; but his main anchorage was his better five-fifths. One of his most monotonous arguments was to the effect that the strenuousness of life could only be equalled by the monotony of it, and that it was a pity we had to do so much in this world to get so little out of it.

“Why should a man be anchored to one spot of the geographical distribution like a barnacle to a ship during the whole of his mortal belligerency?” he one day asked his wife. “We hear nothing, see nothing, become nothing, and our system becomes fossilized, antediluvian. Why not see everything, know everything? Life is hardly worth while, but since we are here we may as well feed from the choicest fruits, and try for the first prizes.”

Now, his wife was one of those happy, contented, sweet, make-the-best-of-it-cheerily persons who never complained even under the most trying circumstances. It is much to the detriment of society that the variety is not more numerous, but we are not here to criticise the laws that govern the human nature of the ladies. This lady was as far remote from her husband in temperament as Venus is from Neptune. He was darkness, she was daylight; and the patience with which she tolerated him in his dark moods was beautiful though tragic. It was plain that she loved him, for what else in a woman could overlook such darkness in a man?

“You see,” he would say, “it is like this. Here I am slaving away for about seventy-five dollars per month, year in and year out. All I get is my food and clothing—and yours, of course, which is as much necessary, but is more or less of a white man’s burden. No sooner do I get a dollar in my hand than it has to be passed along to the butcher, baker, grocer, dressmaker, milliner. Are our efforts worth while when we have no immediate prospects of improvement? And then the monotony of the game: eat, sleep, work; eat, sleep, work. And the environs are as monotonous as the occupations. I think man was made for something more, although a very small percentage are ever so fortunate as to get it. Now, I can make a mere living by roaming about from place to place as well as I can by sitting down glued to this spot that I hate, and then I will have the chance of falling into something that is a great deal better, and have an opportunity to see

something, hear something, learn something. Here I am dying by inches, unwept, unhonoured and unsung.”



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To be “blue” was his normal condition. His sky was always cloudy, and with this was mingled a disposition of weariness which turned him with disgust from all familiar objects. With him “familiarity bred contempt.” One day when his psychological temperament was somewhat below normal the pent up thunder in him exploded and the lightning was terrible:

“Here I am rooted to one spot,” he said, “fossilized, stagnant, wasting away, dead to the whole world except this one little acre. And what is there here? Streets, buildings, trees, fences, hills, water. Nothing out of the ordinary; and so familiar, they have become hateful. Why, everything in the environment breeds weariness, monotony, a painfully disgusting sameness. The same things morning, noon and night, year after year. Why, the very names of the people here give me nervous prostration. Just think—Cummings, Huston, Sanson, Austin, Ward, McAbee, Hobson, Bailey, Smith, Black, Brown, White—Bah! the sound of them is like rumors of a plague. I want to flee from them. I want to hear new names ringing in my ears. And I hate the faces no less than I do the names. I would rather live on a prairie where you expect nothing; and get it—anything so long as it is new.”

Now, that which is hereditary with the flesh cannot be a crime. The victim is more to be pitied in his ancestral misfortune, and the monkey from which our hero sprang must have been somewhat cosmopolitan.

Of course his wife had heard such outbreaks of insanity from him before, so she only laughed, thinking to humor him back to earth again with her love and smiles.

“Conditions are not so bad in Bruce county as you paint them,” she said, “and if you do not go about sniffing the air you will not find so many obnoxious perfumes. Why, I *love* the locality; and I like the people. And I like you, and my home; and I am perfectly satisfied with everything. Things might be a great deal worse. You should have no complaint to make. You have a steady situation, a good master, a beautiful home, plenty to eat—and then you have me,” she exclaimed, as though her presence should atone for all else in the world that he did not have. And perhaps a treasure of this kind should have been a valuable asset, and an antidote against all mere mundane cares.

“Look out through the parlor door,” she continued. “Could anything be more beautiful? The sun is just setting. The lake is asleep. See the reflection of the trees beneath its surface. How peaceful, how restful! My mind is just like the lake—perfectly at ease. Why do you not control your storm and calm down like the lake? Look at the tall shadows of the contented firs reaching away out across its bosom. How like a dream.”

“Bah! Don’t mention lake to me. I hate the sight of it. I have seen it too long. It is too familiar. It is an eyesore to me. I am weary of it all. I want a rest. Here comes Brown now. Let me hide in the cellar. It would be hypocrisy to remain here and smile welcome to him when I hate the sight of his physiognomy and detest the sound of his name. No,



he has gone by. He does not intend to call. Thank heaven. Five minutes of his society would be equal to ten years in purgatory. New sights, new scenes, new voices, new faces; all these are recreation to a mentally weary constitution.”



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“I would consider it a crime to leave this beauty spot,” said his wife, “and it is a sin against heaven to decry it.”

“Then I am a sinner and a criminal,” said the hereditary crank, “because I hate it and am going to leave. I will take fifty dollars and go, and if I do not return with fifty thousand I will eat myself. I have said all there is to say. Those dull, uninteresting faces give me the nighthorse. I am going to-morrow. Of course you remain, because it is more expensive to travel double than single,” he snorted, “and I have not the plunks.”

He embarked into the big world a few days later with his wife’s warm kiss burning his lips—faithful even in his unfaithfulness. She was cheerful for some time, thinking that he would return, but the magnetism which attracted him to the woman whom he had picked from among the swarming millions was of very inferior voltage.

He wandered about Canada and the United States for about two years. He had many ups and downs. On the average he made enough to induce his soul to remain in his body in anticipation of something better. To do him justice he remitted all odd coin to his wife in Bruce county, and he wrote saying he was perfectly happy in his new life. He awoke one morning and found himself in the “Best” Hotel, Ashcroft, British Columbia, Dominion of Canada, and the first thing he saw was the sand-hill. He thought Ashcroft was the most desolate looking spot he had ever seen. It looked like a town that had been located in a hurry and had been planted by mistake on the wrong site.

He fell in with a Bruce county fellow there who was running a general store, and they became very friendly. He secured employment from this friend, who proved to be a philanthropist.

“I have a proposition to make to you,” the friend said one day.

“What is it?” asked the iconoclast.

“Buy me out,” said the philanthropist. “I have all the money I can carry. When the rainy day comes I will be well in out of the drip, and my tombstone will be ‘next best’ in the cemetery.”

“But I have no bank balance,” said the aspirant eagerly. “I have no debentures of any kind; I have not even pin money.”

“Bonds are unnecessary,” said the friend. “Besides, when I sell you this stock and building you will have an asset in the property. I will sell outright, take a mortgage for the balance, which you will disburse at the rate of five hundred dollars per year. You can do it and make money at the same time. You will kill two birds with half a stone. Why, in twenty years’ time Rockefeller will be asking you to endorse his notes.”



The sale was made and the hero jumped into a store on Railway Avenue without a seed or cell, and in a short time the moss began to grow so thick upon him that he had all the sharks in B.C. asking him for a coating. And then he wrote for his wife, whom he missed for the first time. The letter ran thus:



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“Ultima Thule, B.C., March 1st. 1915.

“My Dear Wife:

“You will see by the heading of this letter that fortune has cast me off at Ashcroft, and I must congratulate myself for initiating that rolling stone ‘stunt.’ I have stumbled upon the richest mine in B.C. The gold is sticking out of it in chunks. The auto that you will play when you arrive will be a ‘hum dinger’ and no mistake. I am enclosing my cheque for \$500. Buy out Tim Eaton and bring your dear self here, for I am lonely without you.

“Your hitherto demented husband.”

She read it fifty times, placed it next her heart and pranced about like a five-year-old. “Now, just where is Ashcroft?” she soliloquized. None of the Bruce county aborigines seemed to know, so she consulted a world map, and she found it growing like a parasite to the Canadian Pacific Railway away in among the mountains of British Columbia.

But this was nothing. She would have risked a journey over the Atlantic in an aeroplane if it were a means of uniting her with the man who was the only masculine human in existence so far as she was concerned—the man whom she had singled out and adopted from among the millions of his kind. When they met the union was pathetic, but it was lovely. To make a woman happy, who loves you like this, should be the consummation of a man’s domestic ambitions.

It was pointed out to him afterwards that, after all, the moss did not begin to grow until he had settled down in Ashcroft. So he lost his knighthood as an iconoclast.

Of Cultus Johnny

Once upon a time at Spence’s Bridge, County of Yale, Province of British Columbia, on the Indian reserve, there lived two Indians named Cultus (bad) Johnny and Hias (big) Peter. They were friends until Peter got married, and then the trouble began, because they both wanted the same kloodchman. They had been fishing for some time for the same fish, in the same pool in the Thompson river, and had each been favored with very encouraging nibbles. One day, however, Peter felt the tugging at his bait somewhat stronger than usual and with one jerk he pulled out his fish. Peter had stolen a march on his rival. The priest married them when Johnny was at the coast, fishing at New Westminster for the canneries. When the intelligence reached him he sat down in the bottom of the boat and for a few moments imagined himself at Spence’s Bridge giving Hias Peter a Jack Johnson trouncing. To Cultus Johnny the strange preference of this woman for his rival seemed like unmitigated discrimination. Why, there was no comparison between the two when it came to worldly icties. Peter had nothing: he had no illiha, no icties of any kind; he was broke morning, noon and night. Johnny had a

sixty dollar saddle, a five dollar bridle, a two and a half quirt and the best cayuse in Spence's Bridge, and worth seventy-five



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dollars. Peter had nothing but the wage he earned working on the C.P.R. section, which had been just enough to supply him with his daily muck-a-muck (food) before marriage. How he calculated to feed two with the one basket of o-lil-ies (berries) which had been only large enough for one, did not seem to worry the community, as such things were taking place every day and were a common occurrence, and the klootchman always seemed to survive the ordeal. And it must not be forgotten that Johnny had a seven and a half Stetson hat while all Peter could afford was a two bit cap.

It will always remain a mystery why one Indian should be more voluptuous, or gather more icties about him than another, when none of them have any visible assets from which to derive an income. Unless it be that the more voluptuous Indian works every day of his weary, aimless life, spends nothing, and hoards the residual balance like a miser, lives on the old man before marriage, and on his klootchman after, we are unable to arrive at a solution. No one knew by what means Johnny had acquired all his wealth. Perhaps he had bought all his luxuries on jaw-bone from one store while he paid cash for his muck-a-muck in another. There is one thing certain, the honest Indian is always the poorest, and in these days of the high cost of beans and bacon and rice, he has to be poorer to be more honest. Now it came to pass that one day Johnny balanced his saddle, horse, quirt and Stetson hat with Peter's nothing and argued that all the weight was in his own favor. The keeka (girl) had made a mistake. And to a man who measured everything by worldly icties this was sound argument, for the only big thing about Peter was his avoirdupois—barring his heart, of course. In the heat of his argument Johnny determined to deprive Peter of his sacred property. And among the Indians this is not nearly so hazardous or hopeless or criminal an undertaking as it may seem through an Anglo-Saxon microscope. Although a wife is considerable of an asset to a white man, she is not so to an Indian; and it may be to his advantage that he is more or less philosophical about it. The cultus Indian was at Lillooet when this skookum tumtum (good thought) occurred to him. He was cutting fire-wood with some of the Statlemulth (Lillooet Indians) in an effort to heal the wound in his left chest which had been left gaping since his recent defeat in battle. He went back to Spence's Bridge as fast as his seventy-five dollar cayuse, his sixty dollar saddle, his five dollar bridle and his two and a half quirt could carry him, and presented himself to his kith and kin. The old man gave him a warm hand-shake. They killed some fatted chickens and had the biggest time that the rancherie had ever known. Peter and his schmamch (wife) were there and old acquaintances were renewed. Johnny's strong suit with his ancient flame was his personal icties; and when Peter was otherwise engaged he asked the girl to elope with him to Kamloops or Lillooet. The next day was Sunday and Peter was going out with others on a cayuse hunt which had been planned some time before. He invited Johnny because it would not be safe to leave him in possession of the fort, and in charge of such a valuable, though fickle, asset; for a great number of the Indian women are fickle.



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But Cultus Johnny declined the invitation. He was tired, and wanted to rest. Besides, he had a bridle to finish which he was plaiting from the leather cut from the legs of an old pair of cow-boy boots which he had found; it would be worth ten dollars when finished. In spite of his good intentions Johnny spent the whole day in idleness at the home of Mrs. Peter; and, as it is no insult among the Indians for a buck to propose an elopement with his neighbor's wife, because it is a very common business transaction among them, Johnny again suggested the escapade. The woman only laughed and seemed to enjoy the flirtation. But she would neither consent nor refuse. Hias Peter did not return that evening, and the next day Johnny was at the works with greater cannonading, and with more skookum tumtum than ever, and this time he was braver. He was just on the point of putting his arm around the keeka's waist when the door opened and Peter darkened the opening. They looked at one another for a few moments like two panthers about to spring at each other's throats. Hias Peter had a hias gun, and he raised it to his shoulder and glanced in a very savage and threatening way along the barrel toward Cultus Johnny's heart. Johnny dropped to the floor and begged for mercy. Now it requires some courage to shoot a fellow-being down in cold blood, although the punishment may be well deserved, so Peter lowered his rifle.

"Klatawa!" (Go!) he commanded. "Hiak!" (Quick!) he shouted. Johnny crawled on his hands and knees towards the door, and as he was creeping over the threshold Peter gave him one awful kick that sent him rolling on the ground outside. And turning to the woman: "Fooled!" he roared. "I will shoot you down like a coyote next time," he said. As the Indian is a man of few words, he drew himself up to his hias (large) size in front of her. But the woman pleaded that she was not to blame. Johnny had persisted in his attentions to her, and she could not drive him off. "If you want to get rid of him, shoot him," said Peter.

Now, among the Indians, when you covet your neighbor's wife, or have been too familiar with her, and you are caught with the goods, you do not fly into a far country for fear of your life. You still hang around, and the worst you can get is perhaps a pounding from the jealous neighbor; and the sweet environment is worth the risk.

Johnny's skookum tumtum was somewhat out of commission for a while. When he met Mrs. Peter on the street after that they grinned at each other a few times without speaking; and by and by, when they thought Peter was out of sight, they would stop and talk for a while. He asked her again to fly to Kamloops with him, and she seemed to be swinging on the balance. Johnny dwelt upon his worldly assets—his saddle, his bridle, and all his skookum icties. Peter soon realized that his wife was eating at his table and living in another man's tumtum, but he kept on chewing his beans and bacon and dried soquas (salmon) in silence, and, but for the intervention of Providence, Peter might have followed in the footsteps of Paul Spintlum.



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One day Cultus Johnny and his sister went across the river to fish. They cast their nets directly across from the rancherie, beneath an angry-looking, hungry, threatening, overhanging gravel bed. He and his father and his father's fathers had fished there time out of memory. The old men of the village were squatted here and there weaving nets for the fishing season. Squaws were bringing in bundles of tree branches on their backs for firewood; others were scraping the flesh from raw deer-skins, stretched on frames which leaned against buildings. Some young fellows, among whom was Hias Peter, were rolling up driftwood from the river. Children were capering about, laughing and shouting. Dogs were barking, cats mewing, roosters crowing. There was nothing but joy, and peace, and harmony. It was just such a scene as may be witnessed on a bright sunny day at any Indian village in the dry-belt at any time. Suddenly there was a rush and a roar and a plunge of waters. The whole mountain across from the rancherie had fallen into the river with one mad roar like thunder, and the water was thrown up upon the village and its helpless inmates. In a moment the peaceful scene was one of death and torture. Men, women and children were struggling helplessly in the water and trying in vain to reach the higher benches. At the next moment the water receded and carried many back struggling into the channel of the river. Hias Peter found himself, with others, struggling among logs, timbers and debris of every description. Just before the water receded he saw his wife and heard her yell for help. He seized her skirt and dragged her to safety, clinging to a friendly sage brush. For a moment Peter thought that, so far as he was personally concerned, she was scarcely worth saving; but it is very unnatural to allow a fellow being to drown before your eyes and make no attempt to save him. And perhaps our worst enemy could rely on us for protection under similar circumstances. But where was Cultus Johnny and his sister all this time? The whole world lay on top of them, and that is all we know. They were never seen again.

Mrs. Peter looked across the river and sighed.

Mr. Peter looked across the river and gave a grunt in his own language.

A million tons of earth were holding down Cultus Johnny.

Of the Booby Man

Once upon a time in Ashcroft there lived a "gink" who was very much wrapped up in himself. At a local social function he took the prize one day for being the most unpopular man in the community; and this caused him to sit up nights, and study himself as others saw him flitting across his unattractive and uneventful stage. The winning of this prize spoke to him with greater accent than could the exploding of a sixteen-inch German gun, and it sent a quiver through his entire avoirdupois. It was not only an appalling revelation to him to know that he was

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unpopular, but it was a disgrace to his pedigree right back to the days of Samuel De Champlain, so he began to paw the bunch grass and seek revenge. First he dug among the archives of history for a solution. There must be some reason for this disgraceful blur on his life pages. Why was he the most unpopular man on these sand downs? Why was he an outcast? Why was he the Job of Ashcroft society? Now, just why was he unpopular? Had he boils, like Job? Was he an undesirable citizen? Was he a German, or an Austrian, or a Turk? Was he inflicted with some loathsome disease? Was he a plague? Had some false reputation preceded him into the community? Had he a cantankerous disposition? Was he repulsive in appearance? Was he mean, stingy? Was he stupid, ignorant, uneducated, brainless? No, personally he could not plead guilty of acquaintance with any of the above disqualifications. Among the archives of his past Ashcroft history he found some tell-tale manuscripts, the contents of which had never appealed to him until after the booby prize episode. In plain English, he found written facts which were as bold as the violation of Belgian neutrality. Incidents which had seemed very commonplace and unworthy of notice before, now loomed up on those pages and presented themselves to him as giants of the utmost importance. For instance, in looking up the records connected with the forming of the Ashcroft Rinks he found that he had not been consulted in the matter. His name was missing from that interesting page of Ashcroft history. However, when the time arrived for the forming of a company to finance the erection of the building, great interest was taken in his bank account, and the promoters knocked very early one morning at his door seeking endorsement to purchase shares in the joint stock company which was about to be born. At the meeting for the election of directors to take charge of the affairs of the company he was again surrounded by the same zero atmosphere. He was not even nominated as a prospective member. His name had never been suggested. He was never consulted when anything serious was the point of debate. It had not occurred to him to become incensed at this frigid zone attitude on the part of his associates. He had not been expecting any handout, so he was not disappointed. He had been too much absorbed in his own personal affairs, too much wrapped up in himself, and could detect no grounds for offence. At the annual election of officers for the Curlers, although a member for ten years, it had never occurred to any in the association to suggest his name as a probable pillar for the upholding of the business portion of the club. Again his presence was not suspected, and he may as well have been in Iceland. Although present incarnate, he was to all intent and purpose only in the invisible spirit.



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When the hospital idea was being introduced the social thermometer in the vicinity was again standing at the zero point; and he remembered that he had never had the honor of being invited by the society to any of the annual pioneer banquets. He had received the alien "hand-out" upon all occasions, and had the same status in the community as a Chinaman. Of course, being hitherto so much wrapped up in personality, he took no notice of his social mercury, which always stood at its minimum. And then, as the management of the various institutions had been placed in hands which were, undoubtedly, more able and willing to cope with the difficulties than he, and as everybody seemed satisfied, there was no occasion for him raising his voice in protest throughout the dumb wilderness. Being personally very much occupied with his own stamp mill, and the percentage of the pay-rock, he was just as pleased that no local burden should be placed across the apex of his spinal pillar. But now he had arrived at a point where the road divided. New scenes must be introduced into his play—new machinery installed. Through the microscope he saw that present conditions could not be allowed to prevail. He was losing much valuable mineral over the dump. He was angry. The sensitiveness of his nature had received a shock; he had been shown up as the most unpopular man in Ashcroft. It was time for him to have the mercury brought near to the fire. The next time prizes were being handed around his arm would be the longest, and his voice the loudest; and they would not be booby prizes neither. He had known men of a few weeks standing only, rise to the very apex of popularity, while he, with his ten years initiation, had not yet developed brains enough, in the estimation of the Ashcroft people, that would justify them in placing in his charge the management of the most trivial social affair. What had he done that this measure should be constantly graduated out to him? Well, things would be different. He would "can" personality and take up the "big mitt" of public things. But how was this revolution in the private disposition of a man to be accomplished? He had discovered the result, but not the cause; so he began rooting among the sage brush of the sand downs for the foundation stone of his social submergence.

"I have it!" he shouted one day. "If one wishes to make a puncture in the affairs of this world one must assert himself; one must smite the table top with one's fist every morning before breakfast. One must assume such an atmosphere that the whole community will be cognizant of one's presence, to-day, to-morrow, and all the time. One must assert one's personality. I have been asleep, stagnant, dormant, an Egyptian mummy. I have allowed others to take the cream while I have been passively contented with the whey. I have allowed others to elbow me to one side like a log languishing in the eddy of a river. Henceforth I will be in the centre of the stream. I will rush down with the torrent and be "It" in the Ashcroft "smart set" illumination.



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“There will be no public works in future that does not bear my signature. In a word, I will assert myself, lock, stock and barrel.”

So he hit out upon a new highway with the determination to be popular. He neglected his own stamp-mill that the work might be carried out to a successful issue. He engaged others to take charge of the tail race and dump, with which he would not trust his brother on previous occasions. In fact, he left the steam of the mill at high pressure to look after itself that he might have an unhampered course in the asserting of himself. He invaded immediately all the dances, carnivals, dinners and parties. He was both Liberal and Conservative in politics. He was the “guy” with the “big mitt” and the vociferous vocabulary at all the local functions. He even joined the church. He tumbled into popularity as quickly as the Kaiser tumbled into the European war; and he elbowed his way into the run-way for all offices. Previously bright stars were dimmed by the brilliancy of his superior luminosity. He became a parasite at the local stores and clubs, and was a wart on the grocer’s counter. He became a whirlwind of popularity. He was as much in the advance as he had before been in the rear, and, if there was any German trench to take, he was always first to jump into it. He had the big voice in every local eruption. Every time he batted he made a home run. He even made initiative suggestions for schemes which were more or less amalgamated with reason and insanity. It is said that he was first at the dances, and first in the hearts of the ladies. It is certain he was the first to invent the sewerage system idea; and the patents were applied for before the final endorsements had been secured.

“I will make the man swallow his words who awarded me that booby prize,” he thundered; and he was going the right way about it. He imposed his individuality with emphasis. He was taken by the hand and dragged along cheerfully. He found himself coveted and envied now, where, before, he had almost been denied citizenship. He was now a qualified voter, where, before, he had been disfranchised. He found himself in the front ranks of all social movements, for he had asserted himself with an accent. It was a case of applied personality with him, and it was developing just as he had anticipated. Of course it was a superficial personality; it had no intrinsic value, but it answered the purpose. He received many important appointments. He was created secretary to the School Board, secretary to the Ashcroft Rinks, secretary to the Hospital, secretary to the Ashcroft Hockey boys, secretary to the Ladies’ Knitting Guild, secretary to the Ladies’ Auxiliary. In fact, he was unanimously chosen an official in all the local public works which had no salary attached to them. But then, he was gaining in popularity, and what did it matter if his office was filled to overflowing with exotic paraphernalia, he was reaching that apex to which he had aspired, and the emolument was a mere bagatelle. The booby prize, after all, had been the foundation of his success.

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So things went on and he became the most talked of man in the town. When any difficulty arose he was the first to be consulted. The town found it necessary to come to him for information on every local scheme that had its birth in the local cerebrum, for no one else was capable of handling any emergency and carrying it through to a successful conclusion.

Just about this time the sewerage epidemic took possession of the town, and became an insane contagion. Meetings were held at various places to discuss the matter, and at last the government agent allowed the court house to be used gratis for that purpose. Of course our hero and two other victims were appointed commissioners to investigate. His salary was the same as he received from his various secretaryships.

It was proposed to mortgage the town for forty years to the provincial government for its endorsement to local bonds, and the commissioners were empowered to have the alleys and necessary places surveyed with a view to ascertaining the magnitude of the undertaking, and the amount of the collateral which it would be necessary to raise in England, upon the endorsed bonds, to push the work through to a successful conclusion. The victims set to work with full knowledge of the stupendous responsibility which had been slung, yoke-like, across their shoulders. Surveyors were engaged, and an expert calculator was summoned to give an estimate of the cost of such an undertaking. The estimate was placed at \$75,000.00. This enlightenment gave the community a volcanic eruption; an epidemic of "cold feet" took possession of them, and they retired to warm these extremities at their respective air-tight heaters. In the meantime the commissioners had guaranteed payment to the experts whom they had engaged, and their personal notes were urgently requested. The expenses which they had incurred amounted to about five hundred dollars. When the vouchers were hawked about town for endorsements they received the "high ball," and the victims found it necessary to "make good" from their personal rainy day deposits. The unpopular man took a sly glance back at the ancient happy hunting-grounds antedating his booby prize days.

It was just about this time that an agent of the Independent Trust Company drifted into town "incidentally," and became acquainted with the boys. He made it known in a sort of casual way that he was disposing of shares in the said company, which were valued at more than they were worth—that is, were worth more than their valuation. To keep up the "bluff" the unpopular man bought a thousand "plunks" worth of shares.

"Now," said the shark, "since you have shown so much confidence in my company by purchasing shares, you can prove your patriotism more fully by placing a substantial deposit with the Independent Trust. This will help maintain the company on solid footing, and ensure you higher dividends on your stock. I will give you my personal guarantee that your money will be safer, and more productive than it would be in the Bank."



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The “boob” seized the bait like a trout in the Bonaparte, and made a deposit of five thousand dollars. Shortly afterwards the company went into liquidation, and his six thousand dollars sailed away with the worthless liquid into the sea of oblivion.

About this same time, when his popularity was at its zenith, and was rivalling that of Dr. Cook, the fake discoverer of the North Pole, another shark came down with the rain selling the most marvellous money-making scheme ever offered to the public of British Columbia. This was X.Y.Z. Fire Insurance shares, which he was disposing of at a great sacrifice.

“Let me sell you some shares in the only ‘real thing’ that has been offered to the public since the flood,” he tempted.

The victim was so much under the shark’s influence that he was hypnotized.

“Certainly,” he said. “Write me down for five hundred ‘doughbaby’s’ worth.”

“You mean a thousand,” said the shark.

“No,” said the “gink,” timidly, “I have only five hundred in my sock; that will be as much as my pack will carry.”

“Exactly; that is just right. You see, you are buying a thousand dollars worth of goods with only five hundred dollars worth of cash. The shares are fifty dollars each, with a cash payment of twenty-five dollars, and the balance subject to call. This balance will never be called for, because on no occasion has an insurance company been known to call in its balance of subscribed stock; and the X.Y.Z. is not going to establish a precedent in this respect. You will have twenty shares for five hundred dollars. In other words, you will draw interest on one thousand dollars, and only have five hundred invested. Was ever a business so philanthropic in its foundation?”

Our hero grabbed the bait like a pure-bred sucker, and handed out his last asset.

A few weeks later the company was in the hands of receivers with all its assets vaporized. The popular man found himself on the “rocks.” Being popular for a short time had proved a very expensive expedition for him. The retreat rivalled that of the Kaiser’s retreat from Paris. It was so sudden that the town heard the thud and felt the jar. The unpopular man realized that it is wiser to remain in one’s natural element even if it is necessary to sacrifice many of the first prizes. Perhaps it is better to go after the prizes for which we are qualified, than to aspire to elevations which we are unable to hold intelligently.

The unpopular man backed himself up into his burrow, and for a time the silence around town was embarrassing.



Of Hard Times Hance

Once upon a time on the foothills in the environs of Clinton, Lillooet District, Province of British Columbia, there lived a “mossback” who was as happy as the 22nd day of June is long in each year. At initiative conclusions he would be classified with the freak species of humanity, but beneath his raw exterior there lurked rich mines which the moss kept a secret from the inquisitive, avaricious world.

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He owned and operated an extensive ranch from which he encouraged enough vegetation to feed himself, his pigs, his horses, his cattle, his chickens, and his dog; and this, apparently, was all they derived from the great, green earth. But the asset side of our "mossback's" yearly balance sheet always made the liability side ashamed of itself. The asset increased annually, and the hidden treasure grew to alarming proportions. This growth was carefully salted away at the appropriate salting-down season, when the pork barrels were brought out of the dark cellars, dusted, scrubbed, and refilled with the carcasses of those animals which had been his companions for the greater part of a year. He was a standing joke with the "hands" on the ranch, for he was the most dilapidated of the whole gang, although the owner, and was reputed to be wealthy.

But he was a man with a purpose in life, and that was more than a great many could say. He was chronically eccentric. When he first located on the homestead which had since become so valuable an asset, he had determined to live with one purpose in view, and that was to expand financially with the toil of his hands and the sweat of his brow, and then, when he had acquired sufficient sinking fund, to emerge suddenly into the limelight of society and shine like a newly polished gem. So he wandered up and down the trail which his own feet and the feet of his cayuse had worn through the woods, up the creek, along the face of the mountains, and away down to the limy waters of the Fraser on the other side of the perpetual snows.

There was a fascination for him on this old trail; it had become as part of his life, of his very soul. Sometimes he would be rounding up cattle. Sometimes he would be hunting mowich (deer), or driving off the coyotes. All his plans and schemes were built on trail foundation. He could not think unless he was tramping the trail through the woods, and down the valleys. Here is where all his castles were constructed; and, from the trail observatory, he saw his new life spring into being, when the time would be ripe.

In time the coin grew so bulky that it became a burden to him. It had grown very cumbersome. He might at any time resurrect himself into that new world of his, but there was no occasion for haste; he was very happy and contented; besides, it would mean leaving the old trail and things. He had his balance banked in a strong box which he buried in a hole under his bed, and the fear grew upon him that some mercenary might discover its lurking-place and relieve him of the burden of responsibility. This was the only skeleton which lurked in the man's closet. It was the only cloud in his sky; the rest of the zenith was sunshine and gladness. To the neighbors and itineraries he had been preaching hard times for twenty years, although the whole earth suspected the contrary. He became known throughout the width and breadth of Yale, Lillooet and Cariboo as "Hard Times Hance." Although diplomatically reserved and unsociable, he was more popular and famed than he suspected. Peculiarity is a valuable advertisement.



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His outward appearance and mode of life certainly justified the above appendix to his personality, and it was so blazoned that it could be seen and heard all over British Columbia. He had but one competitor, and that was "Dirty Harry," who at one time frequented the streets of Ashcroft. No other name could have distinguished him so completely from the other members of the human family.

His overalls, which were once blue, had become pale with age, and had adopted a dishrag-white color; and one of the original legs had been patched out of existence. His Stetson hat, which had left the factory a deep brown, now approached the color of his terrestrial real estate. His "jumper" had lost its blue and white "jail bird" stripe effect, and was now a cross between a faded Brussels carpet and a grain sack. To save buying boots he wore his last winter's overshoes away into the summer, while his feet would blister in discomfort. Braces were a luxury which he could not endure, so he supported his superfluously laundered overalls with a strand of baling-rope which had already served its time as a halter guy. His feet had never known the luxury of a factory or home-knitted stocking since he had graduated from the home crib, but were put off with gunny sacking which had already seen active service as nose bags for the cayuses.

"If one wishes to acquire wealth in this world," he would say, "one must make a great many personal sacrifices." So he lived on and waxed wealthy at the expense even of the simplest of domestic comforts.

The improvements with which he had enhanced the value of his ranch were much in keeping with his personal appearance, and they could be recognized as brothers with the least difficulty. The fences, which had refused to retain their youth against the passing years, had their aged and feeble limbs supported with thongs and makeshifts of every description; and where their pride had rebelled against such ingratitude, they were smothered beneath the limbs of fallen trees, which had been felled on the spot to serve as substitutes. His flumes were knock-kneed and bow-legged, and in places they had no legs at all. Their sides were warped and bulged with the alternate damp and drouth, heat and cold. The lumber was bleached white, and porous with decay. It was with difficulty they could be persuaded to remain at their water-carrying capacity. The ditches were choked with willows and maples to such an extent that they were abandoned only in spots where they asserted themselves, and refused to convey the necessary irrigation stream. Here they would burst their sides with indignation, and had to be repaired. The barns, stables and chicken-houses had for years been threatening to collapse unless supplied with some stimulant; so numerous false-works had been erected, outside and in, to retain them within their confines. The harness, which had originally been made of leather, betrayed very little trace of



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this bovine enveloper, but was composed chiefly of baling-rope and wire which had been picked up at random on the ranch as the occasion demanded. The various sections of the wheels of his wagons remained in intimate association with each other because they were submerged in the creek every night; the moisture keeping the wood swelled to its greatest diameter. One day's exposure to the drouth, without the convenient assistance of the creek water, would have been sufficient to cause the wheels to fall asunder. In this respect the unsuspecting creek was an asset of incalculable value. The boxes of his wagons could boast of nothing up to date, that was not possessed by the wheels; and in many cases the tongues and whiffletrees and neck-yokes had been substituted by raw maples or birch secured on the ranch. His unwritten law was to buy nothing that would cost money, and to import nothing that could be produced on the farm even if it was only a poor makeshift substitute. No part was ever replaced until it had gone hopelessly on strike, and necessity was his only motive power when it came to repairs. The general conditions were suggestive of the obsolete.

In the midst of all this ruin and decay, however, there was sunshine, and the heart of Hard Times Hance was warm and buoyant, cheerful and hopeful, and even if he did live upon the husks which the swine did eat, he derived from his life a great deal more pleasure than the world gave him credit for. He had his future to live for. He had his life all mapped out, and that was more than a great many could boast of. For breakfast he had mush, for dinner he had beans and bacon, and for supper he had bacon and beans and Y.S. tea. And he was just as happy eating this fare with his knife as the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of British Columbia could be with his cereal, consomme, lobster salad, charlotte russe, blanc mange, cafe noir, or any other dainty and delicate importation. Bananas, oranges and artichokes had no place on his bill-of-fare. Besides, after he had eaten a meal he had no space for such delicacies. And he could always wash his meal down with the famous Y.S. tea stand-by; and, on top of this, a few long draws at his kin-i-kin-nick (sort of Indian tobacco) pipe. And then there were no restrictions upon his mode of feeding his face. He could eat with his knife with impunity. There was no etiquette-mad society digging him in the ribs, and jerking on the reins in protestation at every one of his natural inclinations; and he could use his own knife to butter his sourdough bread. For a man who expected to emerge into the sunshine of society, he was giving himself very inadequate training. He was as near the aboriginal as it was possible for a white man to approach. He was a Siwash (male Indian) with one exception—his love of the coin. But then, he had an object in this ambition; and a fault, if it is a means to a worthy end, must be commended. He had this propensity developed to the most pronounced degree. It was a disease with him, for which there was no cure. In outward appearance he was a typical B.C. specimen of the obsolete "coureur de bois" of eastern Canada during the seventeenth century.

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The interior of his “dug-out” was more like an Indian kik-willy (ancient Indian house) than the dwelling of a modern Anglo-Saxon. The walls were composed of the rough timbers, and the chinks were stuffed with rags and old newspapers. A few smoke-begrimed pictures were hanging on the walls, and a calendar of the year 1881 still glared forth in all its ancient uselessness, leading one back into a past decade. If he broke the rules of etiquette by eating with his knife, he also smashed those of modesty by utilizing his air-tight heater as a cuspidor, for it was streaked white with evaporated saliva.

How this crude bud ever anticipated blooming out into a society blossom was a conundrum. Perhaps he had some secret method buried in the same box with his hoarded coin. His long evenings were passed reading the *Family Herald and Weekly Star* and the *Ashcroft Journal* by candle-light; for those were the only papers he would subscribe for. His bed consisted of, first, boards, then straw, then sacking; and it had remained so long without being frayed out that it had become packed as hard as terra firma. His blankets had not seen the light of day, nor enjoyed the fresh cool breezes for many long years. His one window was opaque with the smoke of many years' accumulation. Although his chickens had a coop of their own where they roosted at night, they ran about the floor of his “dug-out” in the daytime looking for crumbs that fell from the poor man's table; and his cat, through years of criminal impunity, would sit on the table at mealtime and help himself to the victuals just as the spirit moved him. A stump had been left standing when the cabin was built; it had been hewn at the appropriate elevation of a chair. This was near his air-tight heater, and his favorite position was to sit there with his feet propped against the stove and smoke by candle-light; and sometimes he would sit in the dark to save candles. His other furniture consisted of “Reindeer” brand condensed milk and blue-mottled soap boxes, which he had acquired at times from F.W. Foster's general store at Clinton.

Hard Times Hance was living on first principles; but then, if a man wishes to save any coin in this world he must make great personal sacrifices; and so he was perfectly happy in his temporary aboriginal condition. There were no restrictions upon him. He was even outside the circumference of any ministerial jurisdiction, and had never been cautioned about the hereafter. Like an Indian, he moved just as the impulse seized him. How this man expected to submit to the personal restrictions and embargoes imposed by modern fashions and society was known only to himself. The song of the forest had been his only concert; the whisper of the creek his sole heart companion. When occasion permitted he would wander the entire day on the high mountains, at the end of his trail, hunting for game, and little caring whether he found it or not, so long as he had the wild and congenial environs to admire and embrace. What was city life in comparison with this?



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At last the day arrived when he realized that he must develop wings, so he wrapped himself up in a cocoon; and while the metamorphosis was in process of development he had ample time to study Hamlet's soliloquy. It would mean a divorce from everything he held dear; a parting with his very soul. It would mean the most sorrowful widowhood that could be imposed on man. It would be equivalent to leaving this earth and taking up his abode in Mars. He must sacrifice his love for the creek and the trail. He must renounce his freedom and go into social slavery. It was the emerging from the woods into the prairie; the coming from darkness into the light; a resurrection from the dead. In future he must tread the smooth cement walk between cultivated lawns and plants, instead of climbing the rude, uneven trail obstructed by fallen trees and surrounded with vegetation in its wildest and most primeval forms. He would walk the polished mahogany floor with patent boots, instead of the terrestrial one of his dug-out with obsolete overshoes.

But it must be. For years he had been preparing and planning. The object of his past had been a preparation for a better future; and why not? Others enjoyed the good things of this life, and why not he? Had he not paid the price. Others reaped where they had not sown; he had sown, yes, sown in persecution, now he would reap in envious joy. He had lived the first half of his life in squalor and darkness, that the latter half might be clean and cheerful. When he had set out in his young days to live his pre-arranged history it was with an ambition to be wealthy, no matter by what means it should be acquired, so long as it was honest. Now he was wealthy. He had been poor; now he was rich, and money would put the world at his feet, which henceforth had been over his head. He had been an animal; from now on he would be human.

But in his enthusiasm of development he forgot that he had grown attached to the wild, aboriginal life; that the parting might snap thongs and inflict wounds which even time would not mend or cure. At times the creek would sing, and the trail would speak, but he banished the tempters from his mind to make room for his illuminating prospects, and his wings continued to grow towards maturity. He struggled and freed himself from the cocoon. He went to Vancouver a caterpillar and returned a butterfly, and the earthquake which accompanied his debut was equal to that which destroyed San Francisco. He had sold his farm, which included the creek, and the trail, and the dug-out, and his salt pork barrel, for a song, and with his coin and icties about him, and in his lately acquired form, he invaded Clinton with an accentuated front. The street was lined with people as though a procession had been going by—all the sweet and familiar sounds and sights had been sacrificed criminally, and he was on his way to sip honey from flower to flower.



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He sounded about Clinton for some time for a suitable anchorage on which to materialize the plans and specifications of his mansion, but he did not drive a stake, because Clinton was very much inferior to his "class" ideal; it had no electric light, and no water system. So he migrated south to Ashcroft, and there he pre-empted a large lot and made arrangements for the foundation of his castle. Out of the ground in a short period arose one of the most up-to-date bungalows. While the building was in course of construction Hard Times Hance, who had repudiated this headline, moved about in his dress suit, stiff hat, silk gloves, and a cane, and gave such orders to the contractor as he saw fit. He was looked upon as the most remarkable freak that had ever invaded the dry belt. And he sprang into society spontaneously. The people clamored for him. Progressive socials were arranged in his honor at all the leading social centres in their eagerness to cultivate his society. Some had faint recollections of having seen him at times, others claimed to have heard of him at his hermitage, but they all pretended to have known him personally and thoroughly, and many even suspected that he possessed more, intrinsically, than he had revealed superficially. He was the lion of the hour, and he did not forget to hand around the coin in his efforts to retain the position which he had secured.

When his mansion was turned over by the contractor, and had been accepted by the architect, he issued invitations to one of the most magnificent social functions which had ever erupted at Ashcroft. Those who were invited were flattered, and those who were not called were grossly insulted and wondered what disqualified them. They danced the "tango," and the "bango," and the "flango," and all the "light fantastics" until their feet went on strike, and their ear drums had become phonographic and reproduced the music with a perpetual motion which could not be stopped. Every lady was eager to reveal the dancing secrets to mine host, and before the evening was over he could waltz, tango, and do many of the up-to-date ridiculous "stunts."

And then they dined on a French dinner. It was cooked in French style, and they ate it in French; and then they drank French toasts to the King of England, the Governor-General of Canada, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and the gentlemen drank to the ladies in general all over the world. Then the ladies proposed a French toast to "mine host." Not one of them could speak French, although a few of them could repeat, parrot-like, the words "Parlez-vous Francais?" but they only knew it as a "foreign phrase" which sounded extremely cultured.

And the menu was as follows: "Canape of Anchovies," "Celery en Branch," "Potage a la Reine," "Consomme au Celeri," "Calves' Sweetbreads a la Rothschilds," "French Lamb Chops a la Nelson," "Cafe noir," *etc.*, *etc.*

In the midst of all this foreign celestialism mine host forgot the creek, the trail, the dug-out, the beans and bacon, and the kin-i-kin-nick pipe; and he prided himself on his rapid and agreeable transition into swift channels of life. He was taking to society as a duck takes to water.



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In mode of living, as well as in personal appearance, it was the greatest metamorphosis that had ever taken place in a human being in the memory of man. It was a miniature "Log Cabin to White House" episode. He furnished his castle with the most elaborate fittings and ornaments that the world could produce. He had steam heated rooms and electric lighting from cellar to attic. Every floor was carpeted with the most expensive of imported Brussels. The walls were most elaborately painted and decorated. To secure a final footing in society he had acquired a collection of obsolete paintings, which were very unattractive and vulgar, and could only have been of value as heirlooms to some private family. These were conspicuously displayed on the panelled walls, in partnership with other more or less modest busts and imaginary landscapes. His ceilings were frescoed and figured in most extravagant, but unappealing designs. It was plainly seen that the building had been erected more to satisfy the taste and please the eye of the architect, who had received an unrestricted contract, than for acceptance by the purchaser. The furnishings were very much in keeping with the fixtures and fittings, and his musical instruments were all electrically-automatic machines; and his "canned" music filled the halls and stairways from morning till night. There was no modern convenience or indulgence that he did not lasso and drag home to his castle.

Before, he had wallowed in the one extreme of society, but now he lolled at the other. While before he had been neglected and despised by his fellow rivals, he was now courted, and admired, and feasted almost to death: so much does the possession of the coin-asset change people's opinions with regard to others.

His auto was the envy of all the chauffeurs and private car owners in the interior, and there was great rivalry among the licensed drivers as to who should secure the position as his private chauffeur. One engineer offered his services gratis to have the privilege of sitting behind such wind-shields.

Hard Times Hance persuaded himself that he had reached his "Utopia," and that his past forty years of loneliness and savagery was the price he had paid for the present heaven-rivalling blessings.

A man of his standing in society could not long remain in single dormancy; he was therefore besieged by many of the fair sex. This was very pleasing and flattering to him, although he concealed his appreciation. Of course a palace such as his, without a wife, was like a garden of Eden without an Eve. He had no one to use the electric vacuum cleaner on his linoleums and tapestries. He had no one to meet him when he reached home to take his hat, and gloves, and cane, and place them on the hall rack. He had no one to kiss and afford companionship throughout the long evenings, no one to arrange for social entertainments and meet and welcome the guests; no one to direct and manage the culinary department, and place the furniture in appetizing arrangement. Of course he had the Chinese cook, but he was stale and without spice. There were millions of qualified candidates in the world, looking for partners, who would be more than pleased to have the opportunity to manipulate his vacuum cleaner.



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No sooner had he made up his mind to organize a family partnership concern than he set out to have the necessary forms of contract drafted and prepared. A great many fair ones nominated themselves as candidates for election, but as he was living under Christian methods he could only accept one—which was annoying—no matter how eager he may have been to Mormonize himself. They fluttered around him like moths about an electric arc, and they even deserted their former pre-emptions for the new float prospects. In due course the successful candidate was introduced to the Legislature as a new member.

The nuptials over, they migrated in the fall with the swallows to California, on their honeymoon, and, after escaping the earthquake, returned to their happy and beautiful home. There was a great eruption among the marriageable prospects of Ashcroft, because many of them had dropped a real bone into the water in snapping at the illusory shadow.

An indignation meeting was arranged at which it was resolved that the least prepossessing and most unlikely of the nominees had secured the winning majority. But love is a very contrary commodity, and a defect may be a virtue in the eyes of a hero-worshipper; and “My Lady” was serenely happy in spite of her unpopularity with her rivals. Hard Times Hance had sprouted from pauperdom and had bloomed into princedom, and his newly acquired partner placed the final mouldings and decorations to his life.

They gave frequent balls and banquets, and the most select society in the environs clamored for admittance. To his wife the prince was a modern Aladdin. She had but to wish and the wish was granted. “Eaton’s” catalogue was her Bible, and it was her only food between meals; packages arrived daily with the regularity of the *Vancouver Province*. She had a standing order there for hats, dresses and kimonas, to be rushed out the moment the fashions changed. While before Hance had taken a pleasure in saving, he now had a mania for spending money; and their merry marriage bells continued to ring for a few sweet years without ceasing.

But gradually the spell wore off the self-made prince. The little creek, the long trail, the deep woods, the dug-out, and the salt pork barrel loomed up occasionally before his mind’s eye. In absent-minded dreams he would find himself wandering among the stock on the range at his old ranch; or he would be drinking water from the creek in the old-fashioned, natural way; or chasing a deer at the other end of the long trail. His wife’s sweet voice would recall him to the immediate, and in her presence he would regret his meditations. But it would be but temporary. What profits a man to gain the world, if he lose his peace of mind? “What! I unhappy among all this kingly paraphernalia, and with a queen wife?” he would ask himself, going down into the basement to replenish the furnace. With every shovelful of coal he would curse himself for his feebleness of mind.



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The charm was beginning to wear off. The sound of the singing creek and the wild wood noises were beginning to knock at his door. He was beginning to long for the old, wild life—the life of the wild man of the woods. He was like a coyote in confinement, walking backward and forward at the bars seeking release. He was a fish out of water gasping for its natural element, and his soul was languishing within him.

He made desperate but vain efforts to enjoy his beautiful environs, and for a long time he sustained the “bluff.” The piano became a bore to him; its music was not half so sweet as the creek song. The tapestry was not half so pleasing to the eye as the green foliage of the trees had been; his cement walk not so agreeable to his feet as had been the long, wild trail. The “icties” which had cost him thousands of dollars became to him like so much junk, and his beautiful home became a prison—so much does man become attached to mother earth. Among all this junk one jewel still continued persistently to shine, however, and that gem was his wife; she was all he had left, next his heart, to balance against the thousands of dollars which he had squandered. A man’s best comfort is his wife, and Hance had fallen into the trap in the usual man-like way.

His attraction for the modern in society had dwindled down to a single item—his love for his wife; and between this fire, and the fire of the old life, he remained poised. Of course it would be madness to suggest that she return with him to the woods and adopt the Adam and Eve mode of society, so he kept his skeleton securely locked up.

He had sold his farm for a song, but now he found it could not be re-bought for real money. The situation was hopeless. There was no retracing of steps. But still the old sounds could not be divorced from his ears; and the old salt-pork barrel was an unpardonable culprit. If he could only sit once again on the old stump which had not been hewn away in the centre of his dug-out, it would be a source of joy to him. If he could only smoke the old kin-i-kin-nick pipe, his appetite would be satisfied.

One day he climbed into his auto and made a bee-line for the old ranch. He would have a rock on that old stump if it should cause a scandal in society. But the spot where the dug-out once stood was now bare. The cabin had been burned to the ground by the new proprietors. He went home like a whipped cur. A link in his beautiful past had vanished. An impassable chasm, of his own making, yawned between him and his desire, and he cursed the day which lured him away from his natural, green pastures.

One day he disappeared entirely, and when he did not return for several days, and his wife was insane with grief, a search party was sent out in quest of him. They found him camping on the old trail, dressed in his aboriginal attire, eating beans and bacon with his knife, and chewing venison Indian fashion.



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“This is the only square meal I have had since I left the woods,” he said, when they captured him; and he filled his pipe with kin-i-kin-nick and puffed the sweet, mild fumes. He had returned to his natural element.

“I have been rounding up stock,” he said, “and I shot this buck just over the hill there. Here, dig in, it is jake.”

He had to live among the steers, and the coyotes, and the wild trails in accordance with his early training; original things were his food. Society, and his wife, demanded that he remain on the surface, but his aboriginal inclinations lured him to the woods; so, during six months of every year he was an Indian to all intents and purposes. Early in May he would load a cayuse with beans, bacon, canned milk, frying pan and blankets, and with this treasure he would take to the hills and bask the livelong summer among the junipers, the firs, and the spruces; and he would eat huckleberries, choke-cherries and soap-o-lalies, and smoke kin-i-kin-nick until his complexion assumed the tan of the Chilcoten Indian.

The lure of the limelight had been great, but it had worn off just as soon as he had a surfeit of its false glories. He found that beans and bacon eaten with a knife were sweeter and more wholesome than “blanc mange,” “consomme,” or “cafe noir” cooked in French style, and served by a French chef.

Of the Too Sure Man

Once upon a time, in the town of Lillooet, county of Lillooet, Province of British Columbia, there lived a man who was so sure of his footing that he closed his eyes and floundered along in the dark. When people told him there were chasms in front of him, or that there was ice on the trail ahead, he would not believe them, but put his fingers in his ears so that he could not hear, and thus became deaf and blind to his own interests. The people pestered him so much about his folly, and he learned to hate them so much for their interference in his personal matters, that he crossed the names of all his friends from his list of social possibilities, would recognize none of them, and refused to speak even when addressed; he thus became a blind, deaf and dumb mute. The result was that he ultimately slipped upon the ice on the trail, and fell into a chasm and has not been seen since. It was in the first days of the Lillooet quartz discoveries. Gold had been mined from Cayuse Creek, Bridge River, and the Fraser River, in uncountable ounces, in the free state, by the placer or hydraulic process of mining, for a great number of years, but the source of supply from which the free gold had originated had not yet been located. It was even doubted if there was any source of supply, although it was generally conceded that all gold was originally pilfered by the streams and rivers from the hard quartz-rocks of which the great mountains of Cayuse Creek and Bridge River were formed. While some of the miners contented



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themselves with making wing-dams, turning streams from their natural courses, and scraping about the mud and gravel of the exposed beds for the pure, free gold, picking up nuggets at sight and capturing the “dust” with quicksilver, others, looking for bigger game, climbed the high mountains, tore the moss from their sides to expose the rock, and pounced upon every piece of “float” which would indicate the possible existence of a “mother lode” somewhere near at hand or higher up.

The Too Sure Man of this story was one of the latter. He had found a piece of “float rock” with a shining speck in it near where the nigger’s cabin now stands on Cayuse Creek in the vicinity of Lillooet, and he traced it to the very spot where it had dropped from the mountain above. There he discovered a ledge several feet wide full of shining specks, and he traced it with his eyes right to the bed of the creek.

“All mine! All mine!” he shouted.

Now, he was a poor man, and he had a family—which made him poorer; but the sight of this precious piece of “float” with the gold sticking out of it, and the possession of this enormous ledge of gold-bearing quartz made him a millionaire in an instant. Here was a whole mountain “lousy” with gold, all his! Why, Solomon or Vanderbilt would be so small in the puddle that he would splash mud on them with his superior tread in the sweet “very soon.”

Now, the B.C. law prevented him from staking off the entire Lillooet district for himself, so he took in a friend (who luckily died before the crash came), and they appropriated as large a portion each of the district as the Government at that time would allow. Both of those men had good, steady, paying jobs at the time of the discovery, but the next day they threw down their tools—work was too cheap for them. The only thing that prevented them from buying an automobile right away on the instalment plan was the fact that the auto had not yet been invented. However, they had to do something to elevate themselves from the common, so they became extravagant in their domestic curriculum. Having no money, the stores had to “carry them.” And then they had their assessment work to do on the mine to enable them to hold the claim. They hired men to do this and gave them promissory notes payable by the claim at an indefinite period. When a man ceases work and begins to live on his “rainy day” money, or on the storekeeper, it does not take very long before he accumulates a burden greater than he can carry. When he begins to totter he tries to pass some of the load over to others, and it is usually the storekeepers who are willing to assist him to the limit if his assets are in good retrospect. And what could be a greater security than a whole mountain full of gold? So the storekeepers assumed a large portion of the Too Sure Man’s burden. And their loads became heavier and heavier. One day a company came along, attracted by the noise that



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had been made, and bonded the claims for a few hundred “plunks” down and the balance of one hundred thousand dollars in three months if they decided to take the claims over. The offer was gladly accepted, although they wondered why the company hesitated. This few hundred dollars enabled the Too Sure Man to tide his family through the winter with warm and expensive clothing from the T. Eaton Co., of Toronto, Ontario, while the local grocery man’s burden got heavier and heavier. It was during, all this time that the people had been cautioning him for his personal benefit. And it was during this time that the Too Sure Man closed his ears, and his eyes, and his mouth, and became a blind, deaf and dumb mute. When the three months were up the company decamped, forfeiting their few hundred dollars, and then there was “something doing.” The Too Sure Man opened his eyes and his ears and his mouth all at the same time as far as ever he could. The claim had proved a failure, there was no gold, and only a slight trace on the surface. The local storekeepers, groaning under their load, asked him to relieve them, but he might just as well have tried to lift the mountain that held his worthless quartz ledge. It was just at this point of our story that he slipped on the ice and fell into the chasm. He disappeared, bag, baggage, and family; and in truth it was the only course open to him.

To remain and work off his debt and sustain his family at the same time with the increasing pressure of the high cost of living holding him under, would have been an utter impossibility. The impending shock killed his partner, for he died before the crash came. The Too Sure Man has a burden in Lillooet supported by others which he can come and lift at any time, and welcome.

Of the Unloved Man

Once upon a time in Ashcroft a bachelor fellow realized abruptly that he had never been loved by one of the opposite sex, although he had reached the age of two score and two, and had a great longing to have one included in his assessable personal property. Now, as truth is stranger than fiction, the discovery staggered him. What was wrong? What machinery required adjusting? He had the sensation of a boycotted egg, and was in danger of spoiling before reaching the consuming market. So one day he perched himself on the sandhill and began to survey the environs for a solution to the problem. Why should he be denied this one sweet dream? Just think of it—no one had ever sympathized with him in his utter loneliness of bachelorhood. No girl had ever called him her “snooky ookums,” and he had never had the opportunity of calling any fair vision his “tootsy wootsy.” The horror of the situation was sufficient to stagger an empire. No girl had ever waited at the post-office corner for him. No girl had ever tapped on his office window on Railway Avenue and smiled back at him on her way home from the meat market. No girl had ever lingered outside for him that she might

have the pleasure of his society home to lunch. He had to walk the bridge evenings and Sundays alone, while others went in limited liability companies.



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Once, when he was ill, no angel had volunteered to smooth his pillow, and a Chinaman brought up delicacies left over from some other person's previous meal. He had no silent partner. None of the girls knew he had been ailing, and when he told them weeks after they feigned surprise. There seemed to be an unsurmountable stone wall between him and the sweet things of this world. So, day after day, in his leisure moments, he would pace the brow of the sandhill seeking in his mind for a solution to an issue that seemed unfathomable. Was he ugly? No. Was he repulsive? No. Was he a woman hater? No. Was he a criminal? No. Had he offended the fair sex in any way? No. Was he poor? No. Did he belong to the human family? Yes. With what disease then was he afflicted? Was it heredity? Could he cast the blame upon his ancestors? Up and down the Thompson valley he searched and searched but he could find no answer—even the echo would not speak. Other fellows seemed to have no difficulty in getting themselves tangled up in the meshes of real beautiful love nets. Even the young bucks who had no visible means of support for their own apparently useless avoirdupois, picked up the local gems before his eyes and had them hired out at interest to supply the new family with bread and butter. And all this in the face of the fact that *he* was one of the most prodigious admirers of womankind that ever left his footprints on the sands of Ashcroft.

"The most flattering appointment a man can have is to be chosen the custodian of one woman," he said to himself. "Life, to a man, is nothing if barred from an association of this kind."

At last in despair he wrote to a correspondence paper, and put the whole case before them.

"I am a young man, aged forty-two, unmarried. I want a solution to the problem why I am unmarried. I have tried and failed. I have had Cupid working overtime for me, but he has failed to pierce any of the bosoms I have coveted. No woman has ever loved me, and although I am aware that it is better to have tried and failed than never to have tried at all, I may say that this affords very poor manna for my hunger."

He received this answer:—

"Young man"—(emphasis was placed upon the young)—"you are too slow. You are asleep, stagnant, dormant, hibernating. The whole world is 'beating you to it.' Get over your baby superstition about love, and 'get busy.'"

The letter dropped from his fingers as though it had been his monthly grocery bill. "Heavens!" he exclaimed, "here is the solution to the whole mystery.—Forget love and 'get busy.'" Instead of expecting to be loved, he would love. If he could not get one who would want *him*, he would get one he wanted himself.



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Now, he had had such an admiration for the fair sex as a whole, that he could not concentrate his attention on the individual one. He had been trying to extract a cinder from the eye of the opposition when he could not see properly owing to having a large obstacle in his own eye. However, he proceeded to “get busy.” But what vision would he “get busy” on? Every woman had an attraction peculiar to herself, one of which could not be said to extinguish the other. And then, most of them were “staked off.” One fellow or another had “strings” on every one he approached. But he kept on fishing with all his might. In the meantime it came to pass that the girls continued to cast their spells upon almost anyone but him; even the itinerant stranger who just chanced along “hitting the high spots,” and “travelling on his face” came in for large portions of the “sweet stuff” that was being cast lavishly abroad.

It seemed cruel that he who had such an admiration for those on the other side of the house, and who had such an ambition to own one as an asset, should be so unmercifully neglected. His efforts to catch a wife by the legitimate method, according to his idea, had ended like a fishing expedition in the off season in the Thompson river. About this time he found that the nomads were catching all the fish. He made up his mind to become a nomad and be a wanderer on the face of the Cariboo district. He could not love.

He resigned his position in Ashcroft and migrated up the Cariboo road. He invaded Lillooet, Clinton, 150 Mile House, Soda Creek, Quesnel, Barkerville and Fort George. To secure a wife he became an itinerant. Within the space of a year he was back at his position at Ashcroft more lonely than ever. It was of no avail—he was hoodooed. He could not love.

At this juncture he made another and final discovery, and it was the most important one he had made at this period of his renaissance. He found out that “get busy” had two meanings. It meant “forget love of all kinds and go to it in a business-like way.” This had been a chronic case of a man, in his ignorance, who was prospecting around the hills of this British Columbia of ours for a metal that had no existence. He did not know that ninety out of every hundred marriages resulted merely from convenience, or a mere desire to be married on the part of the man, and the love of a private home on the part of the woman; that nine out of the remaining ten were marriages in which one of the parties only was the love-giver, and that the remaining one was the ideal, in which love was mutual and beautiful. This Ashcroft bachelor fellow was a sentimental monstrosity. He was imbued with the superstition that one must love, and be loved, before one could marry. No aphorism could be further removed from the truth. The glaring realism dawned upon him that it was quite possible for a person to flounder through this world and be entirely immune from the love epidemic; that

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few people ever marry the one they do really love, that some are never sought after by one of the opposite sex during their whole life, only in a business-like way; that modern society was too busy to entertain such a silly superstition as love—that Cupid was a dead issue. He had been waiting until he fell in love or till someone fell in love with him, and thus opportunity had been knocking at his door all those years in vain. When he had joined the iconoclast society, and had shattered this pet idol of his, he began to look around for a wife in the same manner as he would for a car of Ashcroft potatoes—and he soon “landed” one branded with the “big A.” And the amusing part of it is they lived happily—all of which goes to prove our contention that those who love before marriage are not always the happier after their nuptials; and sometimes it is a mere matter of making the best of a bad bargain, and you will be perfectly happy though married, even if your stock in trade of the love commodity is very much impoverished.

Of the Chief who was Bigger than He Looked

Once upon a time in the Thompson valley there lived a mighty warrior kookpi (chief) called Netaskit. He was chief of all the Shuswaps. His name had become a household word the entire length and breadth of the Pacific coast, and the tribes along the Fraser river and the Pemberton Meadows had knowledge, through many sad experiences, of his bravery and daring. Among his own people his word was law, and to show the white feather in the face of an enemy meant certain court martial and death at his hands. Although his subjects feared him, they respected him beyond belief; and to serve him was considered a great honor. It is not our purpose to convey the impression that this kookpi was cruel, treacherous, cold-blooded and selfish only, and a man who had no other ambition than war and the spoils of war. No, if he was a fiend on the battlefield, he was a lamb at home. He had a soft side that battled with the concrete in him at times. His weakness was his insane love for woman, and in his own kikwilly house (home) he was as timid as the smumtum (rabbit). His respect for Cupid had as much avoirdupois as his respect for Mars. His love for his wife was an insane love—it far outdid his love for his chieftom. And he had a wife who was worthy of him and as faithful to him as he was to her—she adored the very skins he wore across his shoulders. Being happily united himself, and having such a respect for Cupid and the fair sex, he passed a law that no man or woman should take unto themselves a partner for life until thoroughly satisfied and convinced that the love flames between them would be of everlasting duration, and were genuine.

“Woman,” he said, “was made to be loved, and not enslaved. My consideration for the welfare of our women exceeds that for our men, because man is so constituted as to be more able to take care of himself.” So much was this old prehistoric chief away ahead of his dark, heathen times. But this masculine weakness of his was nearly his undoing with his warriors, as we shall see.



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One day a rumor went abroad that the Statlemulth (Lillooet Indians) were making their way through the Marble Canyon, and down Hat Creek, to attack the Shuswaps on the Bonaparte, in revenge for some misdemeanor at some former time, on the part of the latter. It was just about the time of the year when the Shuswaps were in the habit of invading the Fraser river at Pavilion for their winter supply of salmon; and, to be cut off from this source of revenue would mean a great deal to the Bonaparte Indians. The invading army must be met and the entire band put to death, or made prisoners.

Telephone messages in Indian fashion were flashed from kikwilly house to kikwilly house, and in a couple of days the entire strength of the Shuswaps was gathered in a great army with Netaskit at its head. The march began at an early hour the following morning, and the enemy was met near the mouth of the canyon where they had called a halt for the purpose of hunting and putting up o-lil-ies (berries). In a moment the air was filled with war whoops, and the arrows flew thick and fast. The women took to their heels and ran the moment the fray began, and they did not stop until they reached Squilachwah (Pavilion) near the Fraser river. The smumtum and the groundhog betook themselves to the high mountains, so great was the battle, and their fright—and it is only within recent years that they have ventured back to that spot. The battle raged loud and long. Netaskit was in the thick of the fight and claimed that he had killed twenty of the enemy with his own bow. Many were wounded and slain on both sides; but the Shuswaps won the day, and they led home in triumph fifty prisoners. And now comes the most interesting part of our story. A counsel of war was held, and it was decided that the prisoners should be put to death the following day. When the time arrived, the unfortunate men were brought out, bound with thongs hand and foot and placed in line near the big chief's wigwam. Fifty victors were lined up in front of them with their bows and arrows ready to shoot at the word of command from their chief, who was pacing up and down in his dignity and anger. Suddenly the love demon took possession of him. He thought of his love for his wife—her love for him. He pictured to himself his possible death and the agony of his widow. He pictured her death and his own agony of mind at his loss. He shuddered as the messages flashed through his mind. He looked at the unfortunate victims—he thought of their women—sweethearts, wives.

“Halt!” he shouted to his men. And turning to the wretches before him he said:

“Statlemulth! listen. You have committed a great wrong in making this expedition against the Shuswaps. The Ko-cha Kookpi (god) is very angry. You should be shot dead but you can save yourselves. Listen. I will pardon every man of you who can produce a wife or a sweetheart who can prove to my satisfaction that her love for you is greater than the voice of the Thompson, and fiercer than the roar of the Fraser.”



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“Never!” shouted the tribesmen, and every bow and arrow was turned simultaneously upon the chief.

“Slaves! Cowards!” thundered the enraged and fearless kookpi, like a mountain lion in pain. In a moment every bow and arrow fell by its warrior’s side.

As the consequence of this act on the part of his subjects is of no importance to this story, we will leave it to the reader’s imagination just what sort of punishment was doled out to them. It is safe to say, however, that Netaskit was too wise a kookpi to order the death of so many brave followers, as this means of gratifying his wounded pride would simply mean the weakening of the tribe, and would put his own life in jeopardy.

A message was sent to the Lillooet illihæ (country) with the glad tidings, and at the close of two days a swarm of smootlatches (women), and keekas (girls), rushed into camp breathless, and began hysterically searching for their respective sweethearts or husbands among the prisoners. The scene was more than poetic; and it was pathetic in the extreme. It was a scene that had not occurred before on the broad surface of the earth—those fifty distracted squaws rushing into the jaws of death in their eagerness to rescue the ones without whom life would be empty, useless, aimless. It is said that it melted the heart of the very rocks about the place, so that to this day the surface of the earth at that spot betrays evidence of having at one time been running lava.

The captives were lined up before the kookpi’s kikwilly house, and the little army of love-mad squaws, awful in their primitiveness, rushed at the line, selected their respective skiuchs (men), and clung to them, hugged them, kissed them wildly in the awful heat of their passion, each in her eagerness to save one at all hazards for her own selfish, but natural self. And no power on earth could tear them asunder. It melted the hearts of the victors so that they called out with one voice: “Go, you have won!” and as they moved away shouting, and laughing, and dancing, Netaskit was seen to weep, so great was his respect for Cupid.

“O woman! woman!” he was heard to exclaim. And this is the reason there is so much harmony between the Statlemulth and the Shuswap to-day.

Of Simple Simon Up To Date

Once upon a time in Ashcroft there lived a “Simon” who had no knowledge of the purchasing value of his salary asset. He did not know that its buying powers were narrowed down to bread and butter and overalls; and as a consequence he was victimized down into a very precarious financial predicament, to say nothing about the valuable and most vigorous and productive years of his life, that were thrown into the scrap heap of time, and had to be cancelled from his list of revenue-producers.

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When you contemplate a steady wage asset of one hundred dollars per month coming in with the regularity of clockwork and as sure as the first day comes around (and the months go by very quickly), you think you are in a fair way to make some of the local financiers look very cheap in a few years to come. Why, this means twelve hundred dollars every time the earth circumnavigates the sun, and is sixty thousand dollars in fifty years, which is not very long to a man if he can start just as soon as he passes the entrance and can build on no intervening lay-off by getting on the wrong side of the boss. But when we offset with our liabilities, such as tobacco money, moving picture money, car fare, gasoline, rent, taxes, repairs to the auto, and other trifling incidentals such as food and clothing, we find at the end of the lunar excursion that there is no balance to salt down on the right side of our ledger, and our little castle becomes submerged because it was built with its foundation on the shifting sands.

But for all that, if a man and his money could be left alone—if money were not such an envy-producer—if a man with money had not so many friends and admirers and strangers who love him at first sight—all might yet be well; and though he might not outclass some of the most corpulent magnates, he might in time acquire considerable moss in his own private, insignificant, Simple-Simon sort of way. But the laws of nature have willed otherwise, and the strongest of us know that it is needless to go into litigation with the laws of gravitation, or spontaneous combustion.

Among the workings of nature (which some people say are all for the best), there is a class of men who have, rather truthfully, been called “sharks” on account of their fishlike habit of pouncing upon suckers unawares and without the legal three days’ grace being given, and of loading them into their stomachs—finances and all—before the person has time to draw and throw his harpoon. It all happens while you are taking a mouthful of tea, or while you are reading the locals in the *Ashcroft Journal*, and when the spell leaves, you find that you have endorsed a proposition with a financial payment down, and the balance subject to call when you are very much financially embarrassed indeed.

Simple Simon was one of those men who move about this world unprotected and without having their wits about them. He was not a sawfish, or a swordfish. So one day when he was walking up Railway Avenue—it was just the day after he had told someone that he had five hundred dollars of scrapings salted down, which was earning three per cent, at the local bank—a very pretentious gentleman, spotlessly attired, accosted him:

“Pardon me. Are you Mr. Simon?”

“I have that asset,” said Simple, wondering how the aristocratic stranger had known him.

“I thought so. I knew at a glance. The fact is, I have just been speaking with Mr. C. Quick.” (This was a lie. Mr. C. Quick was one of the money magnates of Ashcroft, but



had not hired out his name as an endorsement)—“and he recommended you to me as one of the leading men of the town.” (This was a ruse, but it hit the bull’s eye, and at the final count was one of the most telling shots.)

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"I am pleased to meet you," said Simple. "And so am I," said the shark. "As a matter of fact, I only approach the better part of any community," he continued, pulling in on the line. "To tell you the truth, Mr. C. Quick said you were the only man in the town who had both foundation and substantial structure from your roots up," and he laughed a broad sort of "horse-laugh," and slapped Simon on the shoulder.

"You see, with a proposition such as I have there is little use going to any but men of the greatest intelligence—those are the ones who understand the magnitude and the security and the ultimate paying certainties of the proposition which I have to offer you. You may consider yourself fortunate. It is not everyone who has the opportunity to get in on the ground floor, as it were, on a sure thing money-accumulating business. By the way, where is your office?"

Simon led the shark to his private dug-out on Brink Street, and showed him into one of his cane-bottomed thrones, while he himself sat on the yet unlaundered bed.

"Of course you understand all about joint stock companies, trust fund companies, municipal bonds and debentures," said the magnate, unrolling a bundle of unintelligible papyrus showing assets which did not exist, and spreading them out on the bed in front of his victim. The whole system had been premeditated and had been systematically worked out. "Now," said the shark, pointing at long and encouraging figures, "those are assets and these are our liabilities; and besides we have a million dollar Government endorsement. Now, the fact of the matter is this. You have a few dollars. I have a few dollars; Tom, Dick and Harry have a few dollars, and so have Jessie and Josie. Now, those little private funds which we all cherish and fondle, and hug to our bosoms, and jingle in our pockets, are of no use to us. They are dead. Of course they are earning three per cent, at the B.N.A. or the Northern Crown—what bank do you deposit with?—of course, it does not matter; there is no competition among them; they pay you three per cent. and charge you ten per cent. Now, we are very much different. We give you all your money will make—if it is ten, twenty, thirty, fifty, or one hundred per cent. See?"

"Now, the fact of the matter is this: as I said before, those small individual fortunes are of no use to us individually; they have no earning power; they will not buy anything. But, put them all together—ah! the result is magical. You see, it is the aggregate that counts. Now with this theory in view, our company gets to work and canvasses the country and it gathers together thousands of little, useless, insignificant, unproductive funds like yours and mine and joins them together into one vast, giant aggregate which we call a trust fund. I see it is appealing to you. It could not be otherwise. Now, with this aggregate, you, and I, and everyone can own vast estates, buy forty-year debentures, lend money on approved security, buy real estate, the unearned increment of which will net in some cases two or three hundred per cent. interest, besides an increased valuation on the original sum invested."



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Perhaps every living man in the Dominion of Canada and the United States who betrays the least pretensions to having any money in his possession has heard a harangue of this kind many times in his life, and it is just as certain that the first time he heard it he was stung. Now, Simon was no exception to the rule, which proves that we are not all swordfish. He felt himself being hypnotized, magnetized, charmed. He pictured himself as personal owner of lots, houses, acres—a joint owner of vast tracts of land along the G.T.P. or C.N.R.; and the shark showed him a facsimile of the certificates that would be issued to him when his shares were paid up in full. They were very neat and legal-like, and a man should be proud to own one of them.

“You see,” said the magnate, as he realized that he had the victim falling into his trap, “we do not require to sell any more shares; we are doing well enough now, and some say we should leave well enough alone. But, a corporation of the nature of ours cannot rest on its oars; we must reach out for greater and better things, and to accomplish this we must have more capital. The fact is, a proposition has just been put to us, the nature of which I am not just now at liberty to divulge, but it is a sure winner. But it takes capital, as I said before, and we are compelled to sell some more stock. And, after all, it will be you and I who will benefit, and a hundred or more favored ones who have small savings which are netting them nothing at present, and the principal of which is rusting in the bank at three per cent.

“Now, to come down to business. Will you join us? Now, I am not going to press you. There are hundreds too willing; but remember, you will regret it if you lose this chance of a lifetime. Opportunity is knocking at your door; seize it by the fore-lock.

“The proposition I have to put before you is this: We are selling shares at one hundred dollars each, but if you have not the cash now, we will allow you six, twelve and eighteen months on the balance with a payment of five hundred dollars down if you buy twenty shares. The reason we are able to make such liberal offers is that we receive the same terms in buying up debentures.”

Simon was completely victimized. His tormentor might just as well have addressed him in Latin, for he knew so little about debentures, joint stock funds and the intricacies of high finance that he could not follow the promoter and was completely dazzled with the obscurity and eloquence of the language. And then the magnate spoke so rapidly that only lightning could keep up with him. The result was that Simon fell into the trap and was pinched. He not only gave away all his rainy day money, but he burdened himself with a debt, which, to a working man, was a mountain, and more than he could carry. He sold his house to meet the next two payments, and just as the third payment came due the company went into liquidation, and it consumed all their available assets to discover that there was nothing left for the shareholders. And Simple Simon began life over again.



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Of the High Class Eskimo

Away up in the great northland, even further north than the northern boundary of British Columbia, there lives a race of people who form, and have formed, no part of the great human civilization of the world which has been, and is going on in the more moderately climatic regions of the earth. For centuries they have lived apart, and have taken no notice of the big world which has been, and is living itself to death far from them down in the indolent south, where the sun could shine every day in the year—where it did shine every day that it was not cloudy, and where there was no long, dreary, dark midnight of at least four months' duration; where the sun did not dip beneath the horizon at about the beginning of October, and disappear, not to be seen again until the end of March; where, in some parts, there was no snow, while in others only for a few weeks during the year. No snow! no ice! Can you imagine such a condition? And up there it is almost the Eskimo's only commodity. He eats it, drinks it, lives in it, sleeps on it, and his castle is built of it. And he endures it year after year, from his babyhood to his gray days, and there appears no hope for him. Bare ground is a curiosity to the Eskimo; and there are no spring freshets. Their bridges across their streams are formed of ice; the very salt sea is covered with it; and they venture out on those great floors of ice in search of the polar bear and the right whale which form almost their only food, and supply them with their only source of clothing, heat and light. In the midst of his narrow and cramped circumstances the Eskimo can laugh at times as heartily as any other human, and he has grown extremely low in stature to accommodate himself to the small opening which gives access to his igloo (house). The average man or woman does not exceed much over four feet. No other explanation seems to have been offered by science for the extreme dwarfishness in stature of this curious race of people.

Like the polar bear—almost their only associate in those northern and frozen wilds—the idea never occurred to this people to migrate south where the earth is bare and warm, and is clothed in a green mantle; where the sun shines every day; where the land is flowing with milk and honey; where peaches and water melons grow, and where it is not necessary to go through a hole in the ice to take a bath. No, this strange people, whose food is ice, whose bed is ice, whose home is ice, and whose grave is ice, are part and parcel of the snowy north; and they live on, apparently happy and contented with their hard life and uncongenial environment. Where the white man begins to be uncomfortable, the Eskimo begins to be at home. Where the white man leaves off the Eskimo begins, and his haunts penetrate away into the far north—into the land of perpetual ice and snow. Where we go only to explore he builds his permanent abode.

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But this is not a history of the geographical distribution of men; it is to be the story of an Eskimo who went astray according to the moral ideals of his immediate tribesmen.

Once upon a time there lived in this northland of which we have been speaking a young native who had mysteriously arrived at the conclusion that the life of an Eskimo was a very narrow and fruitless existence indeed, and that the conditions under which they lived were totally inadequate to supply the demands of a twentieth century human being. In the midst of the other members of the family he assumed an attitude of weariness and contempt for his associates and environs. "One may as well associate with a polar bear," he soliloquized. "Man was made to accomplish things; the Eskimo is no further advanced in the scale of living, organic beings, to all intent and purpose, than the polar bear, or the walrus. He is born, lives, eats, sleeps, hunts, kills, dies, and is buried in the cold frozen earth, if he does not fall through a hole in the ice into the bottomless sea. To the south of us is a great healthy world where men live; where they have discovered all that the world has to give, and where they enjoy those things to the utmost; where they read and write and take records of their doings. Me for the south!" he shouted, and he made up his mind to migrate at the first opportunity and be in the swim with men. "I must learn to read and write and think, even if I have to forget my own language," he declared.

Now, it came to pass that as he was soliloquizing as above one morning, a girl appeared before him. She was so muffled up in furs that only an Eskimo could distinguish whether the bundle was male or female. She sat down beside him and placed her short, stubby, muffled arm as far around his neck as it would go, and in this attitude she coaxed, and begged, and prayed, and argued with him, thinking that she might resurrect him to himself again. But when she found that his mania was for the south, she wept as only woman can weep the whole world over, even in the far north where the tears are in danger of freezing to her cheeks. But he, in his brutish, advanced-thought sort of way, pushed her from him.

"If you love me you will help me to go," he said. "If you love me you will stay," she responded.

He rose and moved towards his igloo; she followed. He crawled like a bear through the thirty feet or more of narrow tunnel which led into the hut proper. She did likewise. In the igloo he threw himself down on the ice floor among the squalor and quantities of bear meat in various stages of decomposition. The smell from the whale-oil lamp almost choked him. The girl sat down and continued to cling to him.



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“Let me go to the south and I will make a lady of you,” he said. “I will give you gold and silver and feather beds. These environs are not fit for a bear to hibernate in. Just think of our branch of the human family existing and suffering up here among the ice and snow for thousands of years and not having advanced one step from the hovel in which we were first produced? Is the Eskimo destined to everlasting failure—perpetual degeneration? Must you and I be satisfied and consent to endure this animal existence to the end of our days because it is our only heritage from our ancestors? No! I say, a thousand times no. I am ashamed of myself, my ancestors and my entire race,” he shouted, and the girl almost trembled in fear of him. He must surely be demented. But she still clung to him, thinking that her enchanting presence might cure him. Thus love can be a very warm thing even up among the cold ice and snow. Their cold, half frozen cheeks came together and she kissed him. “Stay,” she murmured, coaxingly, as only a woman can.

“I will take passage south,” he continued unheedingly, “and will plunge myself into the midst of the big, busy, warm world, and will gain with one bound that social condition which it has taken the white man thousands of years to attain.”

Now, after all, was this man not right, and is the Eskimo not to be pitied?

The girl, seeing that her whole world was about to vanish from her, left the igloo weeping, and again crawled like a bear through the narrow tunnel to the colder world outside.

One day when the sun was just about to make its appearance above the horizon, and the long night was nearly at an end, two half starved and partially frozen white men burrowed their way into our hero's igloo and asked for food and shelter. The night had been long, dreary, dark and cold, and the approaching return of the sun was welcomed like a prodigal. Is it a wonder then that the Eskimo worships the sun? It seems his only hope, his only comfort; and it would seem to him, more than to any other, the source of all life, his only friend in his dire need. The Eskimo offered the two strangers some meat, which they devoured greedily; and then they told a long, pitiful story. They were explorers. Their ship had been crushed hopelessly between masses of ice. Fifty had started on the long journey south. Provisions gave out. Men had dropped off daily. The trail was one long line of frozen corpses stretched out in the dark and silent night. They two alone had survived, so far as the strangers were able to tell. It was the usual tale of woe which befalls the Arctic or Antarctic explorers. Beginning happily, hopefully, buoyantly; ending in misery, sorrow and death. The strangers wanted a guide to lead them to the south—to civilization and warmth. They had not known what it was to be comfortable for two years; and they had not seen one square inch of bare ground during that period.



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“Oh, for a sight of mother earth!” they shouted. “We would gladly eat the soil, and chew the bark from the trees.” Thus one does not appreciate the most trivial and simple but indispensable things until one is deprived of them for a period of more or less duration.

Our hero agreed to guide them so far as his knowledge extended—even to the very gateway between the north and south lands—if they would guarantee to guide him from that point into their own big, beautiful world further on; they taking the helm when his usefulness as a guide would be exhausted; and he explained his ambition to them.

So, one morning when summer was approaching, and the sun, for the first time in the year was sending her streamers above the horizon, and when his sweetheart Lola stood with arms outstretched over the cold snow and ice towards him, pleading and sending forth her last appeal to his stony heart, he walked out across the white table-land towards the south, and was soon a small black speck in the far horizon.

When the strange expedition reached Dawson they discarded their hibernating costumes and substituted more modern ones, not so much because they were out of fashion, but because they rendered them somewhat uncomfortable. At this point the white men grasped the helm and the Eskimo followed. At Fort Fraser our hero discarded more of his clothing, and at Quesnel he became determined to strip himself. “I cannot stand this heat,” he said; “why, it will kill me.”

“Heat? Kill you?” exclaimed his two companions. “Why, the thermometer is scarcely above the freezing point. If this moderate climate makes you uncomfortable, what will be your condition in California? Why, you will melt away like a candle beside a red-hot stove.” And thus they joked with him, not taking him seriously. So they sailed along and in due time reached Ashcroft. The Eskimo perspired to such an extent that his condition threatened to become dangerous. The slightest covering of clothing became a burden to him, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that his companions could prevent him from stripping himself naked. They persuaded him that he should return before it was too late, but he would not hear of it. “I have made my nest; I will sit in it to the bitter end,” he said. They boarded the midnight train, and in a few moments he was fleeing to the sunny south a great deal faster than ever dog team or sledge had taken him across the frozen plateau. And the farther south he went the more he suffered from the heat, until he was in great danger of melting away. And then the truth dawned upon him; it had never occurred to him before. He was a fish trying to live out of water. He discovered that what his mind had pictured, and his heart had longed for, his constitution could not endure. He was doomed to live and die in the frozen north. Oh, those savage, unprogressive, half-animal ancestors! And for the first time he thought of his igloo, his



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dog teams, the polar bear, and the little woman who had pleaded with him to remain; and he saw her standing as he had left her with outstretched arms, while her very heart tissue was being torn asunder. "Oh, for the ice and snow and the long, dark night," he exclaimed; "anything but this awful heat." When they reached San Francisco he was almost insane, and his condition became critical; and, as if to punish him for his folly, the heat became intense for a few days. They rushed him to the sea shore and he plunged into the water, and refused to come out again. Those were the most congenial surroundings he had found since he left the frozen north. He was in such misery that he did not have time to enjoy the wonders of civilization which he had risked so much to see. Thus does distance lend enchantment to the view. This was an instance of how a man had grown up with his environment—had inherited qualities or weaknesses applicable to his surroundings, had breathed the air of one planet so long that the atmosphere of another was poison to him. He had envied others a lot which it was constitutionally impossible for him to emulate. And he wept for his hereditary infirmities and failings. Could a man be blamed for regretting his ancestors and cursing the fate, or the necessity which drove them into those northern fastnesses at the early stages of their existence? Here again the white man was to blame, for he, in his eagerness and greed, had seized upon the cream of the earth for himself and had driven all inferior or weaker peoples to all the four corners of the globe. And of all the unfortunate, subordinate races, the Eskimo was the most unfortunate, and their condition savored of discrimination on the part of the powers that governed or ordained things.

As our hero had only one ambition while in the north—an insane notion to go south—he had only one ambition while in California—an overpowering ambition to go north.

"Oh, for a mantle of snow, and a canopy of ice!" he shouted. "And, oh, for one touch on mine of my Lola's cold, sweet cheek. Oh, for the frozen, hopeless northland, even if its condition means the perpetual doom and obliteration of the whole Eskimo race!"

They shipped him north as fast as steam could carry him, and from Dawson he went on foot, becoming day by day more and more his natural self. When he neared his igloo he found his Lola standing with outstretched arms to welcome him even as she had mourned his departure, and he realized for the first time that the love and companionship of one woman is worth more than all the riches and wonders of the world put together. They embraced each other with the grip of a vice, in the awful power of their natures, and their affection was as genuine as the most civilized variety. And there he threw himself on the earth and hugged the snow of his dear northland.

Of the Sweet Young Things



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Once upon a time in Ashcroft a very foolish young man married a very foolish young lady. They were foolish in so far as they had entered a matrimonial partnership without the preliminary requisite of love. He married because he wanted a wife, as all good men do; she married because she wanted a home, as all good women do. But, as we have said, they married too hastily in their eagerness for those mere mundane pleasures. Each had been known to lie awake many nights before their marriage summing up the situation, and putting two and two together; but, as they were both liberal in their political views, and had no conservative opposition, the two and two always made four without a decimal remainder, and the house voted for marriage with an overwhelming majority. So they became legally united before they were morally mature for love, and before they had formal introduction to the great things of the world. After the solemnization of their marriage they adjourned to a beautiful little home which had been made to order; and it was guarded by a beautiful garden of Eden.

For a short time everything went merry as the Ashcroft curlers' ball. Her happiness was all he lived for, and his comfort was the only excuse she could find for living. Nothing was too good for his Maud; no man was like her Manfred. They each congratulated themselves that they had hooked the best fish from the Thompson. There was nothing in the world outside of their own sweet lives. How others could live outside of *their* sphere was a mystery to them; and the hugs and kisses which they did not treat themselves to daily would be of no commercial value as a love asset.

For the first few weeks they spent their evenings with their tentacles wound around each other so tightly that they would have passed for one animal; but they had not been welded by that permanent binding quality which is essential to perpetual happiness. Their natures seemed to blend, but it was only a case of superfluous friendship between them. They had no reason to fall out, no excuse to quarrel. They had one mind, one ambition, and they had agreed, mutually, to salt down a few "plunks" each payday for their anticipated gray days. In fact, they seemed better "cut out" for each other than many who marry loving desperately and savagely.

In a few sweet years they had a few sweet children, and life was one sweet dream. But they did not love each other, and without oxygen the lights ultimately became extinguished. But this was only because the ironies of fate had discovered that they were too happy, and that something must be done to damage their heavenliness.



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The honeymoon might, otherwise, have lasted all their long lives without interruption. But fate decreed that the clouds should gather from the north, south, east and west to obliterate their sun. It happened in the shape of two monsters in the form of Flossy and Freddy. Flossy and Freddy were float rocks. They had been picked up by Maud and Manfred on their face value and welcomed to the family circle. They had been assayed at the provincial assay office and found to contain a valuable percentage of real collateral; so our hero and heroine could not be reproached for taking them into their arms and allowing them the freedom of their home pastures. But, ah! this is where the evil one sneaked on to the happy hearth-rug—they took the strangers into their arms. They were all young; and, moreover, human. What could they do when the failings of their ancestors of a million years took them in an iron grip and led them in a hypnotic spell toward the brink of ruin? They were as helpless as the Liberals in B.C. politics in the year 1912. We have often quoted that every one must love one of the opposite sex at least once in a lifetime, and our hero and heroine were not immune from this stern gravitation law, because they were only human after all. What was the consequence? Maud fell hopelessly in love with Fred, and Manfred lost his conscience, his manhood, his heart, his soul, his brains, his job and his salary over the Flossy vision. They had fallen foul of a strong Conservative party, and civil war broke out. The former happy couple looked upon each other as intruders, as disturbers of the peace. While before they could not get close enough, now they could not get far enough apart. Manfred would enjoy his evenings at the ball or opera with Flossy, while Fred would entertain Maud, much to her pleasure, at home. The wife hated to see her husband come home at all, but she went into hysterics when Fred arrived. When Fred and Flossy were away, or absent, goodness knows where, the once happy home was like a lunatic asylum, in which the mania with the inmates was a total disregard of each other, and where language was unknown. The husband and wife drifted further and further apart. They ceased to smile, ceased to know each other, ceased to see each other. They were like a lion and a tiger in the same cage.

As time went on the once happy home became a horrid prison. The children became detestable brats who were stumbling-blocks to their ambitions.

Manfred cooked his own meals, or ate at the “French” Cafe. Maud had to purchase food and clothing from the local emporium with money she had saved up before marriage while waiting table at the “Best” Hotel. Finance became frenzied, for Manfred spent both principal, interest and sinking fund on his affinity. Starvation and the cold world were staring them in the face, for the wolf and the collection man were howling at the door. The city cut off their light and water supply for non-payment of dues, and were about to seize the property for arrears; so they were on the water wagon and in darkness, but still they would not regain consciousness.



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The usual course of events did not apply in this strange case. There was no jealousy floating on the surface on the part of the husband and wife. Maud ignored Manfred's insane attitude towards Flossy because she had the same love-blind sickness and could see no one but Fred. Far from being jealous, Manfred viewed his wife in the light of a white man's burden which he could not shake off. Christian's burden was fiction beside it. Flossy was the only star in his firmament—the only toad in his puddle.

The children were neglected, and ran wild in the bush. It was as though some great Belgian calamity had overtaken the household and had riven it asunder. The garden lost its lustre, irrigation was discontinued, the fruit trees lost their leaves prematurely; the very willows wept. The pickets fell from the fence unheeded; the stovepipe smoked, and the chickens laid away in the neighbor's yard. The house assumed the appearance of a deserted sty. Divorce was suggested inwardly—that modern refuge to which the weak-minded flee in seeking a drastic cure for a temporary ailment; and all this disruption in two hearts which had tripped along together so smoothly and pleasantly. Surely love, misapplied, is a curse. It is surely sometimes a severe form of insanity. If so, those two were insane, just waiting for the pressure to be removed from the brain. And, theirs was a pitiful and unfruitful case indeed. They were—

Thirst crazed; fastened to a tree,
By a sweet river running free.

In the meantime Fred and Flossy were having “barrels” of amusement at the expense of the demented ones. Fred and Flossy were perhaps in the wrong in causing such an upheaval in a very model household. But they were young, and the mischief had taken root before they suspected that any such danger was in existence. When the awfulness of the situation dawned upon them they looked at each other one day in the interrogative and agreed that the poisonous weed should be uprooted. But since it had grown to such proportions it was difficult to arrive at a means by which the evil could be strangled. Now Fred and Flossy loved each other, and the lady was just waiting for the gentleman to put the motion, so that she would have an opportunity to second it.

The thirst-crazed husband and wife, however, were too blind to observe that anything unusual existed between their two friends, and they continued to float down that smooth but awful river to destruction.

“Why does she not die?” whispered the demon within the man.

“Why does he not fall into the Thompson and get drowned for accommodation?” questioned the evil one in the heart of the woman.

At last the eruption became “Vesuvian,” and the ashes from the crater threatened to re-bury Pompeii—we mean Ashcroft. Thoughts of suicide as the only means of relief bubbled up at intervals.

“Give me love or give me death,” they shouted when the fever was at its highest.



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It is impossible to say just how this war would have ended if an unforeseen neutral incident had not brought an influence to bear which made a continuation of the conflict an impossible and aimless task.

One day the deaf, and dumb, and blind husband and wife were sitting by the neutral hearth as far apart as it was possible to be removed and yet be able to enjoy the friendly heat of the neutral air-tight heater. The neutral cat jumped up on the husband's knee, but in his belligerent mood he dashed it to the floor. The wife picked it up and stroked its sleek fur. The neutral children were out in the garden abusing the flowers and breaking pickets from the fence; and one had an old saw and was sawing at the trimmings of the cottage like a woodsman sawing down a cedar at the coast.

There was rustling of a lady's skirt, and the tramp of hurried feet on the garden path outside. The next moment the door was pushed open and Fred and Flossy dashed in, laughing like to split their sides.

"You tell them," said Fred.

"No, you," said Flossy, blushing deeply.

"No, you," said Fred, and he seized Flossy's hand.

"Well, you know, Fred has—" she began.

"To make a long story short," said Fred, "we are to be married, and the date has been fixed for June."

When Vesuvius buried up Pompeii the people could not have been more horrified than the belligerent husband and wife. They looked at each other for the first time in six months. The man pitied the woman, and cursed himself for crossing swords with her. The woman at once recognized her husband as a hero, and was ashamed of herself. They each waited for the other to make the first confession, but it was left to both. They sprang into each other's arms and became welded for life in one beautiful but awful squeeze.

The fright had cured them. It had opened their eyes to the realization of the ridiculousness of the situation, and revealed the criminality of their past behavior.

The volcano ceased to pour forth lava. The earth-tremblings became still. The sun peeped out from behind the clouds. Manfred got back his job on the railway. The water and light arrears were paid up. The fence was repaired, and the garden irrigated. The children were called in from the woods and curried down. Kisses and smiles took the place of scowls and curses. The sideboard was replenished, and the hens were persuaded to work for their own family. Even the willows ceased to weep; and, oh, my! but it was a beautiful resurrection. And thus Paradise was gained again.



Of the Two Ladies in Contrast

Once upon a time in Ashcroft two ladies were thrown into the same society; because in Ashcroft there is only one class. When any function took place the glad hand was extended to one and all. For every dollar possessed by one of the ladies' husbands the other husband had five. Mrs. Fivedollars was very extravagant in her dress and domestic department, and Mrs. Onedollar was very envious and ambitious. The husband of the one dollar variety was more or less of a henpeck because he could not multiply his income by five and produce a concrete result.



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It was a very predominating mania with Mrs. Onedollar to shine in society with as great a number of amperes as her rival; and this ambition gave rise to one of the greatest domestic civil wars that Ashcroft has even seen. Mrs. Fivedollars had no envy. There was no corner in the remote recesses of her heart rented by this mischievous goddess. She made no effort to “outfashion” fashion or to outshine her neighbors. What she displayed in dress did not extend beyond the natural female instincts for attire. Of course she had no cause to be envious, being by far the best dressed lady in town without undue effort. Mrs. Onedollar viewed the situation from a social apex, and the more she studied the situation the more she realized that the world was discriminating against her. From being the best of friends, they developed into the most deadly of enemies.

Now, it came to pass that the husbands of those two ladies were the best of friends. They met frequently in the “Best” and “Next Best” hotels and drank healths in the most harmless and jolly manner. They often met at their places of business and exchanged ideas. They had business relations with each other which terminated to the advantage of both. To quarrel with each other, to them, was much the same as to quarrel with their bread and butter. They had absolutely no ambitions with regard to their personal appearance. They had a suit of clothes each; when that was old or shabby they got another one. But, in this respect, man is very different from woman. All man wants is covering; a woman must have ornament, and she must equal, if not outshine, her neighbor. The tension between the two ladies became greater until it was almost at the breaking point. Several attempts had been made by the distracted husbands to unscrew the strings which they knew were about to snap, but the result was nil.

“The vixen,” said the one. “The hussy,” said the other; and when two ladies develop the habit of calling each other such queer pet names, a reconciliation seems very remote indeed.

The climax came at the annual Clinton ball. This was one of those historic functions to which everyone is extended a hearty invitation, and it is one of the great events of the season. The entire Lillooet, Yale and Cariboo districts participate—it is a regular meeting of the clans. And that year was no exception. All our friends were there, including our heroes and heroines. The music was throwing its waves of delightful chords through the hall and over the heads of the throng of dancers. Something happened! No one knew just what it was, but in the middle of the floor two ladies were seen tearing each other’s hair and draperies. Heavens! it was our two heroines. The tension had reached the limit—the strings were broken. In a moment our two heroes were on the scene, and each one seized his bundle of property and rushed with it to safety. The two ladies were bundled into their autos and hurried home to Ashcroft in the middle of the night.



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The next day a council of war was held by the two husbands and it was unanimously agreed that something must be done.

“I have it!” exclaimed Mr. Fivedollars. “Now, listen. I will take you in as a partner in business. I will give you twenty years to pay your share, and we will dress our wives exactly alike.” The plan was adopted, and the result was phenomenal. Mr. Onedollar had at last multiplied his insignificant unit by five and had a concrete accumulation. The two ladies dressed themselves alike extravagantly, and all rivalry ceased. They became great friends again and lived happily ever after. And all this disturbance and discord of human hearts was over a miserable bundle of inanimate drapery.

Of the Ruse That Failed

Once upon a time in Ashcroft there lived a lady who had the wool pulled over her husband’s eyes to such an extent that he had optical illusions favorable to the “darling” who deceived him. His most alluring illusion was a booby idea that his “pet” was an invalid, and she kept pouring oil on the joke to keep it burning, and pulled the wool down further and further so that hubby could not see the combustible fluid she was pouring into the flames. Her illness was one of those “to be continued” story kinds—better today, worse to-morrow—and she “took” to the blankets at the most annoying and inopportune moments; and every time she “took” an indisposition she expected hubby to pull down the window curtains and go into mourning. But he, the hardhearted man, would continue to eat and smoke and sleep as though no volcanic lava were threatening to submerge the old homestead. His sympathy was not enough; he should stop eating, stop sleeping, and stop smoking—he should be in direct communication with the undertaker and negotiating about the price of caskets.

His wife had the misleading conviction that when she was ill her case was more serious than that of anyone else. In fact, no one else had ever suffered as she suffered; their ailments were summer excursions to the antipodes compared with hers, and when hubby argued that all flesh was subject to ills and disorders, that almost every unit of the human species had toothaches and rheumatics, the argument was voted down unanimously by the suffragette majority as illegitimate argument.

Gradually hubby became convinced that his wife was an invalid, and he went into mourning as much as a man could mourn the loss of a joy that he had grasped for, and just missed in the grasping. He enjoyed the situation as much as a man could who had discovered that he had amalgamated himself with an hospital which was mortgaged for all it was worth to the family physician. Out of his salary of seventy-five dollars per month sixty-five was devoted towards the financing of the doctor’s time payments on his automobile; the balance paid for food, clothing, water, light, and fuel, and supplied the wolf with sufficient allowance to keep him from entering the parlor in the concrete. But the philosopher, as all men must ultimately become, concluded to make the best of his

bad real estate investment. He resigned himself to a life of perpetual, unaffected martyrdom. After all, it was his personal diplomacy that was at fault—he should not have bought a pig in an Ashcroft potato sack.

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During the first year of their matrimonial failure they had rooms at the “Best” Hotel, and the girls carried breakfast to the bride’s room seven mornings of every week at about 10.30, where the “invalid” devoured it with such greed and relish that they became suspicious and talked “up their sleeves” about her. Three days each week she had all meals carried up to her, and the girls wondered how she could distribute so much proteid about her system with so little exercise. The extreme healthfulness of her constitution was the only thing that saved this woman from dying of surfeit. The only occasions on which she would rise from her lethargy was to attend a dance or social of some kind given at Walhachin or Savona—she did not avoid one of them, and on those occasions she would be the liveliest cricket on the hearth, the biggest toad in the puddle, while the husband was pre-negotiating with the physician for some more evaporated stock in the auto. How she ever got home was a mystery, for she would be more disabled than ever for weeks to come. Of course she had just overdone her constitutional possibility—she said so herself, and she should know.

Whispers went abroad that she was lazy, and they became so loud that hubby heard them over the wireless telephone. He became exasperated. “My wife a hypocrite? Never! The people have hearts of stone—brains of feathers—they do not understand.”

One day—it had never occurred to him before—he suggested that they consult a specialist in somnolence. But she would not hear of it; there was nothing wrong with her; all she wanted was to be left alone. In a short time hubby began to consider her in the light of a “white man’s burden,” and had distorted visions of himself laboring through life with an over-loaded back action.

One day the hotel proprietor advised him of a contemplated raise in his assessment to re-imburse the business for extras in connection with elevating so much food upstairs, which was not part and parcel of the rules and regulations of the house in committee. Besides, the accommodation was needless.

“Needless!” exclaimed hubby. “Would you degenerate a lady and gentleman wilfully. I will leave your fire-trap at once and cast anchor at the ‘Next Best.’” The proprietor argued that his competitor was welcome to such pickings, so he made no comment on the debate.

The “Next Best” was “full up,” as it always is, so they carried the living corpse out on a stretcher, and hubby went batching with his burden in a three-roomed house on Bancroft Street. When it became hubby’s duty to cook the meals and carry half of them to bed for his better half every morning before breakfast he began to taste silly and smell sort of henpeck like. He persisted humbly, lovingly, self-sacrificingly, henpeckedly, however, until one morning his sun rose brighter than it had ever done before and he saw a faint glimmer of light through the wool that was hanging in front of him.



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“Perhaps there is such a commodity as superfluous personal sacrifice to one’s matrimonial obligations,” he soliloquized. “Perhaps this spouse of mine with the pre-historic constitution can be cured by an abstract treatment. Is she ill, or is she playing a wild, deceitful part? Is she sitting on me with all her weight?” He was willing to allow her the usual proportion of female indisposition, but a continued story of such nightmare proportions was beginning to unstring his physical telephone system. So, to we who have no wool over our eyes, this was one of the most pitiful and criminal cases of selfish indolence, perhaps coupled with a belief that a husband, through his sympathy, will love a woman the more because of her suffering. No supposition, of course, could be farther from the concrete—a husband wants, requires, admires, loves, a healthy, active working-partner. Failing this the husband as a husband is down and out.

When hubby began to realize this an individual reformation was at the dawning. The very next morning no breakfast arrived by private parcel post.

“Harry,” she exclaimed, “bring me my porridge and hot cakes; I am starving.”

“If you are starving get up and eat in your stall at the table,” said Harry, sarcastically, although it pained him.

“Harry!” she shouted, “you selfish beast!”

For diplomatic reasons Harry was silent.

Harry made an abrupt exit without waiting for adjournment, and went up town. A new life seemed to be dawning upon him. It was the emancipation from slavery. He went into the drug store, into the hardware store, into the hotels and all the other stores—he talked and laughed as he had never done before.

It was 3 a.m. the following morning when he found himself searching for the door-knob in the vicinity of the front window. Having gained an entrance, he was accosted by his wife, who exclaimed: “Harry, you drunk?”

“Well, y’see, it was the pioneer shupper,” said Harry, and he tumbled into bed.

This was Harry’s first ruse. His next move was an affinity. He would cease to pose as a piece of household furniture—a dumb waiter sort of thing.

At that time there was a vision waiting table at the “Best” who had most of the fellows on a string. Harry threw his grappling irons around her and took her in tow. This went on for some time without suspicion being aroused on the part of the “invalid,” but the wireless telegraphy of gossip whispered the truth to her one day when she was wondering what demon had taken possession of her protector. She dropped her artificial gown in an instant and rushed up Railway Avenue like a militant suffragette. Just about the local emporium Harry was sailing along under a fair and favorable wind,



hand in hand with his new dream, when he saw his legal prerogative approaching near the “Next Best” hotel. He dislodged his grappling-hooks in an instant, stepped slightly in advance, and feigned that he had been running along on his own steam. But she saw him and defined his movements. They met like two express engines in collision, and what followed had better be left buried underneath the sidewalk of the local emporium. There were dead and dying left on the field, and they reached home later by two rival routes of railway.



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The stringency endured some days, which time she huffed and he read Charles Darwin. At the end of that period the ice broke, as it always does; the clouds rolled away, and the sun began to shine, and they began to negotiate for peace. They had a long sitting of parliament, and it was moved and seconded, and unanimously carried, that each give the other a reprieve. It meant the amalgamation of two hearts that became so intertwined with roots that nothing earthly could pull them asunder. It was the founding of one of the happiest homes in Ashcroft. He left his affinity—she left her bed. They became active working partners. Long years after he told her of his ruse. She laughed.

“You saved me,” she said.

He endorsed the note, and they had one long, sweet embrace which still lingers in their memory.

Of the Real Santa Claus

I.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Once upon a time it was Christmas eve in Vancouver, B.C., and the snow was falling in large, soft flakes. The electric light plants were beating their lives out in laborious heart-throbs, giving forth such power that the streets and shop windows had the appearance of the phantom scene of a fairy stage-play rather than a grim reality; they were lighter than day. There was magic illumination from the sidewalk to the very apex of the tallest sky-scraper. Being Christmas eve, the streets were thronged with pleasure seekers, and eager, procrastinating, Christmas gift maniacs. They were all happy, but they were temporarily insane in the eagerness of their pursuit. They all had money, plenty of it; and this was the time of year when it was quite in order to squander it lavishly, carelessly, insanely—for, is it not more blessed to give than to receive?

The habiliments of the hurrying throng were exuberant, extravagant and ostentatious in the extreme. Everyone seemed to vie with every other, with an envy akin to insanity, for the laurels in the fashion world, and they were talking and laughing gaily, and some of them were singing Christmas carols. They did not even seem to regret the soft wet snow that was falling on their costly apparel and soaking them—they seemed rather to enjoy it. Besides, they could go home at any time and change and dry themselves—and, was it not Christmas, the one time of the year when the whole world was happy and lavish? The persons of the ladies were bathed in perfume, and the clothing of the gentlemen was spotless, save where the large, white snowflakes clung for a moment before vanishing into fairyland. Vancouver was certainly a city of luxury, a city of ease,

a city of wealth, and it was all on exhibition at this time of approaching festival. Everyone was rich, and money was no obstacle in the way of enjoyment.



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But we have seen one side of the picture only. We have been looking in the sunlight; let us peer into the shadows. There was a reverse side. A girl of about thirteen years of age was standing at the corner of Hastings and Granville offering matches for sale to the stony world. She was bareheaded, thinly clad, shivering. Her clothing was tattered and torn. Her shoes were several sizes too large, and were some person's cast-off ones. It was Christmas, and no one was seeking for matches. They were all in search of gold and silverware, furs and fancies, to give away to people who did not require them.

"Matches, sir?" The solicitous question was addressed to a medium-sized, moderately dressed man who was gliding around the corner and whistling some impromptu Christmas carol; and she touched the hem of his garment. This unit of the big world paused, took the matches, and began to explore his hemisphere for five cents. In the meantime he surveyed the little girl from head to foot, and then he glanced at the big world rushing by in two great streams.

"Give me them all!" he said with an impulse that surprised him, and he handed her one dollar. "Now, go home and dry yourself and go to bed," he continued. He did not stop to consider that she might not have a home and a bed, but continued on his way with his superfluity of matches. His home was bright, and warm, and cheery when he arrived there, and his wife welcomed him. "I have brought you a Christmas present," he said, and he handed her the matches. When she opened the package he found it necessary to explain.

II.

CHRISTMAS

It was Christmas, and the snow was still falling in large, soft flakes. It was about ten inches deep out on the hills, among the trees out along Capilano and Lynn Creeks, but it had been churned into slush on the streets and pavements of Vancouver. The church bells were ringing, and our gaily clad and happy acquaintances of the evening before were again thronging the streets; but to-day they were on their way to church to praise the One whose birthday they were observing. Our friend of the large heart was also there, and so was his wife—two tiny drops in that great bucketful of humanity. The match vendor was also there—another very tiny drop in that great bucketful. "What! Selling matches on Christmas day?" remarked a passer-by. "You should be taken in charge by the Inquisition."

"Matches, sir?" said the tiny voice, and she again touched the hem of our hero's garment. The big-hearted man looked at his tender-hearted wife, and the tender-hearted wife looked at her big-hearted man. "Yes, give me them all," he said again, and he handed her another dollar. He was evidently trying to buy up all the available



matches so that he could have a corner on the commodity. "Here," he continued, "take this dollar also. Buy yourself something good for Christmas, and go home and enjoy yourself."



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“I have no home, and the shops are all closed,” she said, brushing the wet snow from her hair.

“No home!” exclaimed the lady, incredulously, “and the world is overflowing with wealth and has homes innumerable. Is it possible that the world’s goods are so unevenly divided?”

The girl began to cry.

“Come and have your Christmas dinner with us,” said the lady.

The girl, still weeping, followed in her utter innocence and helplessness.

Ding-dong, went the merry bells. Tramp, tramp, went the feet of the big, voluptuous world. Honk, honk, went the horns of the automobiles; for it was Christmas, and all went merry as a marriage bell.

The fire was burning brightly. The room was warm and cozy. The house was clean, tidy, and cheery. It was a dazzling scene to one who had been accustomed to the cold, bare, concrete pavements only.

“My!” exclaimed the girl as they entered. It was a perfect fairyland to her. It was a story. It was a dream.

“Now, we are going to have the realest, cutest, Christmas dinner you ever saw,” said the lady, producing a steaming turkey from the warming oven. The girl danced in her glee and anticipation. “But first you must dress for dinner. We will go and see Santa Claus,” smiled the foster-mother. She retired with a waif, and returned with a fairy, and they sat down to a fairy dinner.

“What a spotless tablecloth! What clean cups and saucers, and plates and dishes! What shining knives and forks! What kind friends!” thought the orphan. “I had no idea such things existed outside of Heaven,” she exclaimed aloud in her rapture.

“It is all very commonplace, I assure you,” said the man, “but it takes money to buy them.”

“And yet,” philosophized the lady, “if we are dissatisfied in our prosperity, what must a life be that contains nothing?”

Ding-dong, went the bells. Tramp, tramp, went the feet of the big world outside. Honk, honk, went the horn of the automobile; but the happiest heart of them all was the little waif who had been, until now, so lonely, so cold, so hungry, so neglected. They were the happiest moments in her whole life. Her time began from that day. But that is many years ago. The orphan is a lady now in Vancouver; and every Christmas she gives a



dinner to some poor people in honor of those who adopted her and saved her from the slums.

Of the Retreat from Moscow

Once upon a time four Ashcroft Napoleons, known locally as “Father,” “Deacon,” “Cyclone,” and “Skookum,” invaded Vancouver to demonstrate at an inter-provincial curling bonspiel that was arranged to take place at that city. Their object was to bring home as many prizes and trophies as they could conveniently carry without having to pay “excess baggage,” and donate the balance to charity. It was decided later not to take any of the prizes, as it was more blessed to give than to receive, and they did not only give away all the trophies, but they gave away all the games as well—games they had a legitimate mortgage on—and they were glad to see the other fellows happy.



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As a man often gets into trouble trying to keep out of it, so the Ashcroft chaps lost by trying to win; and here it is consoling to know that all a man does or says in this world sinks and lies motionless in the silent past, for in this case it will only be a matter of time when people will cease to remember. But to leave all joking aside, we beg to advise that the adventurers were dumped unceremoniously into Moscow by the C.P.R. officials at about three good morning and had not where to lay their heads. You could not see the city for buildings; but even at that embryo hour of the morning the streets were not entirely deserted. Some people seem to toil day and night, for there were dozens of forms moving hither and thither like phantoms in the powerful glare of the electric illuminations. Being Ashcroft people our heroes were accustomed to city life, and the embarrassment of the situation soon evaporated. They bundled themselves into a nocturnal automobile which was no sooner loaded than it "hit" the streets of Vancouver like Halley's comet. It went up and down, out and in, hither and thither. It tried to leap from under the invaders, but they kept up with it. It went north forty chains, east forty chains, south forty chains, and thence west forty chains to point of commencement. It went here, then there, and ultimately arranged to stop on Richards Street (named after our John), at the foot of the elevator of the Hotel Canadian. This was the end of steel for the auto, the rest of the journey had to be made on foot via the elevator. It is a very pleasant sensation to have the floor rise and carry you with it to the third landing, and it only takes three seconds to make a sixty second journey. At the third floor, after having been shown their stalls for the night, the bandits went out on an exploring expedition while the stable man let down some hay.

They located the fire escape, as it is always better to come in by the front door like a millionaire and leave by the fire escape in the dead of the night when the stableman is asleep at his post.

Early next morning, at about ten o'clock, they invaded the dining-room as hungry as hyenas, and had a lovely breakfast of porridge and cream, ham and eggs, toast and butter, tea or coffee. To encourage the coffee somewhat the Deacon "dug" his front foot into the lump-sugar bowl and extracted a couple of aces; and the other mimics followed suit with two, three, and four spots. The breaking of this fast cost forty-five cents for the meal, and fifty-five for the waiter just to make the "eat" come to even money, and they were too large socially to take away small change economically. Every meal they put into their waste baskets necessarily extracted one day from the other end of their excursion via the fire escape, and that is one reason why they returned so soonly. Cyclone, having drawn on his personal account at a Vancouver branch of the Ashcroft bank for enough to pay his next meal and car

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fare, and Skookum having jotted down the usual morning poetic inspiration on the sublimity of the situation, the army, led by Father, marched full breast upon the curling rink building. There were no knights at the gate to defend the castle, nor did the band meet them at the portal—neither did the Vancouver curling club. Their arrival, strange to say, created no commotion; they did not seem to have been anticipated. Things went along as though nothing extraordinary had taken place.

The appearances at the rink, however, were intoxicating, which largely made up for the invisibility of the receiving committee. The rink was somewhat larger than the town hall at Ashcroft, and the great, high, arched, glass ceiling was studded with electric lights like stars in the heavens. Extensive rows of seats for spectators encircled the entire room, and in the centre, the arena was one clear, smooth sheet of hard, white ice. Several games were in progress, and they saw their old friend “Tam” playing with his usual Scotch luck and winning for all he was worth.

Ashcroft selected the ice upon which the first blood was to be sprinkled. The battle began on schedule time, and as they had anticipated, they won without a single casualty. As a result of this “clean up,” a private conference was held that night by the Vancouver and other clubs behind closed doors, at which it was moved, and seconded, and adopted, that Ashcroft was a dangerous element in their midst, and that drastic measures must be set in motion at once to arrest such phenomenal accomplishments or the bonspiel would be lost. All unconscious of the conspiracy against them, Ashcroft spent the afternoon riding up and down the moving stairs at Spencer’s, led by the “Deak,” who had had previous practice at this amusement. Curling to them was as easy as this stairway, and as simple as eating a meal if you cut out the tipping of the waiter. That night they took in a show which was a “hum dinger,” and should have endured a life-time. What a sweet life it was; nothing to do but live, and laugh, and curl, and win; if it would only continue indefinitely without having to worry about the financing of it! Napoleon “had nothing” on Father, and he felt that he could even “put it over” on the local star. But something happened the next day. Whether it was the private conference, or the moving stairs, or the Pantages, or whether it was that Ashcroft became more careless with success, and Vancouver more careful with defeat, will never be known. They pierced no more bull’s eyes—and sometimes they missed the entire target. They had every qualification essential to the successful curler but talent. They had the rocks, the brooms, the ribbons, the sweaters—they even had the will. It is strange with all those requisites that they could not win.

The retreat from Moscow took place three days later, and they went straggling over the Alps in one long string. As though the mortification of defeat was not enough, a huge joke was prepared for them by the reception committee of the local curling club, and lemons have been at a premium in Ashcroft ever since.



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Of Sicamous

The Okanagan Valley, in the Province of British Columbia, is bounded on the north by the mosquitoes at Sicamous, and on the south by the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, which is the United States; and to one who is accustomed to the sand and the sage, the general aspect throughout gives a most pleasing rest to the eye. A trip to the Okanagan is like one sweet dream to the inhabitants of the dry belt—a dream that is broken only once by a dreadful nightmare—the mosquito conquest at Sicamous; but you forgive and forget this the moment after you awake. The mosquitoes at Sicamous are as great a menace to that town as the Germans are to Europe.

The train for the valley, when on time, leaves Sicamous, on the main line of the C.P.R., at about ten, good morning, but sometimes she waits for the delayed eastern train. This happens very frequently on Sundays—for who or what was ever on time on a Sunday? Sunday is the lazy man's day—the lazy day of the world—the day on which we creep along out of tune with things.

Now, when you get side-tracked at a C.P.R. station in the Rocky Mountains waiting for a delayed eastern train, you may as well throw all your plans into the lake, because they will be out of fashion when you have an opportunity to use them again, and you will require new ones—the train may come to-day and she may not come till to-morrow. But, if that station chances to be Sicamous, and it is Sunday—and it must be raining heavily, for when it is raining there are no mosquitoes—you will not regret the delay, and you will be very much interested if you have an eye for the unique, or if you have the slightest inclination to be eccentric you will be reminded that—

There are friends we never meet;
There is love we never know.

Here people—strangers and friends—meet and nod, smile, talk and depart ten or twelve times every day. You will wonder how people can talk so much, and what they get to talk about—people who meet accidentally here, only for a moment, and will never meet again, perhaps. Almost hourly, night and day, cosmopolitan little throngs jump from trains, chat a few moments among themselves, or with others who have been waiting, and then allow themselves to be picked up by the next train and rushed off into eternity—that is, so far as you are concerned, for you will never see them again—and some of them were becoming so familiar. They are voices and faces flitting across your past; they are always new, always strange, always interesting; they are laughing, chatting, smiling, scowling, worrying. There are fair faces and dark faces, pleasant faces and angry faces, careless faces and anxious faces, and faces that are thin, fat, long and short. The voices are as varied as the faces. There is the sharp, clear voice and the dull voice, the angry one and the pleasant one. There are young and old,

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beautiful and ugly, scowls and smiles, the timid and the fearless—the black, the white, and the yellow; and there are faces that look so much like ones you know at home that you are just on the point of asking them how the boys and girls have been since you left. If they had known that they were the actors on a stage, and you were the audience, conditions might have been improved—artificially; they might have acted better, with more “class,” but the interest would have been injured; you would have been robbed of a genuine entertainment. Those people went north, south, east and west; they went to the four corners of the earth. The sound of their voices and laughs go up into the tree-tops, up into the hills and down into the lake, and they are echoed back to us; and that is the only record that is ever taken, of this interesting drama; and then the voices fade away east—fade away west.

But you hear the elaborate puffing and snorting of a locomotive as though laboring under its great load of humanity; there is a loud whistle from somewhere, and then another; two engines are speaking to each other; then the bell rings, the engine sweeps by, and the whole earth trembles—it is the delayed eastern train. There is a great scramble for entrance. Chance acquaintances are forgotten in the individual excitement. The steps to one car are blocked by one man who has enough baggage for ten, and one worried-looking young lady with a baby is afraid she will lose her train. The train pulls out with a “swish, swish” of escaping steam under great pressure from the engine, and the station is robbed of half its population. The familiar faces have disappeared, but a new throng has been cast into your midst—new faces, new smiles, new voices, new scowls; and the chatter is renewed with vigor when we have found ourselves, and are located in several little isolated bunches. But the Okanagan local is here waiting for our scalps. There is another scramble of men, women, children, bag and baggage, for seats, and we are off. The little station platform is deserted and silent but for the clatter of the wheels of the baggage truck. The tree tops sigh, the lake murmurs, but they cannot hold us, we must hurry to the great beyond—the whole world depends upon our individual movements.

Of the Ubiquitous Cat

Once upon a time I had a very curious experience which had a very curious ending.

I walked into a strange person’s house, uninvited, for some mysterious reason perfectly unknown to myself.

Sitting promiscuously around an old-fashioned fire-place, in which blazed a cheery fire, were a man and woman and four small children; and on a lounge, partly hid under the eiderdown quilt, lay a pure white cat, half asleep and half awake, and at intervals

casting sly glances at some of the children. The cat seemed to all intent and purpose one of that human family.

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Now, although the cat can be abused like a toy doll by the children without losing his temper, yet he has the most curiously composed disposition of all the domestic animals. Although extravagantly domesticated, and although he shares our beds and tables with impunity, yet he is, to the mouse, as cruel and treacherous as a man-eating tiger.

However, we did not take up our pen to discuss cat psychology. Upon entering the strange person's house so unceremoniously, I sat me down upon a vacant chair, also uninvited, and began to make myself at home.

The strange persons did not seem to take any exception to my strange behavior, but, kept on talking as though nothing extraordinary had taken place in the human social regulations. I was more interested in the cat than I was in the people, and I could not keep my eye from him, he was so much like our "Teddy" at home.

At last I convinced myself that it was Teddy.

"Where did you get that cat?" I asked.

"Why, we have always had him. We raised him. He sleeps with the children every night, and gets up with them in the morning—when he is here," said the mother.

Our Teddy had the same weakness, and I was so positive that this was he that I called him by name.

In a moment he came to me and was on my knee—it was indeed Teddy.

Now, here was one of the most unique situations on record.

"This is my cat," I said demandingly.

"It is ours," said the chorus of children's voices.

It suddenly occurred to me that Teddy was in the habit of leaving home and would be absent for several days at a time. Could it be possible he had two homes? Did this cat actually accept the affections and hospitality of two distinct families, at the same time, without once breathing the truth or giving himself away?

I went home puzzled to my wife and said:

"Do you know, Teddy is not all ours?"

"What do you mean?"

I was just about to tell my strange story when I awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.



BITS OF HISTORY

Of the Foolhardy Expedition

The people who inhabited this globe during the year 1725 undoubtedly obtained a different view of things terrestrial than we do who claim the world's real estate in 1915, because they had no telegraph, no telephone, no electric light, no automobile, and no aeroplane. How they managed to live at all is a mystery to the twentieth century biped. Fancy having to cross the street to your neighbor's house when you wanted to ask him if he was going to the pioneer supper, and just think of having no "hello girl" to flirt with. The condition seems appalling. But what they lacked in knowledge and in indolent conveniences we beg to announce that they made up in foolhardiness which they called bravery. Well, if it can be called brave to make a needless target of oneself to a bunch of savage Indians, why then they had the proper derivation of the term.



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From one of Francis Parkman's admirable works we have seized upon the scene of our story, which was acted out at the beginning of the eighteenth century, namely, 1725. The Indians seem to have been very hostile in those early days in the immediate vicinity of the early New England provinces; and we are convinced some of the white men were very hostile as well. Of course we, in our day, cannot blame them—they had no telephones, autos, electricity, “hello girls”—they had to be something, so they were hostile towards the Indians.

Dunstable was a town on the firing line of Massachusetts, and was attacked by Indians in the autumn of 1724, and two men were carried off. Ten others went in pursuit, but fell into an ambush, and nearly all were killed. But now we will follow the words of Francis Parkman, who has a delightful way of relating his stories.

“A company of thirty was soon raised.” They were to receive two shillings and sixpence per day each, “out of which he was to maintain himself”;—very little to risk one's life for; but in those days it was no concern with a man whether he was killed or not. Besides, it was worth something to get killed and have Francis Parkman write about you more than a century later. Perhaps they anticipated this perpetuation of their names and deeds.

However, “Lovewell was chosen captain; Farwell lieutenant, and Robbins, ensign. They set out towards the end of November, and reappeared at Dunstable early in January, bringing one prisoner and one scalp.” It does not seem to us to have paid the interest on the investment of two shillings and sixpence per day, “out of which he was to maintain himself,” and, for anything we know to the contrary, perhaps the captain was getting more than this—it has not been recorded. “Towards the end of the month Lovewell set out again, this time with eighty-seven men. They ascended the frozen Merrimac, passed Lake Winnepesaukee, pushed nearly to the White Mountains, and encamped on a branch of the upper Saco. Here they killed a moose—a timely piece of luck, for they were in danger of starvation, and Lovewell had been compelled by want of food to send back a good number of his men. The rest held their way, filing on snowshoes through the deathlike solitude that gave no sign of life except the light track of some squirrel on the snow, and the brisk note of the hardy little chickadee, or black-capped titmouse, so familiar in the winter woods.”

Now here is where the foolhardiness of the expedition begins to appeal to us. Supposing just here they had met five hundred crazy Indians with five hundred crazy bows and arrows? And they must have expected it. They were searching for Indians. Perhaps they were seeking martyrdom? But the New Englander of the frontier was nothing if not foolhardy. They mistook it for bravery, and there must have been some bravery amalgamated with it, because a man must have a certain quantity of that rarity before he can lend himself out as a target at two shillings and sixpence a day, “out of which he was to maintain himself.”



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Now, if you have patience to follow you will learn that they ultimately met the very thing which you expect—which they must have expected.

“Thus far the scouts had seen no human footprints; but on the twentieth of February they found a lately abandoned wigwam, and following the snowshoe tracks that led from it—” Right into the lion’s jaw, as it were. Perhaps they were anxious to be shot to get out of their misery—“at length saw smoke rising at a distance out of the gray forest.” They saw their finish, and their hearts were filled with joy. “The party lay close till two o’clock in the morning; then, cautiously approaching, found one or more wigwams, surrounded them, and killed all the inmates, ten in number.” They were to pay dear for this, as anyone could have told them. “They brought home the scalps in triumph, ... and Lovewell began at once to gather men for another hunt.... At the middle of April he had raised a band of forty-six.” One of the number was Seth Wyman, ... a youth of twenty-one, graduated at Harvard College, in 1723, and now a student of theology. Chaplain though he was, he carried a gun, knife and hatchet like the others, and not one of the party was more prompt to use them.... They began their march on April 15th.” After leaving several of their number by the way for various causes, we find thirty-seven of them on the night of May 7th near Fryeburg lying in the woods near the northeast end of Lovewell’s pond.

“At daybreak the next morning, as they stood bareheaded, listening to a prayer from the young chaplain, they heard the report of a gun, and soon after an Indian.... Lovewell ordered his men to lay down their packs and advance with extreme caution.” Why this caution? “They met an Indian coming towards them through the dense trees and bushes. He no sooner saw them than he fired at the leading men.” Naturally. We should have said “leading targets.” “His gun was charged with beaver shot and he severely wounded Lovewell and young Whiting; on which Seth Wyman shot him dead, and the chaplain and another man scalped him.” As yet they had only entered the lion’s den. “And now follows one of the most obstinate and deadly bush-fights in the annals of New England.... The Indians howled like wolves, yelled like enraged cougars, and made the forest ring with their whoops.... The slaughter became terrible. Men fell like wheat before the scythe. At one time the Indians ceased firing; ... they seemed to be holding a ‘pow-wow’; but the keen and fearless Wyman crept up among the bushes, shot the chief conjurer, and broke up the meeting. About the middle of the afternoon young Fry received a mortal wound. Unable to fight longer, he lay in his blood, praying from time to time for his comrades in a faint but audible voice.” One, Keys, received two wounds, “but fought on till a third shot struck him.” He declared the Indians would not get his scalp. Creeping along the sandy edge of the pond, he chanced to find a stranded canoe,



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pushed it afloat, rolled himself into it, and drifted away before the wind. Soon after sunset the Indians drew off.... The surviving white men explored the scene of the fight.... Of the thirty-four men, nine had escaped without serious injury, eleven were badly wounded, and the rest were dead or dying.... Robbins, as he lay helpless, asked one of them to load his gun, saying, 'The Indians will come in the morning to scalp me, and I'll kill another of them if I can.' They loaded the gun and left him." The expected had occurred. Most of them had been killed. Anyone could have told them this before they set out—they could have made the same prophecy for themselves. And after all they had accomplished nothing but their own deaths. The story of their return rivals that of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow. Of the whole number eleven ultimately reached home. We leave it to the reader to determine whether this was an exhibition of bravery or foolhardiness, or a mixture of both.

We congratulate ourselves that we did not live on the frontier of New England in the year 1725.

Of the Laws of Lycurgus

Lycurgus reigned over a place called Lacedaemon, which is a part of Greece, about the year 820 B.C. Now, this is a great many years ago, and is further back into the archives of history than most of us can remember. There is no doubt, however, that this great ruler, Lycurgus, was crazy, or he was one of those persons whose brains cease to develop after they have left their teens. He certainly secures the first prize as a "whim" strategist. In spite of his insane eccentricities, he was allowed the full exercise of his freedom. Had he flourished in 1915 A.D. instead of 820 "B.C." (which does not mean British Columbia), the asylum for the insane at New Westminster would not have been strong enough to retain him. Lycurgus did one redeeming thing—he founded a Senate; "which, sharing,"—we are following Plutarch—"as Plato says, in the power of the kings, too imperious and unrestrained before, and having equal authority with them, was the means of keeping them within bounds of moderation, and highly contributed to the preservation of the State. The establishment of a Senate, an intermediate body, like ballast, kept it in just equilibrium, and put it in a safe posture: the twenty-eight senators adhering to the kings whenever they saw the people too encroaching, and on the other hand, supporting the people, when the kings attempted to make themselves absolute."

Now, what in the world possessed this despotic imbecile to form a senate? His action in this can only be accounted for in the light that it was one of those unpremeditated whims of a narrow-minded faddist. One naturally wonders what the newly created senators were doing while the king was imposing his insane laws. This body was formed for the "preservation of the state." The wonder is that there was any state left, for the king paralyzed commerce, smothered ambition, choked art to death, and placed

a ban on modesty. Further than having been “formed,” the “Senate” never again appears on the pages of the “Lycurgus” book.



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Plutarch, who lived in Greece about the year 100 A.D., nine hundred years after the subject of his biography, relates the forming and imposing of those laws with the utmost faith, and the most implicit innocence; which goes to prove that the Grecian idea of government, with all its knowledge, had not advanced much, at least up to the time of Plutarch.

And now for the laws.

“A second and bolder political enterprise of Lycurgus was a new division of the lands. For he found a prodigious inequality; the city overcharged with many indigent persons, who had no land; and the wealth centred in the hands of the few. Determined, therefore, to root out the evils of insolence, envy, avarice, and luxury, and those distempers of a state still more inveterate than fatal—I mean poverty and riches—he persuaded them to cancel all former divisions of land and to make new ones, in such a manner as they might be perfectly equal in their possessions and way of living.

His proposal was put in practice.

“After this he attempted to divide also the movables, in order to take away all appearance of inequality; but he soon perceived that they could not bear to have their goods taken directly from them, and therefore took another method, counterworking their avarice by a stratagem.”

Now, this seems to be the only law to which they made objection; and this proves that the love of personal “icties” has very deep roots. Perhaps the influence of the “senate” sustained them in this, for qualifications for a senator, even in those days, must have called for men of some means, and they, when the shoe began to pinch their own feet, would not care to divide up their sugar and flour with the rank and file. It does not appear, however, that they had any say in the matter, and, beyond the statement that they were formed for a purpose, they seem to have taken no part in the affairs of state; if they had, Lycurgus and his laws would never have been made part of history.

“First he stopped the currency of the gold and silver coin”—thus he paralyzed industry—“and ordered that they should make use of iron money only; then to a great quantity and weight of this he assigned but a small value.... In the next place he excluded unprofitable and superfluous arts.... Their iron coin would not pass in the rest of Greece, but was ridiculed and despised, so that the Spartans had no means of purchasing any foreign or curious wares, nor did any merchant ship unlade in their harbor.” Even Plutarch sees nothing suicidal in all this voluntary isolating of themselves from the main arteries of commerce.

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“Desirous to complete the conquest of luxury and exterminate the love of riches, he introduced a third institution, which was wisely enough and ingeniously contrived. This was the use of public tables, where all were to eat in common of the same meat, and such kinds of it as were appointed by law. At the same time they were forbidden to eat at home, or on expensive couches and tables.... Another ordinance levelled against magnificence and expense, directed that the ceilings of houses should be wrought with no tool but the axe, and the doors with nothing but the saw. Indeed, no man could be so absurd as to bring into a dwelling so homely and simple, bedsteads with silver feet, purple coverlets, or golden cups.” Thus he smothered art and personal ambition, two of the most requisite essentials to a people on their onward and upward trend to civilization and success. “A third ordinance of Lycurgus was, that they should not often make war against the same enemy, lest, by being frequently put upon defending themselves, they too should become able warriors in their turn.”

And thus he made them defenceless against their enemies.

“For the same reason he would not permit all that desired to go abroad and see other countries, lest they should contract foreign manners, gain traces of a life of little discipline, and of a different form of government. He forbade strangers, too, to resort to Sparta who could not assign a good reason for their coming!”

Improvement with Lycurgus means retrogression with us. He wished, perhaps ignorantly, to arrest the progress of civilization and substitute a slovenly ideal of his own. His purpose was to cancel the civilization which the race had gained during thousands of years of effort, and bring it back to a semi-savagery. But the world was too big for him. It had things in view which were too great for his small, hampered mind to have any suspicion of. No doubt he was sincere in his little, infinitesimal way; but it is a blessing for the world that his influence was confined to a very small corner of the then civilized world, and that others of broader views succeeded him to manage the affairs of states and nations. With all deference to old Plutarch, the biographer of Lycurgus, we wish to say that however grand the laws of this man may have been as ideals, they were utter failures when brought into practice.

Of Joan of Arc

Some people say the world is getting no better, but if we take a dip into history and consider the conditions which prevailed there from the earliest times up to only a few hundred years ago, we will find a race of human beings which in no wise resemble the present output except in form and stature. And our own forefathers—the people of the British Isles, the Anglo-Saxons who are to-day leading in the social world—were not one iota better throughout those pages than many of the smallest and most unpretentious



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of obscure tribes living here and there in ignorant, local isolation. One of the strongest points in our argument is the fact that history, as we have it, is composed of the clang of battles and the private lives of kings and despots. The ordinary, everyday life of the peasant people—the working classes—the backbone of the nation, so to speak—was beneath the consideration of the historian throughout all times. The only virtue, in his estimation, was a strong arm—a large army to murder and destroy property. And the life of the historian must needs reflect that of the people. There is no doubt that in a great majority they were of a cruel, murderous nature. We get rare glimpses, however (at intervals of sometimes hundreds of years), of the doings, manners, and customs, likes and dislikes of the common people, that we can rely upon as authentic; the rest is poetry and legend, and, although typical, are relations of incidents that did not really occur.

There is no doubt that, although it has been withheld, there was a great deal of virtue, which blushed and bloomed unseen, amid all this blood and war.

As though by accident the historian who immortalized Joan of Arc has let slip a few words in connection with this heroine's early life that are more valuable to us than page upon page of some of our so-called history. "Jeanne d'Arc was the child of a laborer of Domremy, a little village on the borders of Lorraine and Champagne. Just without the cottage where she was born began the great woods of the Vosges, where the children of Domremy drank in poetry and legend from fairy ring and haunted well, hung their flower garlands on the sacred trees and sang songs to the good people who might not drink of the fountain because of their sins. Jeanne loved the forest; its birds and beasts came lovingly to her at her childish call. But at home men saw nothing in her but 'a good girl,' simple and pleasant in her way, spinning and sewing by her mother's side while the other girls went to the fields—tender to the poor and sick."

This is a little domestic scene of the year A.D. 1425, and how homelike and real and familiar it all is. What a sweet peace spot, among all the bloodshed and horror that was going on throughout France at that time.

Joan of Arc is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable characters in all history. She was born at Domremy, France, in 1412, and was executed in 1431. Before she had reached twenty this girl had practically freed France from the English, or at least put the country upon such a footing that a few years accomplished its freedom.



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The superstitions of the times are no doubt responsible to a great extent for the success which was attained by this Maid of Orleans. "The English believed in her supernatural mission as firmly as the French did, but they thought her a sorceress who had come to overthrow them by her enchantments," and so on. The fact remains that this innocent peasant girl of eighteen years of age freed France from the English and accomplished things which no man of France at that time was able to do. Either the French generalship of the times was very incompetent or the army was very much demoralized—at all events they had been awaiting the advent of a leader who was both determined and fearless, for skill does not seem to have been a requisite—and this appeared in the person of Joan of Arc.

It is difficult to believe that an entirely inexperienced person of this kind could take charge of an army of ten thousand men and lead them to victory when the best trained generals of the time could do nothing and suffered defeat at every turn.

With the coronation of the King the Maid felt that her errand was over. "Oh, gentle king, the pleasure of God is done," she cried, as she flung herself at the feet of Charles, and asked leave to go home. "Would it were His good will," she pleaded with the archbishop, as he forced her to remain, "that I might go and keep sheep once more with my sisters and my brothers; they would be glad to see me again."

But the policy of the French court detained her. France was depending on one of its peasant girls for its very national existence. The humiliation of the thing should make all good Frenchmen blush with shame. So she fought on with the conviction that she was superfluous in the army, and a slave to the French court. It does not appear that she was even placed upon the payroll, or that she received reward of any kind for her services—and there were no "Victoria crosses" in those days. She fought on without pay; rendered all her services for nothing—perhaps for the love of the thing. During the defence of Compiègne in May, 1430, she fell into the hands of one Vendôme, who sold her to the Duke of Burgundy. Burgundy sold her to the English—her remuneration for her self-sacrificing, voluntarily-given services.

And now comes the tragic part of a most pathetic story enacted out at a time when the name civilization, applied to the French and English, is a mockery. "In December she was carried to Rouen, the headquarters of the English, heavily fettered, and flung into a gloomy prison, and at length, arraigned before the spiritual tribunal of the Bishop of Beauvais, a wretched creature of the English, as a sorceress and a heretic, while the dastard she had crowned king left her to die." She was not even granted a legal, judicial trial.

Some say that her sentence was at one time commuted to perpetual imprisonment, which proves that there was a glimmer of humanity hid away in some corner of the world, knocking hysterically in its imprisonment for admission. "But the English found a pretext to treat her as a criminal and condemned her to be burned." And at this juncture

it may be well to say that we have good reason to be proud of ourselves to-day, and ashamed of our ancestors.



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“She was brought to the stake on May 30th, 1431. The woman’s tears dried upon her cheeks, and she faced her doom with the triumphant courage of the martyr.” During her last awful moments, as she left this world with the torture of the flames slowly consuming her body, what were the last impressions of this girl of nineteen who left home and happiness to free a people who allowed her to be thus tormented to death? “A court was constituted by Pope Calixtus III., in 1455, which declared her innocent and pronounced her trial unjust. And through the whole civilized world her memory is fittingly commemorated in statuary and literature.” But this is poor consolation and does not undo the mischief. So far as Joan of Arc is concerned, she is still burning, scorching, suffering at that stake, and the world and the English are her torturers, still tormenting her, while the man she made king stands looking on indifferently, heartlessly. All the honor and statuary that ever had creation on this green earth cannot atone for this crime of “civilization” on the innocent. But it is only one blot of many with which the world moves on, branded indelibly to its unknown end; and beneath a pleasant exterior we know, but try to hide, those blots, with apologies for our ancestors. And yet some say the world is getting no better. Out of this chaos of blood, crime and heathendom we sprang with all our pride and greatness, and with such a record it behooves us to be rather humble than high-minded, for crime and disgrace are lying at our very door-step.

“The story of Joan has been a rich motive in the world of art, and painter and sculptor have spent their genius on the theme without as yet adequately realizing its simple grandeur.”

Of Voices Long Dead

The following is not history, although we have placed it under this heading. It is the literal translation of a poem by Theocritus, a light in the ancient literature of the Greeks. Although the actual incident never occurred, it is typical of what was going on among that long dead people, and it is of as much importance to us as the most valuable record of history, and is of vital interest when viewed in retrospect from the year 1915, because it gives us a rare glimpse into the domestic manners of a people who lived when all the present civilized world was in the hands of savages—and how modern it all seems. The scene might have been enacted yesterday even to the smallest detail.

Imagine yourself in the city of Alexandria about the year 280 B.C.

“Some Syracusan women staying at Alexandria, agreed, on the occasion of a great religious solemnity—the feast of Adonis—to go together to the palace of King Ptolemy Philadelphus, to see the image of Adonis, which the Queen Arsinoe, Ptolemy’s wife, had had decorated with peculiar magnificence. A hymn, by a celebrated performer, was to be recited over the image. The names of the two women are Gorgo and Praxinoe; their

maids, who are mentioned in the poem, are called Eunoe and Eutycheis. Gorgo comes by appointment to Praxinoe's house to fetch her, and there the dialogue begins."



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We are following the translation of William Cleaver Wilkinson.

Gorgo. Is Praxinoe at home?

Praxinoe. My dear Gorgo, at last! Yes, here I am. Eunoe, find a chair—get a cushion for it.

G. It will do beautifully as it is.

P. Do sit down.

G. Oh, this gadabout spirit! I could hardly get to you, Praxinoe, through all the crowd and all the carriages. Nothing but heavy boots, nothing but men in uniform. And what a journey it is! My dear child, you really live too far off.

P. It is all that insane husband of mine. He has chosen to come out here to the end of the world, and take a hole of a place—for a house it is not—on purpose that you and I might not be neighbors. He is always just the same—anything to quarrel with one! anything for spite!

G. My dear, don't talk so of your husband before the little fellow. Just see how astonished he looks at you. Never mind, Zopyrio, my pet, she is not talking about papa.

P. Good heavens! the child does really understand.

G. Pretty papa!

P. That pretty papa of his the other day (though I told him beforehand to mind what he was about), when I sent him to shop to buy soap and rouge, he brought me home salt instead—stupid, great, big, interminable animal.

G. Mine is just the fellow to him.... But never mind; get on your things and let us be off to the palace to see the Adonis. I hear the queen's decorations are something splendid.

P. In grand people's houses everything is grand. What things you have seen in Alexandria! What a deal you will have to tell anybody who has never been here!

G. Come, we ought to be going.

P. Every day is holiday to people who have nothing to do. Eunoe, pick up your work; and take care, lazy girl, how you leave it lying about again; the cats find it just the bed they like. Come, stir yourself; fetch me some water, quick! I wanted the water first, and the girl brings me the soap. Never mind, give it me. Not all that, extravagant! Now pour out the water—stupid! why don't you take care of my dress? That will do. I have



got my hands washed as it pleases God. Where is the key of the large wardrobe? Bring it here—quick!

G. Praxinoe, you can't think how well that dress, made full, as you've got it, suits you. Tell me, how much did it cost?—the dress by itself, I mean.

P. Don't talk of it, Gorgo; more than eight guineas of good hard money. And about the work on it I have almost worn my life out.

G. Well, you couldn't have done better.

P. Thank you. Bring me my shawl, and put my hat properly on my head—properly. No, child (to her little boy), I am not going to take you; there is a bogey on horseback, who bites. Cry as much as you like, I'm not going to have you lamed for life. Now we'll start. Nurse, take the little one and amuse him; call the dog in, and shut the street door. (They go out.)



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Good heavens! what a crowd of people! How on earth are we ever to get through all this? They are like ants—you can't count them. My dearest Gorgo, what will become of us? Here are the Royal Horse Guards. My good man, don't ride over me! Look at that bay horse rearing bolt upright; what a vicious one! Eunoe, you mad girl, do take care!—that horse will certainly be the death of the man on his back. How glad I am now that I left the child at home!

G. All right, Praxinoe, we are safe behind them, and they have gone on to where they are stationed.

P. Well, yes, I begin to revive again. From the time I was a little girl I have had more horror of horses and snakes than of anything in the world. Let us get on; here's a great crowd coming this way upon us.

G. (to an old woman). Mother, are you from the palace?

Old Woman. Yes, my dears.

G. Has one a tolerable chance of getting there?

O.W. My pretty young lady, the Greeks got to Troy by dint of trying hard; trying will do anything in this world.

G. The old creature has delivered herself of an oracle and departed.

P. Women can tell you everything about everything. Jupiter's marriage with Juno not excepted.

G. Look, Praxinoe, what a squeeze at the palace gates!

P. Tremendous! Take hold of me, Gorgo, and you, Eunoe, take hold of Eutyчис!—tight hold, or you'll be lost. Here we go in all together. Hold tight to us, Eunoe. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Gorgo, there's my scarf torn right in two. For heaven's sake, my good man, as you hope to be saved, take care of my dress!

Stranger. I'll do what I can, but it doesn't depend upon me.

P. What heaps of people! They push like a drove of pigs.

Str. Don't be frightened, ma'am; we are all right.

P. May you be all right, my dear sir, to the last day you live, for the care you have taken of us! What a kind, considerate man! There is Eunoe jammed in a squeeze. Push, you



goose, push! Capital! We are all of us the right side of the door, as the bridegroom said when he had locked himself in with the bride.

G. Praxinoe, come this way. Do but look at that work, how delicate it is! how exquisite! Why, they might wear it in heaven!

P. Heavenly patroness of needle-women, what hands we hired to do that work? Who designed those beautiful patterns? They seem to stand up and move about, as if they were real—as if they were living things and not needlework. Well, man is a wonderful creature! And look, look, how charming he lies there on his silver couch, with just a soft down on his cheeks, that beloved Adonis—Adonis, whom one loves, even though he is dead!

Another Stranger. You wretched woman, do stop your incessant chatter. Like turtles, you go on forever. They are enough to kill one with their broad lingo—nothing but a, a, a.

G. Lord, where does the man come from? What is it to you if we are chatterboxes? Order about your own servants. Do you give orders to Syracusan women? If you want to know, we came originally from Corinth, as Bellerophon did; we speak Peloponnesian. I suppose Dorian women may be allowed to have a Dorian accent.



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P. Oh, honey-sweet Proserpine, let us have no more masters than the one we've got! We don't the least care for you; pray don't trouble yourself for nothing.

G. Be quiet, Praxinoe! That first-rate singer, the Argive woman's daughter, is going to sing the Adonis hymn. She is the same who was chosen to sing the dirge last year. We are sure to have something first rate from her. She is going through her airs and graces ready to begin.

* * * * *

And here the voices die away in the remote past. How difficult it is to believe that this dialogue took place more than two thousand years ago!

As a last glimpse of such a beautiful, modernly remote gem of conversation, we will give a few more words to show what those ancient gossipy ladies thought of their husbands.

The following are the last surviving words which Gorgo gave to the world:

Gorgo. Praxinoe, certainly women are wonderful things. That lucky woman, to know all that; and luckier still to have such a voice! And now we must see about getting home. My husband has not had his dinner. That man is all vinegar, and nothing else; and if you keep him waiting for his dinner he's dangerous to go near. Adieu! precious Adonis, and may you find us all well when you come next year!

He might have been a husband of yesterday!

For how many years have the husbands been coming home from work daily to partake of a meal which an attentive and tender wife has prepared for him? This was twenty-two hundred years ago.

Of the White Woman Who Became an Indian Squaw

The early history of the northwest frontier of Massachusetts is fraught with blood-curdling tales of savage invasions against the home-builders and empire-makers of that once troubled boundary between the French of Canada and the English of the New England States, but there is not a more pitiful story than that which has been recorded touching the Williams family of Deerfield, who were captured by the Indians during one of their inroads in the year 1704. John Williams was a minister who had come to Deerfield when it was still suffering from the ruinous effects of King Philip's war. His parishioners built him a house, he married, and had eight children. The story of the Indians' invasion, the destruction of the village, and the capture of over one hundred prisoners is admirably told by Francis Parkman in one of those excellent works of his dealing with the old regime of Canada and New England.



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“A war party of about fifty Canadians and two hundred Indians left Quebec about mid-winter, and arrived at Deerfield on the 28th of February, 1704. Savage and hungry, they lay shivering under the pines till about two hours before dawn the following morning; then, leaving their packs and their snowshoes behind, they moved cautiously towards their prey. The hideous din startled the minister, Williams, from his sleep. Half naked, he sprang out of bed, and saw, dimly, a crowd of savages bursting through the shattered door. With more valor than discretion he snatched a pistol that hung at the head of the bed, cocked it and snapped it at the breast of the foremost Indian. It missed fire. Amid the screams of his terrified children, three of the party seized him and bound him fast, for they came well provided with cords, as prisoners had a great market value. Nevertheless, in the first fury of their attack, they dragged to the door and murdered two of the children. They kept Williams shivering in his shirt for an hour, while a frightful uproar of yells, shrieks, and gunshots sounded from within. At length they permitted him, his wife, and five remaining children to dress themselves. After the entire village had been destroyed and the inhabitants either murdered or made captive, Williams and his wife and family were led from their burning house across the Connecticut River to the foot of the mountain, and the following day the march north began with the hundred or more prisoners.”

The hardships of the prisoners, and the crimes of the victors during that long and arduous march north through snow and ice, forms a chapter of pathos in the early history of those eastern states.

“At the mouth of the White River the party divided, and the Williams family were separated and carried off in various directions. Eunice, the youngest daughter, about eight years old, was handed over by the Indians to the mission at St. Louis on their arrival there, and although many efforts were made on the part of the Governor, who had purchased and befriended Williams, to ransom her, the Jesuits flatly refused to give her up. On one occasion he went himself with the minister to St. Louis. This time the Jesuits, whose authority within their mission seemed almost to override that of the Governor himself, yielded so far as to allow the father to see his daughter, on condition that he spoke to no other English prisoner. He spoke to her for an hour, exhorting her never to forget her catechism, which she had learned by rote. The Governor and his wife afterwards did all in their power to procure her ransom, but of no avail.

“‘She is there still,’ writes Williams two years later, ‘and has forgotten to speak English.’ What grieved him still more, Eunice had forgotten her catechism.” But now we come to this strange transformation, unprecedented, we think, which made an Indian squaw out of a white woman. “Eunice, reared among Indian children, learned their language and forgot her own; she lived in a wigwam of the Caughnawagas, forgot her catechism, was baptized in the Roman Catholic faith, and in due time married an Indian of the tribe, who henceforth called himself Williams. Thus her hybrid children bore her family name.



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“Many years after, in 1740, she came, with her husband, to visit her relatives at Deerfield, dressed as a squaw and wrapped in an Indian blanket. Nothing would induce her to stay, though she was persuaded on one occasion to put on a civilized dress and go to church, after which she impatiently discarded her gown and resumed her blanket.”

Could a sadder instance of degeneration be written in the annals of the human family? “She was kindly treated by her relatives, and no effort was made to detain her. She came again the following year, bringing two of her children, and twice afterwards she repeated the visit. She and her husband were offered land if they would remain, but she positively refused, saying it would endanger her soul. She lived to a great age, a squaw to the last. One of her grandsons became a missionary to the Indians of Green Bay, Wisconsin.”

This is one of the most drastic instances of a woman’s devotion to husband, and mother love for children driving her back to the forest of her ancestors, and making her sacrifice all that her race had gained for her during thousands of years. Thus the most natural and primitive instincts of the human race will prevail against all our arts, science and accomplishments.

THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE

Through the Microscope

Life is full of impossibilities.

After all it is not money we want so much as something to do.

Every man should have an accomplishment of some kind.

Some music is like a jumble of misplaced notes.

If you have reached forty and have done nothing, get busy.

We sometimes lose dollars by being too careful with our cents.

We should try to arrange ourselves so that we will appear as plausible as possible to posterity.

We must have something to worry about or we will become stagnant.

Music should be rendered slowly and softly so that each note may have time to tell its story before the next one comes on the stage.



When we are young our time is all present. When we are old there is no present, but our time becomes the aggregate days and years.

We sometimes get into trouble trying to keep out of it.

It is not what we would *like* to do, but what we *can* do.

Let us take our medicine philosophically.

A dollar looks larger going out than it does coming in.

What is that we see falling like grain before the reaper? It is the days, and the weeks, and the months, and the years.

Every dog wonders why the other dog was born.

We are so constituted in temperament that one may love what the other hates.

A face is like a song, it has to be learned to be thoroughly appreciated. You have to acquire a taste for it, and when it is once memorized it is never forgotten.



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Most of our best words are derived from dead, heathen languages.

If you have married the wrong man, or the wrong woman, cheer up and be a philosopher over it. Philosophy is a good substitute for love if properly applied.

If you do not go about sniffing the air you will not find so many obnoxious odors.

If you have a mental wound of any kind, do not mind; time, the great healer, will cure it.

We despise the ancient heathen, yet in some cases we have risen from his ashes.

A woman dresses for appearance, not for comfort.

An ounce of domestic harmony is worth a ton of gold.

We should adjust ourselves as much as possible to circumstances.

It is better to be a dummy than to be a gossip.

Every man thinks *his* dog is an angel.

It is not always the one who can afford it who keeps the hired servant.

Since we can grow a new finger nail, why cannot we grow a new finger?

The mouse is destructive only from man's point of view.

When a man reaches forty he usually settles down to make the best of things.

Sometimes we are called cranks because we will not be sat upon.

The passing of time so quickly would not be so regrettable were life not so short.

A good book has no ending.

It is nothing to win a girl if you do not win her love also.

The passing of time so quickly takes the pleasure out of everything.

If you are popular, anything you say will rise into the air like a Zeppelin. If you are unpopular anything you say or do will sink into the ocean of oblivion like a Titanic.

It is a pity we have to do so much to get so little.

It sometimes pays to accept a few cents on the dollar and let it go at that.



Sometimes men become so parasitical to their occupation that, were they to lose it, they would drown.

“Help ye one another.” It pays.

Our mistakes keep us perpetually on the convalescence.

Woman is equal to man—sometimes more than equal.

While the years are with you freeze on to them as tightly as ever you can.

The “Give-in-to-nothing-or-nobody-for-anything” spirit nurses a great deal of evil.

It takes forty years for a man to become a philosopher. Some never graduate.

Our generation is to be pitied. It is living in the most extravagant age the world has ever known.

When the church does not ameliorate the objectionable dispositions of its adherents, it has failed in its mission.

It is diplomacy to be on friendly terms with all men.

Politics are sometimes dangerous things.

Be cheerful under all circumstances.

The human race has mounted a treadmill which it must tread or perish.

The strenuous industries of this world are man’s unconscious efforts to preserve his increasing numbers from annihilation.



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Courtesy in business is the best policy.

It takes three men's wages to sustain one family in an up-to-date fashion.

Under the circumstances, it is almost necessary to be greedy and grasping.

To be perfectly healthy we should adopt the exercises followed by our ancestors in climbing among the trees.

It is not how much you can do or how quick you get through it, but the care that you take and how well you can do it.

It is not the gift but the giving.

It is quality, not quantity, that counts.

Do not measure a person's length by your personal prejudices.

The man who never had an enemy is too good for this world.

"You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink." You can send a boy to college, but you cannot make him think.

The dog hates the cat, and the cat hates the dog, but when they are friends there are no truer ones.

Just take the world as it is; take things as to be had. Your friends may not be quite so good, your foes not quite so bad.

It is the aggregate that counts.

The almighty dollar is getting smaller every day.

It is fashionable to be lazy.

Money is man's passport through the world.

The one who is most jealous is the one who is least in love.

Poetry is something that was written by someone who is dead.

Life is one thing after another—getting in between man and his money.

Some men are so small that they could easily go through the eye of a needle.

Often the man who is the most mean in buying is the most extortionate in selling.



Some husbands have to prove their love by sending their wives off for a month's holiday every six weeks.

The cat is one of the most cleanly of animals, yet she has never been known to take a bath.

"It is an ill wind," *etc.* The harder the times become to others, the better they become to the sheriff.

Germany wants to reap where she has not sown.

Misery likes company. It is consolation to know that everybody else is hard up during these hard times.

In our life struggle we are obliged to sacrifice many of our pet ambitions.

If a person is not naturally inclined he cannot be influenced by argument.

When the war is over it will be an easy matter to estimate the German casualties. She had about sixty-five millions.

The present seems to be a thing of the past.

An honorable defeat is more commendable than an empty triumph.

One half of the war in Europe does not know what the other half is doing.

Sometimes finance gets men into positions for which they are not qualified.

We must abandon that ancient superstition that a dollar has any financial value.

Where a cat and a canary are brought up together, the cat ultimately gets the canary.



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If a man does not support his country during the war, what can he expect after the war is over?

There is not a misunderstanding but that can be adjusted amicably if it is gone about in the right spirit.

Your business is not the only important one.

It is a pity the cat would not always remain a kitten.

With the bank man it is more a matter of figures than it is of dollars.

To man, money is like a train going into a tunnel. It goes in at one end and out at the other, and leaves nothing.

Never judge a person's way by what the other people say.

There are only two sides to business: what I.O.U. and what U.O.I.

Where there is abundance there is likely to be waste and lack of economy.

A one dollar contra is often used to stave off a hundred dollar account.

"Every crow thinks that *its* bird is a white one," and every man thinks that *his* wife is the right one.

The hieroglyphic signature is often taken as a sign of perfect commercial attainment.

Some people give and take; others are all take.

Blessed is the man who has no family, for he shall inherit wealth.

Unlucky is the man who has children, for verily I say unto you, they keep him broke.

The good Samaritan who lends his friend a dollar, sometimes loses both the friend and the dollar.

The poorer a man the greater his misfortunes.

A great many children go to school to learn to read novels.

It takes as long to become a man as it does to become a philosopher.

Life is far too short judging by the time it takes to collect some of our accounts.



First, steel made millionaires, then railways, then oil, then pork; and now it is the automobile.

When two or three women are gathered together no man can tell when the end will be.

The well-fed philosopher is likely to have a well-fed philosophy; the under-fed one an emaciated variety.

Habitual melancholy is not always a mental derangement; it is very often a constitutional weakness.

Live and—let your indorser—learn.

The further you get into the world the less time you have for poetry, philosophy and sentiment.

The doctor is a man whom we don't want to do any business with.

You seldom meet an enthusiast who is not a crank also.

Individually, dimensions are determined by the proportions of the observer.

The modern attitude is a contempt for economy. Conservation is a bugbear.

Your neighbor is not a freak because he does not fall in line with your way of thinking.

When you have gained your equilibrium, you usually find that it was not worth while getting mad after all.

[Transcriber's note: In "Of the Foolhardy Expedition," there is extensive quoting of a text, and the quotes are not always matched. The punctuation was left as printed.]