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HANSEN

**A Novel of Canadianization**

By

Augustus Bridle

*Author of*  
*“Masques of Ottawa” and “Sons of Canada”*

TORONTO: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA LIMITED, AT ST. MARTIN'S HOUSE  
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## PREFACE

“Patriotism,” said Dr. Johnson, “is the last refuge of a scoundrel.” He was, perhaps, thinking of politicians. To the immigrant Canadian hereinafter known as Hansen, patriotism presented itself as the first privilege of a citizen in a strange land. As a youth in an Ontario saw-mill village he had venerated John A. Macdonald. As a man he paid homage to Laurier. As a citizen trailsman he learned that true love of a country so vast, variegated and visionary as Canada must be greater than politicians, parties, sects, provinces or even racial idioms.

Which of course was a cheerful delusion possible only to one who indulged also the belief that a man must love his adopted country better than his native land, and that a voluntary citizen of Canada can love it as deeply as a man born in Canada. The fact of eight million people trying to make a nation with 3,729,000 square miles of territory seemed to him to need more than an Act of Confederation, three transcontinental railways and elections. He recognized it as one of the great epics of the world, possible only to races such as the Anglo-Saxons, British and French who together projected the geographical paradox known as the British Empire. As these sea races had the Viking’s love of travel, so patriotic Canadians, whether native or immigrant, must have a love of adventure deeper than making plausible orations without faith, and tremendous fortunes without hard work—and as great as the energies which created old Quebec and old Ontario, the Hudson’s Bay Co. and the transcontinental railways.

The story has the form and method of a novel, and the character of a large sketch which it has been found convenient to divide into four Books. It contains many characters, all but two or three of whom are taken from life, and some of whom reappear at various intervals over a canvas purposely made large, because Canada itself with nine millions of people and ten parliaments is itself a vast sketch in the picture gallery of nations.

A. B.

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NOTE—*The real preface to HANSEN is to be found near the back of the book: a speech to a strange crowd on the prairie in which Hansen, who had formerly seen “men as trees walking”, saw Canada as a picture gallery of romantic peoples in a country infinitely more complex than the Ontario saw-mill settlements of the '80's. Jericho was a village on Canada Company land which because of difficult drainage remained a forest primeval for years after higher Ontario had been cleared up. Plainsville is an incomplete aspect of a real market town in that country; Kirkville a mere suggestion of a different type of Ontario town, which in an earlier draft of the book was given four chapters. The incidents regarding the University of Toronto are casual extra-mural glimpses of the celebrated class of '95, which contained the present Premier of Canada, the late Secretary of State for Ireland, four writers of fiction, one poet—and Henry Hooper.*

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# BOOK ONE

## SAW-MILL AND SCHOOL

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[Pg 3]

### CHAPTER I.

#### SWAMP-ELM AND CROSS-CUT SAW.

On a snow-driving night in the year 1887, a tall youth with a mop of spiky flaxen hair stood by a window in a log-walled bedroom with clay in the chinks. By the flare of an oil lamp he could see through the frost ferns, that for days had not melted, the fresh snow framing the pictures on the panes; the crystals gleaming and kaleidoscoping into filmy fabrics of indescribable delicacy; and to his attentive ear the swift swip of the driven snow on the window was like the music of a bird's wing.

Presently he turned to the handmade bed with its patchwork quilts and straw tick, coggled the lamp carefully on a chair and began to read again that marvellous description of snow crystals in Tyndall's *Forms of Water*. For a whole hour he read, jealous of each page that took him nearer the fascinating end; then one of the voices which since nine o'clock had been bumbling below, called from the farmer's bedroom, "Olaf! Put out that lamp an' go to bed."

"Yah," he called. "I will go now." Piously he stowed the precious book of Tyndall's New York Lectures on top of three other books under his bed. On the rag mat he drew off his brown duck smock and trousers, blew out the lamp and rolled into bed in his underwear. "I know I am told to come to bed in the dark," he mumbled. "But I will pay for the coal-oil. To-morrow—sawlogging, he says. Yah."

Stars, themselves a million crystals, spangled the roof of the world when that same peremptory voice banged up the staircase, "Olaf! Gid-up!"

"Yah. I will get up right away."

Almost feeling the vapour of his breath he creaked downstairs past the rooms of seven children, yanked on his cow-hide boots in the kitchen where a fire was roaring in the big stove, and followed Hiram Flater with his bobbing lantern through a foot of snow to the early chores at the low barn with the cow-shed behind. Breakfast before daybreak; all the Flaters, including the baby, were pulling on boots and swuzzling faces in the whitewashed, log-sided kitchen. Cornelia Flater, stout and cheery in a big apron, stood between the enormous top oven and a brown-oilclothed table decorated with nine mush-bowls. Hiram, whiskered, rawboned, grim, took the Bible from its shelf by the clock and turned to his book-mark. By the flare of the lamp, while two of the lesser Flaters disputed which should hold the tail of the cat among the family mitts under the stove, he began to read in the First Book of the Chronicles exactly where he had left off the evening before:

"And their brethren the sons of Merari stood on the left hand: Ethan the son of Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch, the son of Hashabiah——" down to the 66th verse where it seemed most convenient to break the suspense of so thrilling a story. The litanic family prayer which in fifteen years had emerged like a folksong in that household, went up again as they all knelt on the puncheon floor.

The clack and babble of breakfast came like a bedlam of haste after the solemn lento of the orisons. Mrs. Flater placidly dispensed mush, molasses, johnnycake, fried fat pork and powerful tea. Suddenly she glanced at the window and blew out the lamp. The family rose.

Long before she had packed five school lunches into three tin pails, Hiram and his hired youth were making tracks in the snow back the lane. To Hansen's alert blue eyes the new snow flung everything into bold relief—perky little barns and smoke-spired houses against the enormous, grim eternity of the hardwood bush holding up the sky; the low log house of Norah Higgins across the Four-Rod Road; the bleak-windowed, unpainted house of Eli Snell, widower, next to Flater's;

the white frame house of the Cusack large family next the south bush; and towards the blue-smoked saw-mill village whose black smokestack Hansen could see over the snow roof, other houses were dotted lonesome against the walls of the forest; concession lines that led heaven knew where into other clearings like this of the Four-Rod Road.

“Got all them wedges, Olaf?” came the hammering voice of his chief ahead, nearing the bush.

“Yah. I have two iron wedges and two wooden wedges; and the mawl. O.K.”

The sun just peering over the eastern bush gleamed on the long cross-cut saw hung over Hiram’s left shoulder and the two axes which they had ground yesterday. Wind was scattering the smokes. It pierced Hansen’s mitts and stung his ears. The last shrill squeal of the lean shotes scrimmaging at a frozen barnyard trough faded as the two bushmen trailed into the vast infinitude of the hardwood forest. North wind rolled like a heavenly sea over the beam-works of the great crotching tops—elms, oaks, maples, ashes, beeches, birches, hickories, basswoods, with their skins of grey, blue, silver, brown, deep red, black. Treading in the tracks of his boss, Hansen gazed at the grandeur of the first forest he had ever entered, stubbing his boots on many a snow-buried log, peering upward, inward, outward, listening to the chatter of squirrels, the cheep of chickadees, the tap of sapsuckers, the croon of a talking tree.

Far off, as though it had been miles by some sounding sea, a shrill whistle blew.

“Yah. That will be seven o’clock, Mr. Flater.”

They stopped under the roof of a huge swamp-elm up which the keen eyes of the bushman beaded on the trunk as he watched the wind play with the crotch. He laid the saw on a stump, stuck one axe in the snow, took off his mitts and his smock and stood by with his iron-wedged axe.

“Fetch three skids, Olaf,” he said tersely; and he swung the axe once, gashing grandly into the bark; thrice, blocking out a big chip.

“Skids!” murmured Olaf. “Skids?” He had never heard the word before. Hiram had a knack of supposing that a youth as tall as himself should know all that he knew. Blundering about to find anything resembling a “skid” Olaf stumbled over a heap of something loose. “Ah!” scooping off the snow with his mitts, “perhaps these are—skids?” Earnestly he drew forth a rough, flat, slabby thing longer than a man’s leg. He took it to the boss who had already carved a white notch in the doomed elm.

“Would that be—a skid, Mr. Flater? No?”

Hiram grounded his axe. “You spoopendyke! That’s a cull puncheon stave.”

“A cull—puncheon—stave!” repeated Olaf. “Oh!”

“Stave-makers culled ’em on me years ago.”

“Yah. And what do they do with the good ones?”

“Aw blazes! Make ’m into hogsheads fer blackstrap an’ rum down in Bermuda er somewheres. Skids, I said! Green saplin’ poles—that long—to bed the el’m when she falls.”

“Oh! That is different. Yah.” He spoke dreamily as he remembered now having seen on London docks such hogsheads rolling in under the masts of the Thames. He went chopping. Oh the mystery of a forest; of an empire; of a whole world, that now seemed to be built of wood!

With Hiram’s help he bedded the elm. Each took an end of the long saw. After which the triumph of the glorifying sun on a world of forest and snow lost all its magic to Olaf. His head was in a fever, his toes half frozen, his lungs almost bursting, and his ears thumped like triphammers as he backed inch by inch away from the ring of sawdust spurting on his right leg; pausing now and then as Hiram, objurgating the elm in good Methodist fashion for sitting back on the saw, drove in the wedges. Indescribable thirst sandpapered his mouth. He gobbled snow.

“Makes yeh drier’n ever,” grunted Hiram. “Here.” Trudging to a rotten log he gashed it open, scooped a small handful of fat, torpid ants from the wood and scrunched them. “Have a real drink?”

Olaf grinned. “Oh yah!” he gasped. “Like ducks! Yah—ha-ha-ha! Eating a drink! No tanks! What though—is it like?”

“Liddle like vingeder. Stays with yeh though. Grab that saw agin. Some son’v a seacook’ll git an el’m down ’fore we do. Gotcher second wind?”

“No. What is that—in this country?”

“You air—green! Time yeh had it.”

“Yah. I will get it soon. But when, Mr. Flater, will this tree begin to fall and—where shall we be to see it?”

“Gosh! Kingdom come if yeh don’t watch out. Oh you’ll hear gunshots up yunder ’fore she starts.”

“Yah. I have heard those—already!”

“Grannie’s ducks! Be half an hour yet. Never mind the gun noises. But say—when yeh hear me yell, yank out the saw, drop your end and go lickety split——”

“Hell bent fer ’lection!” said Olaf repeating some phrase he had heard.

“Back in yunder as fast and fur as yeh kin; becuz if that el’m starts t’lodge in that white oak and kicks back, she’ll shoot back o’ the stump like chain lightnin’. Come on now!”

Wild went the saw. The gap widened. No more wedgings now. Daylight in the crack. More shots in the crotch; twitchings of the top; then—a terrible, blood-curdling yell that sent Olaf flying for refuge as the whole top of the illimitable forest seemed to be coming off at once. Sprawling flat on his face in the snow amid a clump of bluebeeches, he heard the bombardment of battles at sea, felt rather than heard the final rebounding crash of the elm which, thanks to Hiram’s cunning, did not lodge and shoot back of the stump, but clutched a ghastly gap in the roof of the bush, sent seven trees drunkenly lurching, and flung up a smoke of snow.

After the last echo had died, Olaf dared to rise and look. Limbs were still dropping from that great hole in the roof. The gaunt, grey trunk of the fallen elm sloped up from the sawn stump to the chaos of its top—and here already, calm as a clock, was Hiram Flater with the two-foot nick in the handle of his axe, measuring the trunk into log lengths for the saw.

Bowing his back over a handle of the saw, pausing for a rest only when the saw pinched and Hiram drove in wedges to lift the elm. Olaf let his vagrant mind wander into tracts of speculation. Never a word from Hiram, except once to locate the bark of a distant fox or some other bushman crashing down elms, the youth pondered on snow crystals, sermons, hymns, girls, fights, corncake and blackstrap, and what that elm at three dollars a thousand would be worth at the mill; probably \$6.50, of which his share at \$3.50 a month would be about six cents. After which the Jericho whistle blew and Hiram said with intense and heart-searching eloquence, “Well, let’s go to dinner.”

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE JERICHO CORNER STORE.

Zachariah Peppercorn, freckly storekeeper, chuckled at the snow. So did Shanks the blacksmith who held the Jericho side-hold wrestling record, with a fighting championship on the side. So did Collop the harnessman, as English as ale. So did Rev. Fulton the Methodist preacher with five appointments on his circuit; and Sadie Barlow the young school-ma’am of eighteen with sixty-four pupils. So did the farmers. So did everybody come into new life over the snowfall, but of all people most, Peppercorn, chief owner of the store, principal shareholder in the stave-mill and part proprietor of the cheese factory.

“Snow’s the ticket, Bo!” he chirped to Boanerges Brown, his clerk, whose ambition was the pulpit. “Ev’ry load o’ logs means more staves at the mill, more cash at the store. Ho! There goes the Scandinavian beanpole Flater hired. Got one he-buck of a load.”

Olaf felt like a monument as he rose on the snow-painted logs and saw into the roaring millyard whose sheet-iron smokestack wobbled like a black palsied finger over streets of staves, steaming bolts, lumber, slabs, bark, sawdust and noise.

“Holy smoke! I wonder where to drive this?”

A dwarf giant with a cant-hook arose from the log-piles, bawling, “Whoa!”

“Oh! You are Mr. Tode Beech? I am Olaf Hansen, from Flater’s.”

“Yeh, Spikey. I know the team. G’loot! Wonder yeh didn’ upset. What the blazes—brown jug and oilcan on this chain?”

“Yah, Mrs. Flater wants molasses and kerosene.”

“Git that binderpole down, you bump on a log!”

“I won’t take any more bully talk!” shouted the youth after a brief silence. “I’m only seventeen, or I’d smack you!”

“All right, sonny,” in a milder tone. “Say, that nigh horse has kicked off his left hind shoe. Jeh pick it up?”

“Tied it on the spike of the hames,” grinned Olaf. “I’ll stop at the smith’s.”

“Ho! Bug outcher eyes on that other cant-hook, son. Ho-ope! Over she goes,” as the top log fell to its bunk with a thud; the two others followed and Olaf drove jingling away with his oilcan and his brown jug, first to the blacksmith’s where Shanks shook a red-hot horseshoe at him from behind a leather apron and said, “Tie up, skeesicks. Five teams ahead.”

“I’ll get fits for this,” mused Olaf as he piked away to the store with his jug and can. “Flater will be sure to say I had a fat time reading in the store.” Dark purple patches loomed up from the bush; the wind was high and cold; the mail-carrier drove up stiff with a fog-blown horse as Olaf, fishing a duebill from his pocket, stalked into the hot store, amid shelves of drygoods, gallows of leg boots, barrels of sugar, caddies of tea, boxes of raisins, cases of plug tobacco, spools of thread, overalls and caps, mitts and socks, crosscut saws and axes, ribbons and candysticks, pain-killers, cherry pectorals and vanillas: a telegraph clicking behind the postoffice wicket where Z. Peppercorn sorted and stamped letters.

“Where ju hail from?” asked the mail-man thawing his boots.

“From London, direct,” was the cautious response. “My father was from Norway; a ship’s captain—he was wrecked.”

“Got any folks in Ameriky?”

“One brother in Minnesota. Yah. He left me at Montreal. I told him I stay under old flag. Yah.”

“What’s the odds, what flag, long as yeh got three squares a day? Hustle y’r hooks, Zach. I’m late.”

The mail-bag was chucked over the counter and the store began to thicken with people of various accents to whom news, cheaper than goods, was sometimes quite as important. Peppercorn oscillated between the letter cage and the counters; Boanerges was busy with a new consignment of coal-oil in the shed; so Olaf settled down on a nail keg in an alcove of barrels near the overhang of boots and, as he clanked his can and jug at intervals in a vain effort to get attention, he gazed at the ambidextrous storekeeper whom from his economic patter he felt sure he never should learn to like.

“Axehandles—yep!” to a pair of pack-laden, raven-haired Chippewas who moccasined like glimmering ghosts of dusk into the store. “Baskits? Not on your tintype! Handles—twenty apiece. Good hickory? Hunkadory, I’ll take the lot. Tobac, Tom? Sure. Try a few yards turkey-red skirt fer the missis. Three yards? Cod-liver oil, two bottles. Skedaddle! Vamoose! Hullo Mag. Moss!” to a broadfaced beaming girl with a basket and a pink woollen “cloud” round her head. “Who’s buzzin’ you now since Ebbie went to Saginaw? Here’s a Saginaw letter. Blush now. Kck! Sleigh-bells, wedding-bells—eh parson?” as a hefty, whiskered man came in stamping and blowing, got his *Christian Guardian* and began to read at the stove.

“Well,” coughed the parson as he elevated a felt leg-boot to the stove damper, “I’m sure I shall be happy to tie the glad knot any day, so long as Maggie marries a good Christian and continues to help in the church.”

“That’s the ticket, sir,” winked Peppercorn. “Boom Jericho and the church rings the bell. Now Mag, what’s the order?”

“You’re a windy old gossip,” blushed Maggie. “Wonder you don’t go the whole hog and sell marriage licenses.”

“As lief do it as not,” turning up a lamp. “Hullo—well for the love o’ Mary Ann, here’s Ben Briggs from Cleveland, Ohio. Put ’er there, Ben. How’s tricks? Buyin’ el’m eh? That’s the ticket. Yankee dollars make the Canadian mare go. Farmers poor as a church mouse swallowed by a Job’s turkey. So Cleveland’s lively, eh? Gosh! Wish I c’d run a store there.”

A brief hiatus in the monologue permitted the beaver-collared Clevelander, whose home village was in Bruce county, Ont., to light a cigar and remark in a ponderous tromboning voice:

“The home town of John D. Rockefeller, sir, is humming like a top. Standard Oil, Zach, is goana be the biggest one-man

show on this planet. Why you can't sell that boy there," pointing to Olaf who had risen eager and slouchy over the barrels, "a gallon of A-1 oil without paying dividends to John D. Every lampwick in Ameriky——"

Peppercorn gave a very adenoidal cough.

"Say—listen," went on Briggs. "In less'n twenty years these bushwhackers'll quit sellin' el'm and start buyin' Standard Oil for cookstoves. I tell you, there aint much of anything in Canady except C.P.R. that Uncle Sam wunt get dividends on, and it wunt matter a hoop in Hades whether this country is high tariff or free trade, becuz he's got the world's greatest industrial system right now, and all Canady's smokestacks one on top o' the rest wouldn't be anything more to him than a totem-pole in British Columby. How do I know? Becuz I was born in Bruce county, Ont., starved out of it and hit the trail to prosperity."

"Wait!" snapped Olaf intensely, brandishing his oilcan. "What about electric energy and Niagara Falls? Yah. What about the factories and merchant ships of Great Britain? Yah. What about Canadians who come to stay in Canada? Yah-yah!"

Then came the cataract of amateur economics which for nights, loafing at the store to pick up news and views and impressions, Olaf had been damming up. He was right in the foam of it and could not stop when the door banged open and a helterskelter of little muffled-up children came storming in with a rosy-faced, sparkle-eyed girl in a Tam and feather and long ulster all pelted with snow.

"Hullo Sadie!" said Peppercorn softly as she shook hands with Briggs, who said the same. "Never mind the big noise—only a geeser from Norway."

She paused to look at Olaf who, the moment he caught the serious animation on her fine face, became as mum as the First Bookers Sadie was shepherding home in the storm.

"Please to excuse me, Miss?" he said huskily. "I am Olaf Hansen from Flater's. Mrs. Flater says often she wishes you would come—to see them again; and some day hopes to have organ for to play. Yah."

"Well, I'm sure it's nice to know you, Olaf. Perhaps you'll come to school some day?"

"Oh, that would be wonderful. Yah. But——"

"Letters, Sadie," interrupted Peppercorn. "Hull grist o' them"; and Briggs from Cleveland said, "Sadie, say, that song *Florence Nightingale* you sang here last winter—that's a pippin, aint it parson?"; and the preacher at the door said, "Yes, but Miss Barlow sings gospel songs best of all."

"Want anything?" asked Peppercorn gruffly of Olaf.

"A gallon of kerosene and a jug of molasses on Mrs. Flater's duebill for socks and mittens—yah, here it is," said Olaf slowly. "And please not to call me a geeser again—or anything like it. Geysers are Icelandic."

"Soy it agin an' soy it slow!" growled Peppercorn.

Olaf got his goods and trudged swiftly back to the blacksmith shop where Shanks, just closing up, said:

"Well spoopendyke, I sharpshod the team. That whatcheh wanted?"

"Oh holy smoke!" gasped Olaf. "I meant just one shoe. Yah. Oh dammit!"

Cold with apprehension about Flater and his wrath he drove away, hustled the team to the barn, put down hay and shoved in bed-straw for the horses, waited till he was sure supper was done and went in.

"No supper for me, thanks!" as the whole family hushed to his coming in. "Here is the oil and the molasses; also the newspaper."

Silently Hiram took the Plainsville *Reformer* and pretended to read while Cornelia put the children to bed. Olaf took a new sewing machine catalogue left by an agent that day and sat on the wood-box. Presently Hiram lighted a lantern and went out. Cornelia began to sew a shirt. Olaf observed her rather handsome face and her fresh polka dot dress as a sort of flower of the spotless white kitchen.

"I think you are marvellous!" he blurted. "Yah. I know he is mad. He can dock wages from me for the horseshoes and the lost load of hauling." He put the catalogue on the oilcloth by the lamp. "Did you buy the sewing-machine—no? Too bad! So much cost. So many——for clothes. Good-night!"

He took his lamp and went upstairs as Hiram came in, blew out the lantern and without taking down the bootjack as usual

said, "Kinda thought I heerd a fox barkin' in the lane." But that was only a preamble to a more conclusive statement. "Well fer a dunderhead that Olaf takes the cake." Olaf, surmising some such certificate of character, continued to read his precious Tyndall. "Bet he wuz readin' his head off in the store, same as he does drivin' on the road. Can't——"

Considering that the epigram he was about to utter was too valuable for Cornelia alone, he opened the staircase door and called, "Olaf! Fetch down them books."

Flushed and smiling, Olaf came down with four books which he laid on the table.

"Yeh can't drive a team right and read a book any more'n yeh c'n whistle an' chew a meal," elucidated Hiram.

Olaf folded his arms. "I have told Mrs. Flater you can dock me on wages for the shoes and the lost load of hauling," he repeated.

"You borried them books from Eli Snell, and yeh know what he is."

"Yah. The preacher calls him infidel; but he says the preacher is a humbug."

"Tt! Tt!" deprecated Cornelia.

Olaf repeated the titles as a kind of song:

"Tyndall's *Forms of Water*, about steam, frost, ice, snow crystals;

"Disraeli's *Speeches*, of a Jew who became Premier;

"Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*, to show that in the civilization of money the rich become richer and the poor become poorer."

"And what's the other one?" Hiram touched it as cautiously as though it had been a dead snake.

"*Descent of Man*, by Darwin; a theory that men descended from apes——"

"Mercy!" protested Cornelia; but Hiram reserved his own remarks till Olaf said, "And I do not believe it, any more than I do the myth about Adam in the Garden——" when he banged the table with his fist, flaring the lamp. Conscious that he had lost his Christian temper Hiram wound the clock.

"Aint you got a Bible, Olaf?" he asked in a fatherly way.

"Yah, and it is the greatest book in the world, even more than Shakespeare and Ibsen which I have not got; but I do not believe it is all the direct word of God."

A terrific tumult among the hens fortunately caused Hiram to grab his shotgun from the wall.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### A REVIVAL AND A DANCE.

The revival soon became a more exciting energy than the stave mill. Rev. Fulton with five preaching stations was a Methodist of action. Jericho was his cathedral church, of which Hiram Flater was chairman of the Quarterly Board.

"With a converted Jericho, Brother Flater, the whole circuit revives," he said after stabling his horse. He had come to talk plans. The front room was opened. The box stove roared up the pipe. Fresh-pinnied and Sunday-knickered children filled the red plush chairs and the sofa, blinking up at the perforated mottoes. Hiram wore his Sunday coat over his guernsey. Cornelia with the two oldest girls prepared supper. Rev. Fulton heavily rocked in one of those mounted rockers that antedated the Morris chair, and said, "Yes, and with a family like this all converted—ah! the dear old family album!" as Hiram, seldom at his best in even practical theology, handed over the plush-covered, tin-decorated treasure into which the newfangled tintype had begun to make its way. "Now children," as the family began to gather, "let's find the picture of father and mother before any of you were born. Ah! so that's Uncle Jabez, and Aunt Kate, and here's Cousin Jenny, and dear old Grandfather Flater when he first came to the bush and—now who are these, children?"

In the grand effort to identify each and every tintype and cabinet portrait, one of the copper-toed boots went under the

mounted rocker just as the parson rocked back, and the howling thereupon reached even to the haymow in the barn where Olaf, undecided as to whether he should go in to supper for a pastoral scrutiny, softly played his mouthorgan.

“Olaf!” came a shout. “Supper!” He went; changed his smock to his blue Sunday coat and took his place at the table where Cornelia in her simple brown wincey decked with epaulettes over tight, long sleeves shone with pride over a huge platter of saleratus biscuits, another of fried ham, and a lofty glass bowl of dark-hued quince from her cubbyhole cellar. He felt the parson focus upon him a severely benign gaze before he asked the blessing and plunged into the subject of the revival which was so much easier with Cornelia to fill up the gaps. Rev. Fulton always began at the roots of things. He analyzed the populace, first remarking that so many people had come to Jericho whose pictures as yet did not adorn family albums.

“Our young brother here for instance——”

Olaf felt a crumb of biscuit near his larynx and enormously coughed.

“And as we shall have tremendous crowds of all sorts of people seven nights a week as long as the snow lasts, I shall need an evangelist. Yes, a man from the Moody School; a wonderful young dramatic orator—has been doing marvellous work in Detroit——”

“Oh Christmas!” mumbled Olaf over a mouthful that made him sneeze; to cover his confusion he absently poured molasses on his ham and at length had to leave the table. Sneaking his cap and mitts he went to the barn where in the haymow he played on his mouthorgan *Captain Jinks* and *Come to My Arms, Norah Darling*. The moment he saw through the wall cracks the preacher coming behind Flater’s lantern he slid out to the puny strawstack and away with a sense of guilt to the Corners and the store where for an hour he listened to the holdforthings of Eli Snell on the virtues of a high tariff.

The revival broke on Sunday evening. Olaf in his logging togs went; he dare not stay at home or Hiram, thorough Covenanter once his mind was made up, would have sent him adrift for a job. Sleights with buffalo robes, patchwork quilts and pea-straw crammed the shed and lined the fence. The church was packed. Sadie Barlow, chief soloist on all public occasions, had impulsively lent the church her own little organ from the school. She sat on the platform, so tremendously ladylike and pretty, Olaf thought, with Maggie Moss who played the organ. Behind the lines of homespun, brown duck, woollen “clouds”, tams, turbans, girls’ buckled caps, here and there an old-country loom shawl and bonnet, Olaf sat with Tode Beech’s caucus of saw-mill “last-ditchers” on the bench and the wood pile in the box stove corner. Tode, with his plug of chewing tobacco, was there for a grand show; unshaven, thick, prognathous as a bull terrier, much of his time scanning Olaf who sat bolt upright, folded arms, hair spiking like flax-coloured quills, solemnly studious.

“Tode,” he said, before the Detroit evangelist came to his share of the climax, “these people are not such terrible sinners; they have too much hard work. You swear, and play poker, and drink whisky once a month without being drunk, but your cant-hook is——”

Tode scornfully spit down a crack. “Jiminy! wait till you hear Hi Flater pray, Spikey. You’ll see what a sinner you be.”

“But every day I do.”

“Nh-nh! Not like he ripsnorts at a revival.”

There was something Scandinavianly epic about Tode; still more obvious when Olaf, remarking that Maggie was fumbling the organ, heard him say, “You gossoon! she takes lessons from the blind organist and she plays *Mountain Belle Schottische* better’n he does. See?” Olaf vaguely realized then that Tode was occasionally “buzzing” Maggie.

The singing and the prayer before the sermon were gentle enough; *Almost Persuaded, Rescue the Perishing*, when for listening to the voice of Sadie over the crowd Olaf could not sing. Presently the evangelist, young, intense, clean-shaven, black hair brushed back in a mop, rose and leaned over the pulpit in a profound, penetrating silence. Suddenly the actor who had chosen the pulpit for a stage, thrice in a shuddering low voice repeated the phrase, “Seeking whom he may devour!” each time more slowly. With an index finger tracing a direct line to each pair of eyes he could focus, he drew a terrifying picture of the devil.

Olaf had some ancestral intimation of cobolds, gnomes, trolls and witches; but he had never heard of a universal underworld genie with horns, tail and hoofs capable of going about anywhere to destroy human souls. He had seen some of London dock life, but never supposed that even its spiritual degeneracy was due to a personal devil. The life of Jericho emerging from the forest to the farm was to him as yet a great epic, and most of its bushfaring, home-making folk

a sort of heroes. The evangelist's devil began to upset all this. The "Curse of Labour" consequent upon sin angered him, since most of the men and women he knew loved work as much as life. The God of the evangelist was even less intelligible to him than such legendary Norse deities as Odin and Thor with all their semi-human satellites. He had read once a poem about a pagan Olaf who became a Christian, but not through fear of either a destructive Devil or of an implacable God who hated sin while he loved the sinner.

But at least the hymns were simple. *Revive us Again* and *Arise My Soul*, how they shook the crowd! To the amusement of his fellow-sinners at the door Olaf sang these, and many others as good, not without sincerity.

Hiram Flater's almost nightly prayer near the climax of the service quite justified Tode's prediction. He always began ominous and low, often with the verse, "Plunged in a gulf of dark despair, we wretched sinners lay," after which the voice rising in pitch, tempo and fury, lost itself in a foam of traditional words, and with his gnarly hands on the back of a seat he shook it as though Satan himself were underneath. Always next day in the bush with Hiram after such a prayer, Olaf wondered how it could be the same man.

The simple hymns sung by Sadie Barlow were a transition to the beautiful. Sadie played her own organ as she sang. She had a Jenny Lind element of pure lyric beauty and a natural gift for making every word vitally interesting. When she sang *I am Coming, Lord, Then we'll Sing the New Song*, and *Beulah Land*, tears and smiles came to Jericho; and Olaf realized that she was in a world more beautiful than he felt his to be.

One night Maggie Moss came down to the gang at the stove. To Olaf she seemed a lovely but somewhat fearsome creature of salvation as she knelt beside two of the mill-men. Presently with nerve-wracking courage she came to Tode, when Olaf rose, took his cap and left the church. Next day Hiram Flater was taciturnly vindictive with dyspepsia. It seemed strange to him that when such a roystering sinner as Tode Beech could go forward, a youth whose greatest visible sin was reading queer books should be so stubborn.

Before the revival was done a dance was held in the Irish settlement. Olaf had once spent a vagrant Sabbath in this Little Dublin not far from Dromley on the Canada Southern; much impressed with some large, broad houses and with what scant Romish ceremonial he had observed at the little church. Without a word he stole away on a revival night and went. Not having been invited, he stood on the road to listen. Old tunes he had heard whistled at the Jericho mill, *Irish Washerwoman*, *Money Musk*, *Devil's Dream*, *Peekaboo*, were now rapturous melodic lines from a rhapsodic fiddle whose bardic motions he could see on a table through a window; enchanted glimpses of ribbons, sashes, bright faces, balloonlike swaying skirts, arms aloft, to the romp and thump of the floor in the stepdance and the swing and the "grand right and left" and the patter of the "calling off". Slight snow fluttered across the windows; horses snorted in the barn; an open door let out a clang of merriment, some wild words, a curse or two, as a couple of men came out the lane talking about a girl.

What happened on the road Olaf himself told his boss next morning when Hiram accusingly asked him at the barn who had given him the bad black eye.

"Oh! Kearney the agent of station at Dromley," going on to describe the fight.

"Why didn't yeh scat fer home soon as the row started? Twuzn't your fight. Like fighting? Eh?"

"Naw! I was scared and was going away when Kearney calls me a gatepost to be holding up a gate, so I got mad to see the scrap on the road——"

"Bad egg, that Kearney."

"No, he only fights too much and gets jealous of pretty girls to own them. But he lost temper and kicked Tom Finn at the stomach to knock out his wind; so I told him the girl—Bella Donahue she is called, a black-haired one that drives sometimes to Jericho in a layback cutter—yah, that's the one—I said she would send him to ballyhoo for that kick, and he came at me hell bent fer 'lection—yah—till I tied him in a knot—so!"

Olaf illustrated his point by seizing Hiram who shook him off.

"Ah! So you would have me—to pray for such a kicker and not wallop him, by jiminy! At my age, would you?"

"Oh, mebbe yeh done right, Olaf. But yeh've got into a pickle in a place'v sin. So——"

"So I will be converted now like all the rest," blinked Olaf with his good eye. "Yah. Now I have found a real black sin of my own, I will do what others do to lose it. Yah! I will go forward!"

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## CHAPTER IV.

### SPLITTING FENCE RAILS.

Olaf's conversion, perhaps as sincere if not so emotional as many of the others, at least gave him a new sense of belonging to the community and a somewhat gentler experience with Hiram teaching him bushcraft. He began to understand this hard-handed technician who made axe-handles from young second-growth hickories, travoys from birch trees, built his own bob-sleighs from young oak, made his own flails with which he threshed beans when not using the horses to trample them out, and in all things was as expert on the farm as Cornelia his wife was in the technique of the home. Religion had been a wonderful thing for Hiram who in his pre-conversion days had been a rough-fisted man of terrible temper and many fights. The temper seemed to find expression now in his church prayers.

A sharp contrast to Hiram was his next neighbour, Eli Snell, who lived alone—his wife being dead and his two sons in Michigan—and never went to church; the lord of Slapdash and practical philosophy who had lent Olaf the books. Eli fascinated Olaf because of his knowledge and his cheerfulness, though his pronunciation—so much like a Yankee's—and his use of such ejaculations as "I swan!" rather puzzled the youth.

Eli dearly loved two rails in any fence; the top one and the third one down. Seated thus, he was pleased with the momentum of the world and all that therein is, except work. He had ceased to read the Bible because so much of it was the story of people who had such trouble getting to heaven. He preferred the daily Conservative newspaper from Toronto because it gave him an excuse to go at least four evenings a week to the corner store where he was the chief holdforth on all subjects from Zulus to boll weevil. His trousers were commonly held up by wooden skewers in his braces, but he had distinguished mutton-chop whiskers and a resonant baritone voice.

One fine spring forenoon when Hiram Flater was away to the lake-bank log yards to watch how the scalers of Mr. Ben Briggs would cheat him in culling, Eli casually ploughing, heaved himself to the line fence to get a better view of the diligent Olaf battering out new rails for the fresh cornfield recently logged up.

"Lovely spell o' weather?" he bawled when the youth paused to survey the mess he had made of a black-ash rail-cut.

Olaf nodded and went mawling at the wedges.

"See the woman's bilin' sof' soap an' smokin' the pork in the button-wood gum," tromboned Eli again.

Again Olaf nodded and spoiled another rail.

Eli took a firmer foot-hold on the third rail down.

"Cal'late to git them rails all split 'fore Hi. comes home?"

This question was too pungent to be ignored. Olaf came across.

"Mr. Snell," he said breathily, "I can't split rails—worth shucks."

He was yet somewhat conscious of his effort to use the bushman vernacular, a change which naturally began with the slang elements, a flattening of the A's and such abbreviations as "cal'late", "p'rade" and "'preciate". In these reforms, like most imitators, he sometimes bettered his instruction, though he often found himself puzzled as to why he should use them at all.

"But I want to learn, Mr. Snell. I 'preciate all Hiram's done to help me."

"Wall, I guess yeh wunt be an easy mark like some farmers—specially Grits that donno beans about the tariff. Hiram's easy. Never reads a line excep' the *Weekly Reformer* an' the Bible. No wonder he had yeh tote back that Darwin. Ho-hum! Guess he'll be reeve o' the township when I'm in the poorhouse."

"Such a man to work! So is she—I mean a woman. Cornelia is having a bee to-day; a busy bee—a quilting bee; those patchworks."

A made-in-Jericho patchwork quilt was a natural basis to Eli for an argument against reciprocity, which Olaf was delighted to hear him begin.

“Oh yeh,” he admitted, “I wuz a free trader at your age, same I jined the church. Me—yeh, howling Methodist; wa’nt any Anglican church here or I’d been a bishopite. Spouse I’ll end up bein’ a Mick and a Radical. At present Tories, Grits an’ peasoups are ’bout all we have to run elections.”

“What’s a peasoup—oh, I know—Quebec.”

“Yeh. Li’ble to be Grit here and Tory hereafter. Solid Que-bee is one way o’ makin’ election sure. This noo leader Wilfrid Laurier is likely to play hob with Jawn A. down there. But it’ll take a lot o’ peasoup Grit votes to upset the National Policy now. Party gits in awn hard times an’ stays in awn hope. Jawn A. promised smokestacks. Yeh. Waal, Moses promised the Israelites Canaan, and it took ’em forty years to arrive. Give the N. P. a chance. Maybe she’s a humbug; but tryin’ to build prosperity an’ patriotism awn free trade ’cause they have it in England is a pure halloocination. Them Commercial Unionists think they’re an asset to the Grits. I swan! Jawn A.’ll have all their hides awn the barn door this election an’ the tightest stretched one o’ the lot’ll be Professor Goldwin Smith.”

All through this alluring labyrinth of political philosophy Olaf’s blue eyes sparkled like diamonds. He had never heard Eli, dangling his boots from a counter, expound so much in so few words, and told him so.

“I’ve heard you mention Goldwin Smith before, Mr. Snell. Have you got his book *Canada and the Canadian Question*?”

“Yeh.” Eli got down to disentangle his browsing team from the harness. “It’s a slicker piece o’ jugglin’ than *Progress and Poverty*.”

“I’d like to borry it—kin I?”

Olaf’s use of “kin” rather amused Eli. “You kin,” he said. “’Twunt undermine y’r morals anyhow, and if it hurts y’r patriotism, yeh can’t have as much as a clear Grit; in which case the Lord help yeh!”

With a bland chuckle Eli chirped up his sleepy horses. Olaf, conscious that he had wasted some of Hiram Flater’s time for which he was paid about twelve cents a day and his board, went spoiling more rails with terrible energy. He yearned to see the fence go up along the new ditch, the stumps come out, the plough go in, the new corn start. Bob-whites whistled merrily. After that talk with Eli, life was wonderful.

Sharp at twelve by the Jericho whistle Cornelia pounded a pan to call dinner. He went up, turned out the horses—forgetting to put the poke on the breachy one. At dinner in reply to Cornelia’s question about the rails he said vaguely, “Oh middlin’.” Hot from baking for the quilt-bee and her numerous excursions to the soap kettle, she was perfectly serene.

“I think you are wonderful,” he said.

Her quilt frames were set in the front room.

“Olaf,” she said quietly, “he’ll be late getting back after the barn-raising on the shore, and maybe angry about the cheating on the logs. You’d best get the rails all done, if yeh kin.”

Olaf wondered if the terrifying Flater of the revival prayers would rise again. He mumbled a reply; but, seized of a new idea all his own for the afternoon’s work to atone for the wasted forenoon, he went to get the horses. The breachy one had jumped into the new clover and was rather full. As quietly as possible in his excitement of doing a thing on his own order, he harnessed the team, found the log-chain and managed to get the outfit back the lane to the new stump field.

“More I split rails the worse I spoil ’em,” he said as he began to chop at the roots of a stump. “Anyhow I kin pull stumps.”

The field! He had knelt in the mud to help log it and ditch it; the first field he had ever helped to create—years hence he might come back to see it waving with crop. Hiram should at least credit him with initiative in changing his job. There would be stories to tell of the raising on the shore, of the fight between Tode Beech and Bob Shanks the blacksmith with the raising-gang for a gallery. To-morrow, pleased at the new quilts, forgetting his bamboozlement by Briggs over the log-culls, Hiram would behold his hireling’s work, angry at the spoiled rails, pleased over the stumping.

Thus Olaf argued as he sweat, braces down, shirt unbuttoned behind—those strange shirts with no buttons in front—chopped and heaved and sweat into the comedy of the afternoon; which years later he recalled in its bald outlines, thus:

Broke a chain and a bellyband, jerking the team on the seesaw;

Watched the buggies drive in to the quilting bee;

Nigh horse took the colic from new clover and overheating;

Heard the hollow pounding of the Chippewa basket-makers at the black ash in the bush;

Pulled the harness from the sick horse and rolled him over and over;

Fired one heap of stumps and dry-brule;

Heard the he-yo-o-hee! of the lake shore raising;

Frantic at the spasms of the bloated horse, he rushed to the Chippewa camp to see what Bill Dodge would prescribe as medicine;

Lost in admiration of the summer bush, birds, trilliums, he gave up the chase and went back at dusk to the horse—where he found Hiram kneading the brute's under parts with a handspike.

To Olaf's amazement, even after a hectic confession of his manifold sins, he was mercifully mild.

"That's his Christianity!" said Olaf to himself. Meekly as the sick horse rose and shook himself, he put on the harness. As they went up the lane he made bold to ask Hiram about the fight.

"Nip an' tuck," said Hiram, pausing in his humming of *Revive us Again*. "Bob gave Tode a bad face on the sluggin' but Tode got him on the clinch. Oh yes, they both jined the church, but this was an old score and they had to settle it. They'll be good from now on. Hope so."

Relieved that Tode had rather vindicated the cant-hook over the sledgehammer, Olaf dared to ask about the culling of the logs.

"Best I ever had!" said Hiram after he had given the invalid horse a bottle of something from the stable-girth. "Never docked me fer a single wind-check, and we had no dozy butts."

"No, we sawed them all off good," recollected Olaf, who now began to fathom the mildness of his boss.

Days afterwards, he got a plausible explanation from Eli Snell who made it his usual business to co-ordinate causes in the community.

"Tell yeh, son, what I know about that. It's a petticoat."

"Petticoat!" scorned Olaf. "See any green?"

"Easy," said Eli laconically. "Boss Briggs tuk a shine to the schoolmarm's voice. Schoolmarm thinks you're a white-haired boy; stumps Briggs to give Hi as good a cull as possible——"

He paused to watch the dawn of a new idea in his victim.

"Women start bein' cute when they're young, sonny. That gal cal'lated you might stand a better chance collectin' y'r wages from Hiram if he got a good cull on the logs. Eh?" He chuckled like a crow. "Say, if I wuz Jawn A. I'd have a woman like that in my Cabinet."

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## CHAPTER V.

### DOMINION DAY CELEBRATION.

From his seventeen dollars on account of wages Olaf spent seven dollars and a half for clothes to wear at the Dominion Day celebration. Peppercorn, outfitter, was pleased to shew him all goods.

"Spring-bottom pants all the go now, boss. Donno as I've got any your len'th though."

"Mrs. Flater cannot len'then those kind," said Olaf, critically inspecting the nautical flanges of the balloon style which in the Jericho district preceded the skintight variety of trousers. "But I can let down the suspenders. Yah—I want also a hat."

“Christie er sof’ felt? Nice line here.”

Olaf chose a round grey felt with a blue band.

“Be O.K. when yeh catcher hair. Bill Hall’s got a Saturday evening barber shop right back o’ the store.”

“Please don’t be so—darn personal!” said Olaf reddening.

“Kck! Well, how ’bout a tie then?”

Cravats were becoming the vogue in Jericho, though some of the young men wore little bows tucked under the collars. With much interest Olaf had observed these varying modes. He chose a red cravat.

“Two cellaloid collars—that will be all.”

“Try a box o’ papers,” advised Peppercorn. “Got the Comet here; ten in a box—fifteen cents. Saves washin’ cellaloids.”

“Cellaloids will do. I kin wash them.”

“How ’bout a Waterbury watch? Dollar; garanteed——”

“Yah—to go when I go,” grunted Olaf. “No, it is too cheap. How much all will that be?”

Peppercorn totted up the items mentally observing that Hansen had not “beat him down a copper; stubborn, stuck-up—that’s why.”

“Be a big doings Dominion Day, I guess,” solemnly handing over the money.

“Should’ve been Twenty-Fourth. More of a national——”

“Much less!” thundered Olaf who at once gave an exposition of Confederation, a steel engraving of the Fathers of which Peppercorn had in his own parlour.

“Queen’s Birthday aint celebrated in England like ’tis here——nuthin’ like Guy Fawkes Day,” he wound up. “So you will be chairman of sports committee, eh?”, seeing that the merchant disliked his remarks.

“Swat the boys say. You entering?”

“Yah. The pole vaulting only. I practise every evenin’ on to Flater’s cow shed behind the barn.”

Olaf took his parcel, after some delay in getting it tied up, and as a result of some cogitation decided to have his hair cut. He emerged from Bill Hall’s tonsorial parlour that evening with a close clip that made him wish the sun would not rise till the hair grew.

On the afternoon of the grand day Hiram in green-black tail coat and white shirt, Cornelia in her remade blue wedding silk, and all the children in many colours, starched, shining, perky and be-ribboned, went in the three-seat democrat. Olaf walked, conscious that his cravat was very red, his navy-blue coat much too short, his springbottoms vast and his cowhide, well-polished boots enormous. Grandiosely he hippety-hopped along the fence-corners like a crane about to fly; whistling, abandoned and gay; waving his blue-banded felt hat at the people in the dusty rigs, wondering at all the fine buggies and lap-spreads and fly-nets that came from the lake shore way.

The celebration was to be in three parts; speeches, band music and supper in the hickory grove; sports on the timothy meadow round which at his own expense Peppercorn had scraped a half-mile race track; concert at night in the cheese factory adjacent to both. A hundred horses were tied on the rear edge of the grove on the front of which centring on the platform and the long tables on both sides were assembled the fashion, manhood and beauty of Jericholand. From the crotch of a young maple Olaf saw what to him was an amazing spectacle varying in patterns of beauty as the light rippled over the crowd. Ribboned and flowery hats, muslins, prints, calicoes, gingham, plain bonnets, old-fashioned shawls, bustles and sweeping skirts, calfskin leg boots and springbottom trousers, flaming cravats and swanking silver-plated chains—of all young blades at that picnic he was least like a dude.

“Holy Mike! you air certainly one chromo,” bawled Tode Beech strolling past, hefty in a striped set of hand-me-downs, cockwise hat and enormous chain hung with a huge locket. “Guess you’ll have a picnic finding any girl to take to the concert. Don’t spose y’ve got the price anyhow.”

“Aw, watch my smoke!” advised Olaf. “Who’s buzzin’ Mag now? Yah!”

Tode skedaddled away to the baseball game, Jericho vs. Irishtown. Women near a smoking stove, captained by Cornelia

in her pink pinafore, bustled about the long tables with white cloths, orange lilies, sweet-williams and clattering dishes. The Chippewa band in blue uniforms from Big Island near Belcourt filed up to the stage and played *The Maple Leaf*, the hoopa-horn solemnly chopping the tune into staccato measures. The pop and ginger-beer booths livened up. Maggie Moss in white muslin and a floral hat as big as a small parasol swept up to one of them with Rom Cusack, whose top buggy was yet unpaid for and whose faith in the church was still unshaken; Tode, since the fight with the blacksmith, having fallen from grace in both courtship and religion. Bella Donahue in green and white floated across the open with Phil Kearney the young station agent who had given Olaf the black eye at the dance. There went plaided Mary Melrose from Logieville, with her beau, and blue-skirted Rosa Lafleur from Belcourt with hers. But Olaf, dreading to exhibit his clothes, dare not come down from the tree. Eli Snell came stalking past, hands joined at his back, minus collar and tie. Grooming his mutton-chop whiskers he glanced up and said, "Waal I swan! you playin' Zaccheus? Haint seen the schoolmarm yet," uncannily reading the youth's thought. "She was up to Logieville over night. Oh, likely she'll be here with one o' them blind organists. Anyhow she's singin' at the concert. Doc. Strang's chairman. Waal, he'll make 'em laff. Hope he shoots some good jokes in his speech this afternoon, fer I haint got the price'v a ticket. I swan! here they come now."

Rev. Fulton in long black "seersucker" came on stage with the minister from Logieville and a huge-shouldered, mystical sort of young man with flowing black hair, looking like an Indian chief. Dr. Strang had driven his team from Marlborough, a nice little town twelve miles east. A noted Liberal orator, he was official chairman of tea-meetings and anniversaries. Rev. Fulton confined his lengthy remarks to complimenting everybody on good looks, fine girls, prosperous farms and large families. Rev. Ibbetson drew a dry but engaging picture of greater Jericho and gave a sketch of the Fathers of Confederation. The Chippewa band played earnestly.

Then the chairman introduced Dr. Strang. A smile dawned over the crowd.

"Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen," came the musical glib voice, "the presence of two preachers on this platform reminds me of the man who, about to be hanged, shook hands with the turnkey, the sheriff and the hangman and turning to the minister said, 'I'll see you later.'"

As Olaf listening, slid down the tree, the orator sailed away into a seductive analysis of the character of John A. Macdonald whom for humour he compared to Lincoln, for political wisdom and looks to Disraeli, and for tactics to Machiavelli. Every unfamiliar character he made profoundly interesting by some simple story. He wound up with a prophetic picture of the country—which some day he hoped to represent in Parliament—as one of the bright stars in the constellation of a great bilingual Canada, loyal to Great Britain, friendly to the land of "that great Englishman George Washington", and an example to the whole British Empire of a self-governing little people in a huge land whose Indians even—turning to the band—could loyally play *The Maple Leaf* and *God Save the King*.

The big drum led the applause. The crowd swung away to the timothy meadow where Peppercorn, with pale Boanerges as his aide, was entering late contestants, directing judges, starters and prize-givings. Olaf observed the growing furore in a sort of dream. He scarcely noticed who won the hundred-yard, the broad and high jumps, the sledge-hammer throws, the tug-of-war, or what Jericho might be doing to Irishtown in baseball. It was all a vast cosmic excitement; pagan, historic, splendid and rather devilish. The cheers seemed like the discordant babel of the ages. Peppercorn's nimble tongue apparently kept him from being tarred and feathered on behalf of judges, starters and referees. War to the hilt seemed to be on between all the race settlements. Fracas and fights developed in almost every caucus that surged round the winners. Youths who had been converted in the revival must have backslidden into profanity. How any event was sanely judged or any award righteously made Olaf could not make out. Even Dr. Strang's speech had become a blur with the sudden arrival of Miss Barlow in a flower-figured frock, benign hat and pretty blue parasol, in company with two merry blind gentlemen. Olaf watched that bobbing blue parasol as she cheered each contestant in the pole vaulting, heard her scream as cat-like Kearney out-vaulted all others by a peg and then,

"Hansen! Olaf Hansen!" piped Boanerges Brown.

What he did for the next few minutes seemed part of a splendid nightmare; himself on the campus, hat, coat, boots off; running with the pole, rising once—over Kearney's mark; again, a peg higher—the rest was blind bedlam as he grabbed his clothes and ran back to the grove; and here came Tode Beech like a young elephant through the underbrush.

"You won that Spikey, yeh gossoon, but yeh lost it by a fluke. Them dang spring-bottom pants——"

"One button!" gasped Olaf. "It came off."

"Yeh, and y'r pant leg slumped an' ketched the bar. You gotta do that over."

“Nah! They don’t want me to win—not that crowd. I’ll go—oh gosh! go home.”

“Looka here, Spikey—know what I believe?”

“No, and I don’t care. What——?”

“Watch my smoke. Tell yeh later.”

Tode rolled away, found a French girl for supper and the concert; presently at one of the tables he saw Olaf talking with great gusto and quite elegant language about the evening concert to Miss Barlow and Dr. Strang.

“The stuckupstart!” he muttered. “Hey Rosie—watch me take ’im down a notch fer talkin’ that dood language.”

Stealthily Tode abstracted a piece of Mrs. Flater’s jellycake from a plate and slipped it into one of Olaf’s side pockets. As soon as he saw enough people looking he pulled it out again.

“H-ho!” he roared. “Here’s the johmie that takes the cake—an’ by the jumpin’ geeswax! he earned it. He won that pole vault, too.”

“At’s all right, Spikey,” he said an hour later as he hustled Rosa away with the crowd from the debris of the table to the festive cheese factory for the concert. “Jist a liddle joke.”

“Take it from you Tode—nobody else.”

“Know what I believe about that button, Spikey?”

“No, yeh started to say it an hour ago.”

“Well, between you an’ me an’ the gatepost—Zach Peppercorn loosened that button on purpose when he sold yeh the pants. Haw-haw-haw!”

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## CHAPTER VI.

### THREE-MASTER AT PORT SAND.

Norah Higgins, two lots down the Four-Rod, smoked a black stub of a clay pipe on her hewn porch and said to Eli Snell leaning over the gate where the old-man and the sweet-mary began to smell in the dew,

“Arrah! ’tis no sign any more that the new moon lies on her back for an Indian to hang his powder-horn to be stayin’ out o’ the wet. ’Tis a dry moon we had three nights ago, and as fair on its back as the rocker of a cradle.”

Norah had one bachelor son; a crinkly old thing she was, always smoking Canada green that she grew in her own garden, but this year could spare the plants no water from the well.

“Nigh lawst one o’ my shotes down a crack, clay’s baked suh hard,” admitted Eli. “Wunt be much crop t’ thrash on my ol’ place. Some folks’ corn—like Flater’s—gits big enough to cup the doo. Mine—I swan! crows tuk what wire-worms left.”

“Whsht!” pointed Norah with her pipe. “Me owld cat chews the grass! ’tis no sign. A cat-bird sang this noon; no better. The tree-toads do be pipin’ at night, and the maple leaves ha’ the pale sides up, and what wid mackerel skies an’ sunrises as red as poppies—ah welladay! Whsht!”

“All signs fail in dry time, Norah,” yawned Eli. “But some folks make good awn failin’ signs.”

“Yes, there’s Flater, off slashin’ a concession at five dollars the acre, whilst he comes home betune times from his shanty to reap. Him! Fears the Lord. Who’s trailin’ your cows to the lake for water, Eli?”

“Oh, young Olaf takes mine ’long o’ Flater’s. Yep.”

“To come home dry as they went. Not a churn on the line that dashes up anny but sour slops for butter. What of ye, old bach bones?”

“Pork drippin’ ’s my butter sence—”

“Whsht! Marry agin then, says you. Marry a widdie, say I—but niver cast eyes at the likes o’ me.”

Norah vented an uncanny cackle which on the evening mist Olaf heard as he finished his chores.

“But that Olaf now,” continued the crone as she came to the gate as dry as a smoked herring. “Do tell, but he’s a quare mortal! ’Tis me that’s heard him along the dusky road droolin’ to himself such a lingo!”

“Practisin’ Canadian speech, yep.”

“Dindongin’ it like a song, word by word, limb that he is! And he plays that mouthorgan—ach! thim ditherin’ revival chunes as he drives the cattle past. Whsht now! Listen?”

The sound of a family singing to a mouthorgan drifted down the road. “Ah Eli! ’tis a diff’rent house ye do inhabit wid yer owld books, and not even a cat to lick the fryin’ pan and niver a pipe to smoke.”

“Can’t ’ford to smoke, Norah. Too poor.”

“But ye’ve time to think Eli, and what d’ ye be thinkin’—about the folks matin’ and marryin’ now?”

“Waal, looks as if Tode’s lawst Mag fer keeps sence Rom Cusack got that top buggy.”

“Ay, and what o’ that schoolmum? Do she marry wan o’ thim blind organists, or that mop-headed blatherskite, Dr. Strang?”

“Hard t’ figger out, Norah. Think I’ll mosey awn home. Good-night.”

Trudging the long bush road barefoot in the dusk behind the cattle, often Olaf wondered on what up-lake steamer Miss Barlow might be cruising. Lake Erie lay seventy feet below the bank, swallowing the rains, taunting the drouth-land farmers. The raftsmen were busy; borers, boom-makers, cant-hookers rolling down the logs in thunder as men waist-deep piked them about in the offing of a tug. A big free, wet life! Every day he followed the bloated, flyswitching cattle back into the hot clearing he felt more like a dog. He ceased playing the mouth-organ for the family who stopped singing at dusk. The raspberries crizzled, the garden truck went dry, the children were peevish and the shrill wheeze of the cicada became a voice of fate. As yet Hiram had taken no money for his slashing, when every day the crash of his jampiling trees filled the air with storms. Olaf, hoeing beans in the hard clay, suckering corn, snarled at the children, talked crustily to Cornelia who rebuked him sharply; and one evening when Hiram came home he found him moody, rebellious, mainly about a pig so thin that it squeezed through the orchard fence and rooted round the trees; with the final rejoinder:

“Darnation! I didn’t make the pig thin; anyhow rootin’ round fruit trees lets air into the roots.”

Next day Olaf did not play his mouth-organ behind the cattle to the lake. There was an offwater breeze. The big raft was done; the tug poofing with a proprietary air about the huge quadrangle of logs it was about to tow across to Cleveland. As the cows came bulging up the gully Olaf stood on a breezy headland to count thirteen sails in full view; one three-master leaning in upshore to a dock and a bolt-mill called Port Sand. The lake foamed a bit, booming on the beach. Yonder crawled a fish-boat to the mile-out pound nets from which a bald-head eagle rose with a fish. Olaf had watched this eagle for nearly an hour, from the time it left the nest in the back bush. A flare of smoke on the skyline marked the trail of a steamer from Detroit, maybe Duluth, to heaven knew where; and Olaf with his gad by the roadside made a map in the dust as he heard the boom of the lake; a mystic reverberant rhythm as powerful as the sea.

“What the hell’s that?” growled somebody.

Olaf had seen Tode rolling up from the raft, coat over his arm, hairs on his chest.

“Great lakes, Thickie. On one side of ’em, look—Duluth, Chicago, Port Huron, Detroit, Cleveland, Sandusky, Buffalo—here’s Niagara Falls.”

“Yeh, where honeymooners go over the cant-i-lever bridge—so it’s come to me arms Norie darlin’!”

“And the only city we’ve got on the lakes is T’ronta, about a hundred thousand. Oh gosh!”

Olaf sat hugging his knees as the cows spoofed at the short grass. Tode drew from his overalls a wad of banknotes.

“More long green ’n you ever handled, Spikey.”

“Spose y’ll put it in the bank, Tode?”

“Nope. Stays right in my jeans fer a nest-egg till I git enough by judas! t’ flash in front o’ Mag Moss an’ ax ’er what

about Mrs. Beech. Eh? See that three-master upshore?"

"Yep, she's slopin' in fer bolts to Port Sand."

"Gonna sling bolts into 'er at twenty-five an hour; an' if the goin's good, board 'er to Cleveland. So c'n you. Skin out! Hiram's an ol' skinflint Methodist——"

"Shut up! I'll make yeh swallow a front tooth 'fore you can bend my spine if you blackguard my boss. See Thickie?"

"Aw, come off the perch! Spleeny about my dough. Hoof it up to Port Sand 'long o' me."

"I gotta take the cattle home."

"Let'm rip. They'll mosey back time fer milkin'."

"I aint got no boots, Tode."

"Lend yeh the price. Git a pair at Port."

"I'd as lief tell Mrs. Flater; she'll worry."

"Like ducks! She aint y'r mother."

Olaf pondered a moment, watching the schooner.

"Gimme a bit o' paper, Tode?"

"Want a pencil?" Tode produced a thick log-marker. On a flat stone Olaf scrawled a note. "String Tode?"

As the timberjack saw Olaf tie the note to a crumple-horn of the old spotted cow he said, "Well, if that don't beat the Dutch."

Half an hour later the two dusty ones creaked into the Port Sand store where Olaf bought the boots; away through the millyard with its wooden railway for logs leading back to the bush; and before noon Olaf was on top of a ship-side bolt-pile heaving bolts to Tode in the hold who caught them on the fly and packed them away. When the mill whistle blew Tode bellowed "Ho! fer the hash-house!" and twelve bolt-slingers went up to the boarding house.

The afternoon slid away in a tantrum of bolts, breezes, snatches of songs, genial curses and chewings of tobacco. After supper they went slinging again, on into the dusk. After dark they swam around the ship. Olaf climbed to the topmast in the moonlight and played his mouth-organ while Tode on the dock patted "juber". They crawled up to bunk. Sunrise—fried fat pork, johnnycake and molasses; back to the schooner.

In two days the three-master was topdecked with bolts and riding low; sails and rigging all ready; wind off shore; tug poofing; hands all paid; the gang squatting idly on the dock to see the Lulu tow out and the sails hoisted.

Tode manoeuvred a quiet word with the captain who said, "O.K. Board but no pay." "Hunkadoree!" piped the thick one back to his mate. "We're on. Scoot up to the store an' cash in fer a smock. Skedaddle Spikey!"

"Aw gimme a rest. Lemme think!"

"Lord! yeh have thunk, thank yeh. Quick—vamoose! Eh? What the Sam Hill—?"

"You don't savvy, Tode. Not quite. Jericho to you is only a stave mill—and a girl that if you don't get 'er you'll slide away on another ship to find a new one."

"Listen, Spikey—you sachet fer that smock an' talk about gals when y're on the deep bloo. Write 'er a letter—"

"Write who a letter. Who said—?"

"Aw bite me foot! You'll swim to the ship yet."

Olaf held out his hand. "So long Thickie!"

"You son of a shennanigin' seacock!"

Tode twisted his mate's hand till he creaked a bone and hurled himself aboard.

From the bank Olaf saw the schooner warped out; sails hoisted, men like bugs in the rigging; Thickie like a blob of bronze on the bolts. The moment the *Lulu* caught the wind and began to sling foam on the tug, he waved his straw hat and tried to shout; his voice croaked. The answer came back from Tode's trumpeting paws.

“Ho’ back t’ the hardpan and hoe beans—Spikey!”

And as the *Lulu* swept grandiosely into the wind with her tail to Port Sand, Olaf went booting back in the shore dust to the Four-Rod Road, where as he counted his three Yankee dollars and three quarters he could see the sails of the *Lulu* like a huge butterfly in the mist.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE OLD CHIEFTAIN.

Late in August Peppercorn became enormously excited over a poster that decorated Jericho and the store, making the auction sale bills look insignificant:

### DOUBLE-HEADER EXTRA

PLAINSVILLE, AUGUST 23rd

JOHN A. MACDONALD  
Father of Confederation, Author of National Policy,  
Creator of C.P.R.

Gives his Great Knockout to Commercial Reciprocity.

IN THE OPERA HOUSE.

NED HANLAN  
World’s Champion Oarsman

Will Row on the Snye against the American Champion

BOTH EVENTS FREE

“I swan!” said Eli in the store. “Hope to be there! Guess I’ll have t’ chance it awn the hoof. On’y one railroad teches Plainsville an’ that’s east an’ west.”

“Good Tory like you dorta ride a plug horse bareback t’ hear John A.” taunted Zach. He twitted and tantalized so many men about how to join the grand hegira that at last he was able to announce magnanimously, “Well boys, I’ll drive a wagon-load. As vice-president o’ the stave mill I’ll order up the millyard team if somebody loans a hayrack wagon. Store’s closed that day from noon on. How’s that fer high?”

“Bul—ly!” chanted Eli slapping his own knee. “That’s the talk fer a member o’ the Liberal-Conservative Association like you be.”

Sharp at one o’clock on a very hot day, superb in a check suit, flapdoodle felt hat and heavy watch-chain, Peppercorn drove on to the sawdust campus in front of the store and shouted like a song:

“All roads lead to Plainsville. All aboard!  
Them as can’t git a board fetch a slab.”

Seventeen combinations of Peppercorn trousers, boots and hats leaped to the cross boards, dangled over the rack and passed Zach’s box of six-for-a-quarter cigars. The only perch vacant was the end of the reach behind. In a cloud of dust the chief Tories of Jericho clattered away up the Centre Road.

Three miles up a tall, dusty figure in short coat and round felt hat turned out.

“Ho! Olaf! Hansen! Pile on!”

Zachariah pulled up. “That loon on?” he asked.

Olaf sat on the end of the reach behind, bobbing like a bird on a bough in the dust.

“How d’you like it?” leered Boanerges Brown.

“T-too m-many s-spools in my s-pine,” chattered Olaf as they jogged through what seemed to be an older Jericho and came to a railway. Stutteringly Hansen asked why it was called the Canadian Southern.

“Because it’s the Michigan Central. You tryin’ to count those there freight cars?”

“Fifty-two and not one of ’em local,” shouted Olaf. “All Yankee freight shortcutted through Ontario. Yah. Ridiculous!”

Through a long gardenland of older farms nearer the town Olaf stood on the reach to sight the spires of Plainsville, a town he had never seen; at which opportune moment Peppercorn cracked the whip, the team lunged and he was spilled into the sandy dust.

“I kin ketch youse,” he shouted; and a mile race began—won by Olaf on account of the team slowing across the Grand Trunk which he gaspingly remarked to Eli Snell had one terminus in Chicago, the other in Portland, Maine, and Eli said “Yessir”; and here came a grist-mill, a planing-shop, a carriage factory, a school, a dawdling cab, board sidewalks, bow-windows, parasols, flashy negroes, a rare old church, crowds, a market; then a labyrinth of rigs and the yard of the wooden Market House where negro hostlers clambered like monkeys and only a magician like Peppercorn could have manoeuvred a stall for a team.

“Pull out ten-thirty, boys,” bawled Zach as they shed their coats to shake them. Mopping his dusty face, Olaf avoided the Jerichoites and soon lost himself across a rickety bridge in a swarming park towards the river Snye whose trees on both sides, both its wooden bridges and even its shipmasts at the docks, were black-birded with people. Many a column had he read in Snell’s daily paper about the worldwide exploits of the greatest oarsman of his age; the men whom Ned Hanlan had beaten were almost as famous as the heroes in Homer; he was known in lands where even John A. Macdonald, Premier of Canada, was unknown.

The race was coming, down the river; the last heat. Far up, farther than sight, began the cheers that swept like a prairie fire through the crowd in advance of the oarsmen neither of whom Olaf could see; at length broke into a cyclonic fury of arms, hats, handkerchiefs, screams, whistles, bugles; on down under the second bridge near the masts, where the final pandemonium became so intense that it flung its energy back over the crowd and everybody said in his joy that Hanlan had won again.

The crowd dispersed like scampering beetles into the humdrum of the main street; hundreds to the Market Hotel where, after waiting an hour for a gargantuan twenty-five-cent meal, Olaf sat among a sweltering crowd, hearing twenty various versions of the race, descriptions of Hanlan and his stroke, his sliding seat, his title to immortal fame.

Time for the next hero. As Peppercorn had said in the wagon on the way over when settling the gerrymander problem with Eli, the Premier of Canada making his first speech in Plainsville right on the heels of Hanlan’s victory over the American oarsman, would be sure to reclaim that constituency from the Grits. To Hansen just now there were no Grits, no Tories. The crowd waiting to stampede the top gallery at the opera house were to him what the crowd had been cheering Hanlan—just Canadians. He had read for a second time *Canada and the Canadian Question* on purpose to see how the Premier of Canada would “tack the hide of Goldwin Smith to the national barn door” as Eli had predicted. Now he was to realize it all. Perched in the peak of “the gods” he viewed the Conservative Association on the stage, heard the band as a voice of destiny, rose with the hot crowd when the Old Chieftain at last came on amid a storm of cheers. He focused his gaze upon that pale, grizzle-haired, lean man with the Disraelian nose, the red tie, the faultless cutaway; saw in the back row on the stage badged Peppercorn waving his hat; saw the Premier sit down and a benign portly gentleman with grey Dundreary whiskers rise to inaugurate the occasion—James Hagarty, wealthy lawyer, President of the Conservative Association, in a concise, admirable speech full of statistics.

Then the Premier; another cyclone of Toryism as he rose, bowed with intense dignity and a flickering smile, raised a hand and began to speak; a dry penetrative voice, it seemed the preamble to an oracle at Delphi. He began by a deft allusion to the fresh victory of Hanlan, with whom he had recently shaken hands, and whose victories he hoped would continue in all parts of the world, no matter what government might be in Ottawa. From that he traced the story of what

Conservative rule had done for a confederated, prospering Canada and for the Empire to which it belonged; a cool, calculating, humoresque that made Canada blaze out on the canvas, with the vast Empire and the Old Flag as a romantic background; the northern half of great America, content to work out the destiny of a self-governing Dominion under the Flag of Empire; self-governing by reason of freedom under the B.N.A. Act and more by reason of the use made of that freedom by the party—Hansen winced at the use of this bigotizing word, but the orator went on to say what had been done by men associated with him to create the free Canada of that epoch:

Confederation itself, from sea to sea;

Purchase of Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company, adding a vast interior domain and still another seaboard;

Organization of the Northwest Mounted Police;

Creation of the Canadian Pacific tying Yokohama to St. John, N.B., and binding the Provinces;

Inauguration of the National Policy. . . . .

and here the applause punctuating each period became a tumult, out of which the intensely vibrating voice of the Chieftain astutely evolved a scathing denunciation of the "fiscal traitors" who would hand over all that the Old Flag forces had won in a free Canada for exploitation by the people who had fought that Flag in 1876; narrowing down to an adroit prediction of what Plainsville would do to make the river Snye help the great St. Lawrence to win a still greater victory over continentalism than the greatest oarsman had won against America—when under continued Conservative rule the products of Plainsville factories and farms would be carried down to seaboard into the markets of the world.

A dry miracle of sagacious political wizardry, that speech made every man and woman who heard it feel sublimely conscious of the alluring to-morrow, venerating the heroic victories of the past, caring little for the mere present except as an opportunity to have seen and heard that weird Hebrew-nosed Highlander with the red tie and the perfect courage of a man to whom open battle was a joy, cynical compromise a necessity, human interest in people a habit, and genial sarcasm a constant relief to the burdens of office again and again thrust upon him by the loyalty of his colleagues.

What did it matter how the opera house cheered and whistled and thundered, when the hairy hands of Eli Snell flapped slowly upon high and Peppercorn's hat waved higher for three cheers and a tiger? When the end came nothing seemed to matter except to vote for the Old Man, the Old Flag, the Old Policy.

The next thing of which Olaf was clearly conscious was standing among the Jerichoites at the Market Hotel, while Boanerges having hitched the team stowed three watermelons into the wagon; then,

"All aboard fer Jericho!" as Zachariah came from a belated conference and rose to the reins and Olaf swung to the reach—and when the wagon clattered past the town into the sand of the river road Boanerges Brown struck up, "We'll roll the old chariot along"; after which when they all joined in the chorus, he passed the watermelons. Zachariah slowed the horses and held up a glass.

"Boys," he said grandly with emotion, "this here's the glass that the Ol' Man tuk his las' drink from when I wuz with 'im in the hotel. No boys, 'twuznt hard liquor, nor even claret, but John A. turns to me and he says, 'Peppercorn, on behalf v Jericho and my habit fer years back, we'll have a leedle glass o' milk.' So we'll 'Roll the Old Chariot Along.'"

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### DR. STRANG AND THE EPIDEMIC.

During the last week of Miss Barlow's holidays, typhoid from low wells crept into three of the clearings. Jericho still regarded typhoid as one of the Biblical plague family. Eli Snell compared its possible ravages to the yellow fever scourge in New Orleans and the smallpox epidemic in Montreal. Norah Higgins stopped wagons on the road, talking about pestilences. Two children died. The old Logieville doctor, becoming distracted, advised Peppercorn, who as chairman of trustees was also guardian of health, to get Dr. Strang. Peppercorn made no promises. When Sadie came

back to school half the seats were vacant.

“Please mum, two’s dead!” piped a girl from the 13th. “Lil nigger Bass is one.”

Sadie had already heard the news. She cried. Taking asters from her desk, she placed two bouquets on the desks of the permanent absentees. After school she visited the graveyard and left more flowers. “Lil nigger Bass” was a nearer-Jericho offshoot from the Beecherville colony three miles down the Centre Road.

Sadie went at once to see Peppercorn. Old Dr. Grant was already there, again arguing on behalf of Strang.

“Oh, by all means!” said Sadie. “He’s wonderful with typhoid. I know he’ll come.”

“If you please,” said Zach who believed in as few words as possible from other people when business was to be done, “we’ll come down to cases. Half the children are out o’ school, becuz the parents think typhoid’s contagious. Two’s dead. Do I go to sleep? No, I’ve wired my friend Mr. Hagarty in Plainsville to use his influence to send Dr. Barnes—tiptop man. I expect a wire back any minute now.”

Sadie began to think faster. She knew the head of Hagarty and Bosworth, lawyer money-lenders; had gone to school with one of his daughters and visited at the big stone house, Hagarty Hall.

“You won’t have Dr. Strang!” she said.

“Now you leave all that to me, Miss. In school you’re tip top. In business diplomacy women aint successful.”

Sadie had a few words with Dr. Grant as he drove in the rain down the road. “Big boss!” she said indignantly. “He only dislikes Dr. Strang because he has long hair and wears slouchy black bows and weird waistcoats—and because he’s a Grit orator. But I know that Dr. Strang is the only man who can keep my school full, and I’ll get him somehow. Thanks!” as she got out.

Deciding to wire Strang for advice—but not at the hands of Mr. Bo Brown—she set out after supper in a crescendoing downpour to walk four miles to Logieville. A dark night; real sticky Jericho clay mud; nearly two hours; office at Logieville closed, clerk abed but she rapped him up.

“Verra weet, Miss Barlow—yes.”

She scribbled a telegram. “I’ll wait for an answer Alec., please.”

“Verra weel, Miss Barlow—yes.”

Strang wired back—“Come and see you in the morning.”

“Ah! That’s great, Alec. Go to bed.”

“Verra gude Miss Barlow—yes.”

The rain pelted; the road was dark; the mud sucked off her rubbers on the way back to Jericho, but she was happier now. She tied her rubbers with strings torn and knotted from a handkerchief. The umbrella leaked on her nice summer hat. Being a real girl, she closed the umbrella and put the hat under her raincoat. It was good at last to have the rain. Crickets chirped. Back at the bush the first katydid.

“Six weeks till frost,” she said aloud. “That’ll be good for the typhoid. Oh Jericho! where are you?”

Next morning, still wet, few were at school; and Sadie was a tired girl. It was near noon when Strang drove up, his black mane and horses matted with mud.

“Well Sadie girl,” after a joke for the children, “what’s the idea?”

She told him about Peppercorn. He laughed.

“We must euchre him, child. This is a Health Officer job. You must pull a wire in the county town. You went to Collegiate there. If the H.O. can be persuaded to send me, I’ll pitch my tent in Jericho and see it through. You close the school. I’ll drive you to Dromley. You may be able to flag the flyer.”

When Peppercorn beheld Dr. Strang’s black horses splashing past with Miss Barlow under the buggy top he said to Bo Brown, “The nerve o’ some people. What the dickens?”

“Going to Dromley to catch a train for Plainsville,” said Bo.

“But the Detroit flyer don’t stop. Dromley aint a flag station even for big trains.”

“That may depend on—the girl behind the flag.”

“Moses! Wire Kearney—you know how.”

Half an hour later Sadie scurried to the Dromley wicket. “Plainsville, please—Mr. Kearney?”

Phil, having just taken the Jericho message, drawled back, “Sorry, Miss, but the flyer doesn’t stop.”

“Then you’ll flag her won’t you—to oblige a good Presbyterian Methodist who’ll sing for Little Dublin whenever you ask her?”

“Impossible. Much as me job’s worth, Miss.”

“Then I’ll not be singin’ *Killarney* for you.”

“Sure, I think ye’re as much Irish as Scotch.”

“Oh all good people are part Irish, you know.”

One minute after the express whistled, the language that Kearney got from the conductor as the flyer stopped at Dromley for just one girl was to him amply repaid by her sweet smile as she waved her hand.

Two hours later Sadie dawned as fresh as roses in rain upon James Hagarty, judicial, businesslike, benign with Dundreary whiskers, listening gravely to her earnest recital.

“Mmm—yes, I had a wire from Peppercorn. I’ve wired him back that Dr. Barnes is out of town to-day. Of course you understand that he is a very good friend of mine—in a business way. We have clients around Jericho. Peppercorn has a big influence. Er—”

“Oh!” tapping with her boot. “I didn’t know. Business is so queer. It’s like politics—never know where it stops. Then, Mr. Hagarty—I suppose when Peppercorn’s Limited is organized—it will be on money—borrowed from you? There. I’ve said too much. Have I?”

Hagarty nodded with a bland smile.

“Then I’ll say more. If he depends upon you, couldn’t you let him know it—by not doing what he wants in this case? You can persuade the Health Officer. Oh, I’m only the teacher and I may lose my school over this, but I’d rather do that than lose half of it to the cemetery. Those backwoods folk are so superstitious about an epidemic. They read the Bible and say it’s a plague. There’s an old half witch—a dear old thing—on the Four-Rod Road that stops people in their wagons and says such things; and if there’s one man that can work on people’s minds to get such notions out of them and make them want to laugh and live—it’s Dr. Strang. Oh dear! I know I’ve said too much. I’m excited. Please excuse me? Thanks, Mr. Hagarty. Good-bye. I’ll leave it to you.”

Too late now—three o’clock—to catch a train to Dromley for a walk of seven miles, Sadie took lunch at a confectionery store and hired a livery.

Strang was soon domiciled in Jericho with an office in the house of Peppercorn who snarled a bit but, on receipt of a letter from James Hagarty, decided for the present to keep mum. The Doctor was busy almost night and day; a man of tireless physique, too busy for a week to read his geology books as he went into bush homes and farmhouses, driving his black horses over stumpy roads, through the walls of the bush, a weird angel of healing to people in shacks and shanties, ordering baths and starvation and broths and fresh air—but always diffusing the unspeakable genial something that made people want health.

“Peppercorn,” he said with one of his mystic grins at the boss of Jericho, “if you want to be elected to Council as a public benefactor, put down an artesian well behind this house. You’ll strike the best water in creation two hundred feet below.”

This was an old controversy first mooted by Strang in the flat country. Peppercorn decided to make the experiment; one way of convincing Jericho that Strang and Barlow were not everybody. Within a week a crude oil engine from Dayton, Ohio, a derrick and a drill gave Jericho a new sensation.

The Flater children all took typhoid. Olaf was set at housework to relieve Cornelia as nurse. He soon became a fair cook. Strang’s visits were an inspiration. Olaf understood that his coming to Jericho was due to Miss Barlow.

“Strang’s a real wizard!” he said emotionally to Cornelia. “So’s Miss Barlow. Yes, Bill Higgins has got the fever. Poor old Norah!”

After the little threshings by an up-and-down boiler engine and a red separator, the Four-Rod cattle reconnoitred the puny straw stacks to see where the oatstraw began and the blinding barley beards left off. Fanning mills clacked dustily at open barn doors, and wagons white with sacks of wheat toiled away to Plainsville in the bright September dawns. Norah Higgins smoked her stub pipe on the porch and prophesied,

“Indade an’ somebody’s bowels’ll give out wid the typhoid before any watter gushes from the bowels o’ the airth into Jericho. Who knows but it may be wan o’ me own that goes? I have great faith in ye, Dr. Strang, but if it be the will o’ God to send pestilences as recorded in Holy Writ, ’tis not in the power o’ man and medicine to cheat Him of wan grown-up victim.”

“You keep on smoking Canada hunk, Norah, and you may escape it,” he said as he got into his buggy. “But there’ll be good water in Jericho yet.”

Peppercorn’s second well went down two hundred feet and still no water.

“Third time and out,” said Zach stoically. “Try another hole.”

The epidemic began to slacken. No more funerals had come. The oil engine continued to bark. September came to a close with wild asters and goldenrods. Strang sometimes visited the school where he gave the children little lectures on rocks, bugs, birds and stars and heard them sing while Sadie led them at the organ.

“Hope these desks will all be full this winter,” he said one hazy afternoon as the children went. “Hansen? Yes, I’ve talked school to him. He says he can’t afford it; feels that he’s got to become a citizen of Jericho by hard work, praying if he can, using rough language, fighting if he has to, and that if he went to school he’d be the joke of the village. But I may persuade him.”

As they walked to the store Olaf met them bareheaded on a horse.

“Old Norah’s got it, Doctor! She wants you.”

Strang hitched his team. Afraid that Miss Barlow would talk to him about school, Olaf went clattering away home. That evening he met Strang on the road.

“Yes, old Norah’s pretty bad, Hansen.” Yawning primevally he held up a book he was reading. “Better borrow this from me when I finish it, boy. Has the imagination of Jules Verne—and something else.”

“Oh!” Olaf read the title. “*Looking Backward*, by Edward Bellamy. Thanks! I’d like that.”

It was wonderful to feel the pall of typhoid lifting; health coming back with the cold dew, next thing to frost, on the unsickled corn. Cutting corn one night after dusk to finish the field—Hiram away at a log bee—Olaf heard a screech owl under a misty moon; a shuddering nocturne from the woods back of Higgins’, nearer and closer and more peremptory, till it settled in the young orchard.

Norah in her little rough room heard the owl. Strang at her bedside, heard it as he smoothed the patchwork quilt. The lamp was low. “I tould ye, Doctor,—that watter—niver would gush—from the airth into Jericho—before wan had fooled ye—wid all y’r—No! No parson fer Norah. She married herself out o’ wan church—no use for another. Ach! where’s me—me ould pipe? Wan more puff, Strang? Wan more—jist!”

“Here old girl!” Strang lighted the old stub, gave it to her and stood silent.

“A—ah! Yon owl tells me—betther to smoke here than—hereaft—pff!”

He stooped, took the pipe from her teeth and listened. She was dead.

Olaf, first at the house after the death, asked to be a pallbearer at the funeral. He and Hiram and Eli and three more heaved the crude, unpainted box into a wagon. The procession, gathering people and horses and rigs from seven settlements in as many dialects, reached from the house to the Jericho church where a sincere but blundering sermon brought a cataract of sobs from the son Bill, only assuaged by the simple unaccompanied singing of *Lead Kindly Light* by Sadie.

Three evenings later in the kitchen Olaf read Bellamy’s *Looking Backward*—borrowed from Strang. Hiram read the market list in the weekly paper. Cornelia pared skimpy little apples. Now and then Olaf gazed at the puncheon floor

spotless as a washed apron, the log walls gleaming white, the big stove with its top oven burnished like a crow's wing, a pot of pumpkin stewing for pies, and on the line above a grand array of ironed handmade garments, all sizes. He began to speak; coughed and lapsed into silence as the few flies that had escaped Cornelia's traps buzzed among the bunches of sage and red peppers on the beams.

"Judas priest!" said Hiram jerking his socked feet from the edge of the table. "Bedtime!"

He rose and wound the clock. Olaf turned down his book:

"What's gnawin' you, Olaf?"

"My year's up t' day, Hiram."

"Well—I haint got more'n half the wages."

"All right. Take your note on a pail o' water for the rest."

Hiram turned at his bedroom door. "What's the prospect?"

"Goin' to school this winter, after I've done a few jobs huskin' corn. Yah. Don't care if I am a beanpole."

"Hmm!" twiddling his whiskers. "Got a place t' board?"

Signs from Cornelia; then a proposal.

"I see. Chores an' work Saturdays for board an' washin' eh?"

Cornelia lighted another lamp and put away her work.

"Good-night Olaf," she said; and they left him to his *Looking Backward*.

An hour later a drawling resonant voice came from the road.

"Hansen—hear the noos?"

"No. Thatchu Eli? What?" And from a window came the voice of Hiram, "What be the noos, Eli?"

"Peppercorn's struck water. Nigh two hundred feet in the third hole. Soft as rain water, cold as ice. Yep. Oh, he's the bo-oy! G'd-night!"

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## CHAPTER IX.

### CITIZENSHIP AT SCHOOL.

Olaf's advent at school came in a January thaw, a few days after the sign Peppercorn's Limited went up on the enlarged corner store. It took some nervous energy for so tall a youth in leg boots with a tin pail and a pack of books to pass that corner. Jericho had grown. Shanks the blacksmith had a small carriage shop with a roller rink above it, and a new house next door. Collop's show of harness opposite was nobbier now; and his wife had lace curtains on her windows above. A tailor shop had come opposite the store and Bill Hall's barber shop next to it was now open every day. Cronk the cooper had a little barrel factory just along the Four-Rod, and Kerns cabinetmaker was next, making golden-oak sets, selling reed organs and conducting funerals. A young doctor had moved in and was already singing tenor in the choir which now had an organ played by Melissa Peppercorn who had been away at High School and "taking on the piano" from an English organist in Plainsville. And of this little social world Sadie Barlow was the queen.

But the red tank and the whirling windmill and the new sign Peppercorn's Limited, with Jericho's first piano in the big frame house next, were still a proof that the general merchant, mill director, cheese president and chairman of trustees was economically the first citizen of Jericho.

"Morning Zach!" said Olaf as the proprietor came out smoking a cigar.

"Well it certainly aint afternoon; an' my official name to all school children aint ixactly 'Zach', neither."

"Oh! Good-morning—Mr. Peppercorn."

“Hi! Hold on now,” as Olaf stretched his stride. “Come back here.”

“Wherefore and why?” Other scholars halted on the sidewalk when they heard that booming voice.

“Becuz you’re a scholar in S.S. No. 9 and I’m chairman’v the Board, and I’ve got sump’n t’ask yeh?”

Not certain that he could legally dispute such authority, Olaf came back.

“Bo,” said Peppercorn to the chief clerk who was now book-keeper, studying theology in spare moments, “what’s the len’th o’ the pipe system from the tank’v Peppercorn’s Ltd. to the school well?”

“Six hundred and thirty-seven feet, sir; cost ten cents a foot—”

“That’s near enough, Bo. Is she workin’?”

“Started this morning, sir.”

“Well Hansen”—Zach scanned the ash of his cigar—“when you git to school, you figger out how many miles an hour the wind’s gotta blow to fill that well in two hours.”

“Which windmill,” roared Olaf, “the one with a red tank—or the one that runs the Board of Trustees?”

“Bo,” said Zach as he went in, “some tongues are certainly hung in the middle.”

When Olaf entered the school, he took a desk near the door assigned him by Miss Barlow. “If y’ll excuse me,” he smiled when she came down to his seat, “I wunt go up with the Class. Look too big. You know—I c’n stay here and hear you teach. You do it so—oh well, it’s great anyhow.”

“Well, if it’ll help the show to go up,” he admitted when Sadie smiled down his way from the platform, “here goes!”

Slate at his smock, boots with red tops outside his brown duck pants, his mop of spiky hair towering above the rest, he looked the uncle of that class.

“Multiply fractions,” said the teacher. “Cancel”, furiously writing a long line on the blackboard.

Olaf never lifted his pencil; his lips gave a low whistle; his right hand shot up eight feet.

“Works down to three-fifths,” he said. “Pshaw! that’s fun.”

The school broke into a sniggering undulation.

“Aw, I didn’t do it to be smart,” he blurted and turning, went back crimson to his seat. “Please go ahead,” he called. “I’ll do ’em here.”

“Order!” called Sadie. “Very well, Olaf.”

Presently he turned to gaze over the conglomerate social fabric of which Miss Barlow was the genial despot. He had never seen a country school; never a crowd of children whose clothes and adornments expressed so much hopeful economy at home and whose habits and language reflected so intimately the personal care of a teacher. A fascinating picture: hair ribbons, ringlets, bangs, stereotyped pinafores, variegated webs of home-knit stockings, cheap necklaces, nibbled pen-stocks; boys in uniform smocks, wet-brushed hair, red and blue boot-tops with copper toes on the small boots; boys who seldom washed their wrists except on Saturday night, used bran mash to soften chapped hands and coal-oil to cure chilblains and had a habit of saying “turmut” and “vingeder”.

“What a work!” he found himself saying; when day by day he discovered how much of the work was being lavished on the chaotic jumble of his own personality.

To make this clear to himself as well as to the teacher, Olaf wrote on his slate one day a list of such words as “kin, dorta, gonna, brung” and slang phrases like “hunkadory, watch-my-smoke, hell-bent-fer-’lection and lickety split”; so absorbed in this that he failed to notice how pale she looked and how cross she was with a desperate headache when she impatiently glanced over the list and said under her breath, “Great Scott! what next?”

“Don’t you want me to reform?” he said.

“Yes, Olaf, but don’t be ridiculous!”

Evidently this bright angel had a temper. In five minutes she gave a drastic caning to a couple of Back Line lads who got all questions wrong and had no home-work done.

“Tell my dad ju made welts on my hands!” howled the elder.

“Tell him, and you’ll get more!” she snapped.

Next morning Sadie was all smiles; completely transfigured; but the Back Line lads were absent. The Inspector came that day; a precise, somewhat clerical M.A. who gave a Third Book Class, then up, a gruelling lesson on how to say “The mountain and the squir-rel had a quar-rel” instead of “squirrel” and “quorl”; afterwards told Miss Barlow about a new child culture called kindergarten, of which he gave such a pedantic illustration that Olaf was relieved when Sadie gave the children one of her easy little talks about snowbirds and snow, with a little song at the organ in which the children heartily joined.

“Capital!” said the Inspector. “Now we’ll have our national anthem by my old friend Alexander Muir, *The Maple Leaf*.”

He prefaced this by a patriotic talk on the Conquest of Canada in 1759 and the War of 1812. The whole school sang the first stanza, Sadie’s voice a line of beauty in a rather discordant babel. At the end of the second stanza, the Inspector said,

“Hansen, you were not singing. What’s that?”

“Please sir,” as he rose, “it wouldn’t be true for me to say,

‘At Queenston Heights and Lundy’s Lane  
Our brave fathers side by side’

because I had no ancestors in the War of 1812. Lots of other people in Canada hadn’t either.”

“Ah! You are a Norwegian; born in London you say? Then you are a British subject, my boy, and should sing our—”

“But it’s only for English, Irish and Scotch,” protested Olaf.

“Please sit down,” said the Inspector.

This and the caning episode came to the notice of Peppercorn the same day. Whereupon he called Hiram Flater, second trustee—the third being away on jury—to a special meeting at the school. Hiram scented trouble from the way Zach coughed and turned up and down the wick of the red lantern on the desk.

“Never had sich a big ’tendance, Zach,” he said mollifyingly. “Everything neat as a noo pin too. My young uns never done so well. Olaf—”

“Too much Hansen!” scowled the chairman. “Why did she lose her temper so’s to leave welts on kids’ hands? Highstrikes. What starts ’em? Hansen. Who’s the big I-am in that school? Hansen. Who takes her ’tention so she lets the ornery ones flicker? Hansen. Who gives lip to the Inspector ’bout *The Maple Leaf*? Hansen!”

“He tol’ me ’bout that,” coughed Hiram. “Said he didn’ mean no disrespect to the Inspector and wrote him an apology.”

“Why didn’ he ’pologize to the Chairman?”

“I donno. Spose he cal’ated I wuz a trustee.”

Zach held up his red lantern, regarding his colleague with grave astonishment.

“Don’ do that agin, Hi. I’m chairman. See?”

Hiram repentantly fozzled his whiskers while Zach unfolded a tale to which the rest of the agenda had been a mere preamble; tapping his thumb on the desk.

“No,” said Hiram. “He aint belt that way. Not fer a mennit!”

“Order!” Silence. “Who said he wuz? But she is. Look at the flirt she is with the blind organist and Doc. Strang and young Doc. Marlatt; so het up over any noo young preacher, too, that she never lets Boanerges Brown of Peppercorn’s Limited drive ’er anywheres any more. This boob, Hansen—poof! putty under her thumb. Psh-sh! Hold y’r plug horses now, Hiram. You go at ’im and he’ll make a row fit t’ stop a clock. Leave Hansen to me. What the Inspector calls moral suasion aint a pea-whistle in a cyclone with a weird wop like that. Hansen eh? Says he’s only Scandinavian fer Johnson, same as Schmidt is Dutch fer Smith. How de we know he aint a Roosian Nihilist? Look at ’is hair; the way he grins; potters round alone in the bush, talking to ’is shadow. Tell me! Now, seein’ I’m a committee of one on this Board, I’ve

gotta—”

“Move you a committee of one to investigate welts on kids’ hands,” snapped Hiram. “Move we adjourn. Kerried!”

Peppercorn’s tribunal on Parents vs. Barlow was a failure. Sadie got wind of the investigation and did at once what she had intended to defer until the week-end. She walked three miles in a wet snowstorm to a mill shack on the Back Line, apologized, had supper, sang for the family, wrote in the large girls’ autograph albums, slept with one of them on a straw tick next a wall that leaked sawdust, was cordially invited to come again, and took the children to school in the morning.

That very afternoon the Chairman came in as the children went home, circumspectly produced the accusing letter, impressively read it aloud and said,

“This kind o’ thing can’t go on, Miss Barlow.”

“But it’s all over, Mr. Peppercorn,” she said huskily with a smile, “and I’ve got a lovely cold from sleeping in a hot shack after I got my feet wet in three miles of snow.”

“Lot o’ use bein’ a chairman,” growled Zach as he went back to the store.

Criticism developed rapidly in Hansen. Having settled some of his own defects, he went at the textbooks.

“Miss Barlow, here’s an arithmetic question that asks me to find the profit a merchant makes by discounting fifteen, and the beggar marks his goods up twenty before the sale starts. I call that crooked.”

“Yes, but it’s only imaginary, Olaf.”

“Excuse me, it’s real. Look at this so-called History of Canada,” holding up a brick-coloured little book. “Nothing but a catalogue of names, dates, places, treaties and wars. There are fifty romances in those names. What we need is a school library of books about great Canadians—Parkman’s for instance.”

“Mr. Peppercorn says we’re spending too much now on maps.”

“Well, let’s have a school concert. Have it on Arbour Day. Two weeks yet. Get Dr. Strang for chairman.”

He drove her to acquiesce and himself undertook the details of the programme. On Arbour Day he borrowed Flater’s team and hauled a load of loam, another of young maples. Flower beds and trees were all done by three o’clock. A lovely May evening. The school was packed. Olaf was doorkeeper. Peppercorn flung down a quarter.

“Watch out ’taint a twenty-cent piece,” he joked.

Dr. Strang came early. He made even Peppercorn shake with laughter, until he praised the enterprise of getting a library fund and mentioned “my young friend Olaf Hansen”, when the chief trustee rose and scowled himself out; after which Hansen bungled a duet with Miss Barlow, “When ye gang awa’, Jamie”; so mortified that near the end of the programme he tried to save his reputation by moving a vote of thanks to Dr. Strang and other great men of Canada, including the Fathers of Confederation, the French explorers, Henry Hudson—until Strang, noticing that the youth was too excited to stop, rose and adroitly closed the speech for him. This so further humiliated Hansen that he left before the school chorus, in which he was the only basso, sang *The Maple Leaf*.

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## CHAPTER X.

### AUTOGRAPH ALBUM.

One evening when the Centre Road was newly scraped and buggies were squeaking past, Maggie Moss was basting a dress on the verandah while Sadie Barlow idly turned over the pages of Maggie’s autograph album.

“Oh, some good, some queer,” yawned Maggie. “Bet I c’n tell you which is whose.”

“The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls—”

“Phil Kearney’s. He sings it. Never sang a note till you came, either. Nice horse and rig he’s got; silk-worked buggy-spread and fly-net with tassels on the ears—and I know who he got it for!”

“Green grow the rushes-o, you bet your life I’ll have a wife—”

“Poh! Rom Cusack. Never took me to a circus or went to Detroit on a hawlday. Had to sell his buggy. Stick-around!”

“Many a slip ’twist cup and the lip’?”

“Bo Brown. Meant that fou you. Queer fish!”

“When is he going to college, Maggie?”

“I donno. Latest wrinkle he’s learning Injun at the Chippewa camp. Told me plump not long ago that he wants a girl can play and sing in a pigtail mission on the per-airies after he leaves cawlige. Then he says—oh so serious—there’s no voice too grand for the Lord’s work on the frontier. Oh, Bo’ll get there—but he don’t look it.”

“The older the tree, the harder the bark; the older the girl the harder to spark’?”

“Tode Beech. Mad at him!” biting her thread. “Never said ay, yes or no to me when he lit out. Last I heard he was in Cleveland; making money. Lot I care!” Maggie twisted a knot, saying more mildly, “The next one is Ole Hansen’s. That’s a daisy! ‘So live that when thy summons comes’”—clattering off the finale of Bryant’s *Thanatopsis* at hectic speed. “Said it was some kind o’ synopsis, but he strung off the whole pome a mile long like a gorgeous fun’ral; then he talked about it—and say! it was grand. I think it’s great what you’ve done for that bo-oy at school; so does he. Is he—back yet?”

“Olaf is not coming back, Maggie.”

“Not comin’ ba-ack? Go on!”

“He wrote me a note: says he’ll take his exams; coming for his books some day after four. That reminds me—he has the key to the box with all that concert money in my desk.”

“S—say! Zach’ll raise Cain about that.”

“Oh I don’t care. I’m going to resign.”

“Re-si-ign? Not over Ole Hansen? Sadie how kin you? Just when Jericho quits drying up to blow away—h’lo’ guess Zach’s home from town. I c’n hear ’im up at the Corners—ta-alkin’! Listen!”

Peppercorn had come back from Plainsville enormously excited over a piece of news that he had told only to Kearney who had driven him from Dromley on his way to spend an hour with Miss Barlow. Olaf was at the Corners to get supplies for a shanty he had put up on the Back Line where he had a job of slashing twenty acres of Canada Company land. Roller skaters were thundering in the rink over the carriage shop. Tailor, blacksmith, cooper, cabinet-maker, young doctor, Bill Hall from the barber shop—all were in front of the store with a caucus from the mill to hear the Mosaic deliverance of Peppercorn.

“Well boys, I signed a contract t’day in town—fer excloosive rights to buy right’v way clean through Jericho township—fer the noo railroad!”

“Noo railro-oad?” was the choric response.

“Swat I said. Parallel the Canady Southern an’ junction with the line built last year from Marlborough to Plainsville. How’s that fer high?”

All agreed upon the sublime height.

“What’s thatchu said, Hansen?”

Olaf leaned on a post above Bo Brown who, sitting on the stoop, had remarked that the new road would compete with the Canada Southern.

“I merely said to Bo that a railway usually creates traffic.”

“Pile you know about it!” partly irritated at the accuracy of the youth’s pronunciation. “Bum economics! Business creates railroads. Look what Jericho’s become without no railroad at all!”

“But there’s no trade without highways,” argued Olaf. “It may be a river or a road or a railway; it’s all the same. A railway is a special kind of road. If a road creates business—”

“Scat!” interrupted Phil Kearney. “Why there’s hundreds o’ miles o’ the C.P.R. that don’t average a ton o’ traffic to the

mile. Anny gossoon knows that.”

“Yes, but the C.P.R. is a transcontinental, or it never would have been built. The railways of the future—”

“School boy spouting! Who made the pow-wow about *The Maple Leaf* an left the schule concert and declined to sing it? You’re a bird to be talkin’ about Canajun development—you are!”

Without waiting for Olaf’s retort, Kearney sprung his own piece of news even more electrifying than Peppercorn’s.

“Leavin’ Jericho?” came the choric response. “What’s the reason?”

Kearney glanced sidewise at Olaf. “I guess that’s—personal, Mr. Hansen.”

“Miss Barlow’s intended resignation is news to me,” said Olaf.

“Noos t’ me,” said Zach. “Chairman o’ the Board dorta know.”

Bo Brown nervously got his hat, begged leave of absence from his boss and wriggled away in the dusk down the Centre Road.

“Spouse you’re goin’ to pay y’r respects to Miss Barlow this evenin’?” said Peppercorn to Olaf.

“I came to buy supplies for my shanty, a four-pound axe for one thing. But I can get those at Port Sand—for less money. Wait!” he called to Kearney untying his horse.

“Oh, you’ll be callin’ on Miss Barlow—want a ride? Walk then!”

“I would prefer—a fight!”

“Sorry. Oblige you anny time after this evening.”

He drove away. Overtaking Bo Brown, who by this time was into a frantic dog-trot, Phil took him in, drove him at a smart clip a mile past the Moss farm at which Bo had privately intended to stop, suddenly pulled up and said,

“Far as I’m going this direction, Bo. So long!” turned his horse and drove back.

““Many a slip ’twixt cup and the lip!”” cogitated Bo. “Now he takes her for a drive—proposes to her. He is a cutter-out. I—” Slowly he felt a desire for revenge. “I’m not a minister yet,” he chattered. “I am a lover. I’ll put rails in the road to wreck that fine buggy when he drives home so fast. That is—love. Ah Boanerges! quite unworthy of your brains—and of such a woman—such as a man waits for, years, decades—in the fulness of time gets her! Ah!”

Later, in the shadows of the fence corners he heard them pass and sing, “The harp that once”. “His dodge, her protection!” he argued. “A woman does not sing when she is proposed to. No. Ah! Wait Boanerges! Thy time will come.”

Dramatically he began to enjoy this rôle of sermonizing detective. Towards the rising of the midnight moon he heard the wheels coming back, the horse—walking he thought. Then, to his intense joy as they passed him, when Phil drove with one hand only, he heard her talk to him in such a fine motherly way about marrying Bella Donahue. “Poor Phil!” he mumbled, stalking the rig, beginning to feel the pity of a conqueror, as the rejected suitor talked back so brokenly and later said something sharply about Hansen. “No!” he heard her say. “I love no man.” “Ah! but it may be ‘yes’ in your soul, Sadie,” argued Bo.

Hansen. Yes, he was the danger now. Sadie had settled Kearney. Somebody must settle—that other one; that pupil; that writer of poetic effusions in so many autograph albums of girls that Bo had visited; that youth of superior language even to that of Boanerges Brown; that *bête noir* of Peppercorn.

“Olaf,” mused Bo, with his attentive self as he neared the village, “your days are numbered in Jericho. But not hers. She must not go because of you. Jericho needs her. The choir needs her; the school; the people everywhere. So be a good boy, Hansen, and leave her alone. Eh—what’s that?” as a thick figure growled like a bear in front of him on the sidewalk.

“Where the blue blazes you been, Bo? Got that key? Lock up!”

That was Peppercorn.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### FINANCIAL DISCREPANCIES.

When the raw village with its hopeful, busy people caught the colour of the spring, and the white-stoned beds of portulaca, balsams, phlox and asters began to thicken up, and the new little crop of ABCers came toddling and wistful, clean and shiny, into the school, Sadie had no desire to leave Jericho. Z. Peppercorn knew that. He believed she would recant her rumoured resignation. He was himself amiable. Now that Hansen was gone he beamed on the children, blessed the pumping of water from his well, joked with Sadie about the love affairs of other people, and began to calculate how much the trustees might raise her salary. He went to church on Sunday mornings to hear his own Melissa play the organ and Sadie sing, and to watch the lyric devotions of Maggie Moss, only alto, young Dr. Marlatt the tenor, and Bo Brown—in the absence of Olaf—the one bass. He even began to wonder what it might cost to decorate the church.

In all things but one Peppercorn for the time being was almost a benedictine saint. When Miss Barlow reminded him of the tin box containing the concert money in her desk, he said with a quick shift of the eyes, “Oh yes, Hansen’s got the key o’ that. Bo,” to the bookkeeper, “how much do we av’rige daily cash turnover in this firm outside’v doo-bills?”

“About twenty-one dollars, sir. Saturdays more.”

“Ho—hmm!” Zach did a sum with a pencil. “And that tin box at the school, Bo, has got in it nearly thirty-seven. Money from the pockets’v the people, held in trust fer a specific object as specified on the programmes, lays there as unproductive as a door-knob in a hen’s nest. Hmm! Take a letter to—Mr. Olaf Hansen—address Port Sand. Ready? ‘Dear Sir: If you do not transfer—that concert money—to me at the school here—within two days of the receipt—spelled “recipe” aint it—well go on—receipt of this, I will consider—yeh—having you arrested—’swat I said—arrested for—” The next word bothered him. Bo suggested one beginning with “mal” and they finally agreed upon “malfeasance of trust funds. The fact that you hold the key—proves that you are legally liable. Yours truly.’ Put on the bottom—‘Chairman of Trustees, S.S. No. 9, Township of Jericho.’ There—guess that’ll put a ring in ’is nose,” as he filled in the signature.

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The letter in reply was even more brief and quite as terse, written in a clumsy, thick hand. The financial meeting after four o’clock at the school on the day appointed by the letter was to Z. Peppercorn as exquisitely enjoyable as to his intended victim it was the opposite. He asked Miss Barlow to remain. Pleased that she put on her hat to make such a nice picture with the parasol and the chatelaine, he drew up a second chair to the desk and asked Mr. Hansen, who came sharp on time, to produce and unlock the tin box. Olaf smiled at Sadie who was obviously amused. Zach sat back, gazed aslant at the ceiling and twiddled his thumbs as he directed Hansen to sort the coins into separate piles—there were no bills. Olaf felt his fingers shake as he mopped his neck.

“Part’v eddication to handle money,” said the chairman. “Nobuddy ever gits so intellectchul that real money don’t—beg pardon, Mr. Hansen? What’s that?”

“Some discrepancies here. But I can explain them.”

“Dis-crep-ancies!” Zach whistled the word as he fingered one of the coins. “Yeh. This t’bacca stamp stuck in fer a nickel—discrepancy tally one. ’Spose that was put there by the same smart Alec that does it on c’lection plates at church. Gotta watch these grafters.”

“These coppers don’t come out to even fives, Mr. Peppercorn. But I remember now, I let in one Back Line family for all they had or could scrape up—fifty-seven cents.”

“Yeh. I’ve had those kind in my store; people that wanta buy all they need fer what money they got—an’ then jew yeh down. But it aint business. Hmh! Took in a couple o’ twenty-cent pieces here too, and a plug quarter. Take y’r time now; don’t git flustered. What d’you make the entire net proceeds?”

“Thirty-four, seventeen. Gross thirty-four, fifty-four when I make up the oversights,” was the staccato answer.

Zach methodically packed each pile of coins back into the box.

“And y’r house by my tally wuz ixactly thirty-six, fifty!”

“How do you know that?”

“Counted noses on the spot. Hundred and sixteen adults; fifty children.”

The glint of the chairman’s eye was cocksurely smug. “That’s what I call a real discrepancy—Mr. Hansen.”

“Mr. Peppercorn,” snapped Sadie, rising. “Please stop.”

Olaf gazed intently at the chairman and passed a band back over his hair. Peppercorn rose.

“Mind now—I didn’t say intentional or—conscious discrepancy,” he explained with an upstuck thumb and a smile. “Any cap you put on that fits is no doings of mine. But business is brass tacks. Slouchy bookkeepin’ starts discrepancies—then it’s only a step to dishonesty. A young man starting out to improve his circumstances gotta be almighty conscientious about nickels even in private business. In trust funds he’s gotta count the dints on a copper. People will gossip. People in gen’ral don’t draw the line between wilful and—”

The words began to clog. Peppercorn was conscious of a primeval glare in the blue eyes of his victim. Sadie went quickly to the door; and the moment she closed it. Zach felt his wrists in the grip of a vise and his whole two hundred pounds of critical avoirdupois being hoisted towards the exit. In a few moments the head of the frantic but helpless chairman of S.S. No. 9 was under the school pump.

“Cool you off in your own benevolent community water!” shouted Hansen as he pumped a swift stream all over him. “Now you old discrepancy—go home and get dry!”

Zach was a sputtering but wordless person as he rolled away down the plank sidewalk with a streel of water in his wake and his clothes plastered to his ponylike figure.

“Take the proceeds with you!” bellowed Hansen banging out of the school with the tin box, hurling it after the chairman who paused to pick it up. Taking his books, Olaf strode after Sadie who was between hysterical tears and laughter at the comedy.

She stopped. He smiled at her.

“That’s the lowdown funny business you drove me into—and yourself, too!”

“Olaf—that’s not true.”

“I don’t mean the ducking, though if you hadn’t been there, he’d have got worse. I mean—the humiliation of counting that money.”

“Olaf, I had nothing to do with it. How was I to know what would happen?”

“Of course not. But if you had been considerate enough to go out—that fat clock never would have ticked me off the way he did. He was making a show—for your benefit.”

Suddenly he held out his hand.

“Please forget this—Miss Barlow? I’m going up for my exams.”

“I don’t care—whether you do or not,” she said in a low tone, drawing away from him. “I cared—oh, so awfully much once. I was foolish—ever to have coaxed you to school.”

“No! No you weren’t. No! Please shake hands? I’ll be off to the bush to-morrow. Oh—bush whacking would be easy if I could have been thinking—about the books we were going to buy with that money that came so hard from people’s poor pockets. I did mean it for the best. Some day Jericho will have a school library—like we planned. All that bush will be gone. The mill will be a heap of old sawdust. The village will be a little town. The farms will be beautiful with crops and more children. These roads will be white ribbons of life and colour reaching on and on, with windows like eyes to see it, and the school will have children of maybe three languages—oh, I’m blabbing again.”

She took his hand—conventionally, yet with a slight second pressure—and moved away.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### TAR AND FEATHERS.

Bo Brown, aghast when his chief came drenched into the store, helped him change clothes in the oil-shed and trembled at the man's grim silence—which so far as that episode was concerned Peppercorn never broke. The chairman wrote at once to Hiram Flater, resigning his chairmanship, "owing to pressure of business". As there was yet no newspaper in Jericho, Bo Brown became the official spokesman, cautiously holding the balance of sentiment which now excited the village and the farmhouses even more than the news of a railway or the rumoured resignation of Miss Barlow. For several days Peppercorn was out of the village.

"Busy on the railway right of way," explained Bo to Hiram Flater, who came in a splutter wanting to know what he should do about a trustee meeting. "Two are a quorum. What's the agenda?"

"Miss Barlow's resignation. Got it to home. Consarn these monkey-shines! Hull section upsot. Like t'know who's t'blame."

Which was so intensely the concern of everybody that the letter which Maggie Moss received from Tode Beech, saying that he would be back in Jericho for the early summer, excited nobody but Maggie, and Boanerges who had given her the letter.

"Hope and trust your friend arrives soon enough to see—the little drama of justice that will happen one of these days in Jericho," said Bo. "Oh, wait and see, Maggie."

Of all this Hansen knew nothing; miles distant in the green bush where even a stray steer never came and where deers sniffed at the woodsman's strange shanty; under centuries of trees, for generations owned by the Canada Company, oozy, flower-strewn, thick with glades of underbrush and saplings that networked up colonnades of vast shaggy pillars to a colossal, bird-haunted wilderness of green, through which only furtive glimpses of blue revealed that a man alone in such a forest belonged to any universe vaster than that of the trees, or was anything but a dwarf.

To "slash" and girdle such forests had long been the work of such men as Hiram Flater, and from him Olaf had learned much of the craft. But more primevally, instead of building a board shanty in the clearing, Olaf contrived his on a back bush knoll from the trunk of a wind-blown hard maple whose clay roots made one wall—and the other two he made of poles hung with old quilts; the roof of dovetailed semicylinders of elm bark; outside the doorway, his fire; on the ledges of the roots, his pots, pans, dishes, lamp and books; in a small cave near by, his cache; his water from a little well dug in the clay. And whenever a Chippewa hunter came past he veered wide of this crude habitation as something uncanny.

The work was gigantic; to take down the trees, following a line of stakes driven by the surveyors; to half chop five, each of four notched towards the last; then to chop one into the chain—sending the whole magnificent six down in a superhuman, blasphemous, god-defying crash of destruction. Sweat; mosquitoes, but for which he would have worn no shirt; calloused hands and arms of steel; swift, smoking meals on a plaque of wood; ten hours slinging a four-pound axe every day—each day more of the sky coming in, more jampiles green to wither in the hot sun; great crotch-high curtains of woodbine torn and twisted profanely into the jungle of devastated trees; and then in the evening, a mosquito smudge, the birds and his books.

With such a life—where on any map was a village called Jericho? But between hours at the books he sat and sang the songs of Jericho; mostly those he had first heard Sadie sing—with some hymns.

Singing "God moves in a mysterious way," he slung his evening dishwater into a swale, when for the first time since his exile he heard human voices; then a crackling. He turned and saw emerging from the underbrush Chippewa Tom Dodge, his bulky form half-obscuring the lean profile of Bo Brown, who was whacking mosquitoes. Tom carried a gun and a woodchuck slung with bark over his shoulder.

"Nice fat woodchuck, Olaf!" chortled Bo, noticing that the bushman was inclined to be unsociable. "Poor Injun! says trees falling in summertime scare away the deer. Big hole you're making in God's grand bush, Olaf; but how do you stand the devil's own mosquitoes?"

Olaf slung his pan to the shack. "Bo" as he coolly surveyed the intruders. "Tom Dodge told you that in Chippewa, didn't he? Yes, you're learning his language to preach to redskins. Well—you tell Z. Peppercorn in Chippewa where this shebang of mine is when you get back to Jericho. That's the good boy! Good-bye Tom!"

Early in July Dr. Strang was taking supper in one of Marlborough's four wooden hotels, talking to his parrot who between crackers cryptically croaked, "Down with John A.! Hooray!", when the floor of the surly-papered dining room suddenly shook to heavy boots, and a bronze Hercules flung his felt hat on the floor, sat at a table and drew a long breath.

"Hullo Hansen! Down for exams?" smiled the glib Doctor. "How is Miss Barlow?"

"I don't know, Doctor. I'm bushwhacking now."

Next morning Hansen began three days in a world to become more bewildering than the bush. The evening of the last examination he went with Dr. Strang to the fair grounds park to watch lacrosse.

"Our national game, Hansen,—but doomed to extinction." He yawned vastly. "Remember—it was a game of lacrosse that won the siege of Detroit in the War of 1812. The great American game of baseball is going to win the siege of Canada from now on. And that's only the beginning."

In an impulsive letter to Sadie that evening Hansen quoted this saying of Strang's as he told her about the exams, and wound up more personally, "Your troubles in Jericho came mostly on my account. I hope my apparent ingratitude is no greater than my real sense of regret. You are worth more to Jericho than ten like me. Please stay there. I'm out of it for good."

Next morning he bought a dozen bananas, took the mail stage as far west as a bee line from his shanty and burrowed again into the bush; from the smell of ancestral liquor and the old parrot execrating "John A." in a wooden hotel, to the tang of withering tree-tops and the clang of vireos; from the world of books into the wilderness of the forest.

Sadie was still in the village. Her resignation had been accepted "with sincere regrets" signed by Hiram Flater. Maggie was into her expected throes over Tode Beech who came in a splendid swagger of city clothes, bought a nobbier horse and rig than Phil Kearney's and at once proceeded to admire the growth of Jericho and find out what was the matter with everybody—especially Miss Barlow.

"She aint worrying about Spikey, is she Mag?"

"How do I know?" snapped Maggie rolling dough for a pie. "Queer thing a lady that weeps one day and smiles the next interests a man more than a person that's always chuckling and serene. Oh, you haven't got me yet even if you have popped the question. I'm in no desprit hurry, Mr. Beech."

"Nippy little piece," soliloquised Tode as Maggie vanished for a moment and came back to say, "Now you c'n see how a real lady conquers a man. She wants to see you."

"Me—oh I aint fixed up fer parlour calls."

"Go on in, stoopid! It's important."

"Oh, is it? Sump'n 'bout that tar an' feathers party that's gonna be held in honor'v Mr. Olaf Hansen leavin' town on a rail—I guess. Well, serves 'im right in a way."

"Not becuz he doused Zach Peppercorn."

"Who said? Spikey's got his faults, though."

"Oh yes, big words and independent—go on?"

"Causes Miss Barlow to resign—you know why."

"Do I? You tell me—smartie!"

"Oh, gits Phil Kearney jealous."

"Yes," paring the edge of a pie. "And who else?"

"Mr. Boanerges Brown. Gimme a cookie, Mag?"

"Oh! When did you ever make any one jealous?"

"Me! Pshaw, I c'n blow in here with a gol' watch, seventeen jools, stuckupstart as duds c'n make me, an Jericho eats out o' my hand."

"Well, you go an see how she makes you—ditto."

Half an hour later Tode came back with a smile and admitted, "Well I'm signed up."

"Oh! For the tar party?"

"Yup. Gonna see Spikey. Tell 'im he's gotta come to see her to-morra night; trunk's packed, but she won't budge till he shows up."

"Then he'll be tarred and feathered for sure. Dontchu let 'im."

"Poh! How kin two stop a crowd?"

"Thick-head! Aint there two girls behind you?"

"Now y're talkin'. But he's gotta face the music all by 'is lonesome first. 'Becuz,' I says, 'I know Spikey well enough to bet that when he realizes he's been the monkey-wrench in the thrashin' machine, he's game enough to take his medsun.' So I'm off to the shanty to-night. So long Mag. Got nuther cookie?"

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Hansen rubbed his boots with banana-skin next evening and set out for Jericho. At the clearing after dusk he saw clouds; the night would be dark. He had never noticed so many windows in Jericho. There was a caucus on the store stoop; somebody called "G'd-night!" He walked on, past the mill, down to the Moss farm. Sadie, exquisite in a cool flouncing frock, with a faint suggestion of violet perfume, came to the parlour door.

Maggie had never known Sadie take so long to "fix up" even for Dr. Strang. She was intensely curious as she heard the two voices; heard them laugh. Tode was up at the village. He had told her of his strategic manoeuvre to upset the tar party; she thought it "great!". But to Maggie's notion those two people in the parlour should be more dramatic than to be talking about seeing each other at the Collegiate in Plainsville, and how much money Olaf would have to pay his expenses for a year. They spoke quickly.

"Sugar!" sighed Maggie. "'Taint a bit like I dremp it would."

But suddenly Olaf did raise his voice enough for Maggie to hear, "I deserve it. But tar and feathers—Yankee custom!—isn't half so bad as all you've done for me has been—good!" Then Sadie spoke; inaudible to Maggie who whispered, "oh—oh, goodie!" when Olaf said again, "They can rail-ride me to ballyhoo, but the tar will be all off me long before some of the rest will be rid of what I give 'em."

Afterwards there was a terrific noise on the road; stones crashing into the verandah; jangled cowbells, boos, cat-calls, groans—and Sadie came running to the kitchen.

"He's gone out, Maggie. Oh, I'm a wretch!"

"You—aint! Don't—werry! You guv Tode a contract. Trust 'im. Trust the other one too. Listen?"

The road was quiet now except for slowly scrunching boots. Maggie looked out. Inky dark. She knew, but could not see, that Olaf was being silently bodyguarded fore and aft by shadowy figures towards the mill.

"Sadie," laying aside her apron, "you go up an' talk to dad an' mam; they aint in bed now. I'm goin' to see the fracas."

When Maggie came as near as she dared to the corner of the mill and the engine house close to the pond, where before dusk Tode had persuaded Kearney and Bo Brown to stow the pail of tar and the whitewash brush, a pair of shiny Cleveland boots had just kicked a lantern into the pond.

"Now Spikey!" hissed Tode in his ear as he jangled a cowbell at arm's length, "back to the corner and hand'm y'r dooks! Fast as you paste'm I'll tend to'm. Ho!" he bellowed. "Y'ho! Come on Jericho!"

Maggie began the story afterwards, while Hansen with what clothes he had left was limping back to the shanty, and Tode with the two girls was washing at the pump. Her ribs were sore with laughter but she held them again and laughed again.

"Got the highstrikes?" said Tode swuzzling his face. "Poor Cleveland soot's up the stump now. Ticker's O.K. though. Oh say, Mag, fer the love o' Mike, tell the lady 'fore she goes away to-morra—"

Maggie did her best to describe how one by one and two by two as they charged at Hansen in the corner, he had toppled the gang over to Tode, on one knee at the bank. "And he plops them into the pond—stickiest clay—like a lot o' bullfrogs

—the boots pullin’ off—the sputter an’ the spits—oh s—say! S—say! Zach Peppercorn—o—oh! I can hear ’im yet—like a rhinoceros—o—oh! Wo—ow! S—say!”

“Yeh,” growled Tode as he tweaked his tie, “that pond sure did sound like a circus tank full o’ seals—an’ that Spikey has got one godawful punch! Wish yeh all kinds o’ luck, Miss, wherever yeh be. Sorry y’re leavin’ Jericho jist as I come back. Now Mag, let’s have a cookie.”

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The evening before Sadie left Jericho she went to the Flaters’ to thank them for having been so kind to Hansen. She played blind man’s buff with the children, sang for Cornelia and Hiram—without an instrument—then as she left, glancing round the “front room” with its perforated motto *God Bless Our Home* and its rag carpet, she said, “Won’t you let me leave my little organ here—till you can buy one?” Which so excited Hiram that the very next day he trudged back to Hansen’s shanty on the Back Line to tell him. Hansen was working like a whirlwind to make up for lost time.

“I stopped so often chopping this forenoon,” he told Hiram, “because I was listening for the whistle of a train. Some day I hope you buy that organ—worth its weight in gold!”

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# BOOK TWO

## THE COUNTY TOWN

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### CHAPTER I.

#### COLLEGIATE DREAMS.

Headmaster McCorm of the Plainsville Collegiate chuckled with amusement when he read a brief letter from Olaf Hansen:

“Dear Sir:

I have decided to attend your Collegiate, with a view to going up for a Third-Class Certificate next summer; but as I am short of funds, I should be obliged if you will let me go on through for a Second on that date if I guarantee to get up all the work. Miss Barlow, late of Jericho, has been my teacher and will be glad to testify as to my industry as well as to my lack of funds, which is so urgent that I have arranged with another student who has been a clerk in London, Ont., and came from a farm on the lake shore near Jericho, to keep back. Miss Barlow herself—who took her Third from your school and is a friend of Mr. Hagarty, chairman of your Board—is going back for her Second. She says she has some doubts as to my being able to get a Second in one year, but I have none myself; and I hope in saying so I do not seem to be bombastic, or that in asking for such a favour I propose to break any good rules of the School even though I may interfere with traditions.

Respectfully yours,  
Olaf Hansen.”

Unaware of this declaration of independence, Sadie made it her first care to see Chairman Hagarty to ask his influence in letting Hansen plough through the Forms. Hagarty promised to speak to the headmaster and added:

“Now, Miss Barlow, unless you are otherwise located, come and live with us. Both our boys are at college and we have vacant rooms. You can pay Mrs. Hagarty the lowest rate obtainable in any good boarding-house, if there is such a place in Plainsville, which I very much doubt.”

“Oh, Mr. Hagarty!” she blushed and stammered, “Oh, wouldn’t I love to. But I can’t. No indeed—I can’t!” She rose. “No I have other arrangements. I can’t tell you what. But all the kindness you want to show me, please put into letting Hansen go his own gait in the Collegiate. I may never get through for my Second anyway, for I’m not a good student—but he is. Thanks all the same!”

“Well, be sure to come and see us?”

“Er—oh yes, thanks—as often as I can.”

A day or two after he began his studies Hansen met Sadie on the way home.

“How do you like it Olaf?”

“Oh, it’s too fine! It’s heaven. Knowledge isn’t just a cold god; it’s a demigod; half human anyhow—but divine. I like the masters, the students with beards, the pretty girls, the ‘lab’, the ‘gym’, the whole idea of *mens sana in corpore sano*—now what are you smiling at? Of course women don’t feel like that. Women don’t reverence wisdom; they’re part of the show that men have to adore—somehow. They inspire poetry, but they don’t make it—not the big stuff! Byron hit it right in ‘The Isles of Greece where burning Sappho loved and sung’. Oh of course there was Minerva, and Psyche, and a few more, and—oh, do you live over this way?”

“Yes, but I’m going downtown to shop.”

“Hope you’ve got a nice boarding-house. Baching’s fine. Celibate Lodge, I call it. One room and a pantry where we

hang our clothes—.” She glanced at his pepper-and-salt readymades and huge bowler hat bought at Port Sand, and he felt his ears warming. “Such as we have,” he said. “Snook, my side kick, though, has a real wardrobe; quite a dress-up dude, carries a cane Sundays and wears pyjamas—excuse me,” he began to whistle. “Isn’t this a great little park? Baseball and lacrosse—think I’ll go in for lacrosse; national game; that’s the drill shed over yonder; fine little regiment here, good band too.”

Thus he bubbled along, over the rickety creek bridge, into the main street where he turned and she went across. At the corner he watched her skirt along the shops before he dodged into a stairway by a shining grocery and went upstairs three steps at a time with such a hullabaloo that one of the modistes on the first floor up said, “My heart! there’s that bushwhacker student coming home; he goes downstairs in the morning like a ton of coal into a cellar and comes upstairs like a regiment all shouting and singing at once.”

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So, one Saturday evening in October two gargoyles, one with a mop of spiky hair, leaned from third-storey windows over the main street of Plainsville. One of them had a dish towel over his arm. Sputtering arc lights at the street corners and in the aisles the best stores gave a theatrical aspect to the week-end parade of citizens past a big wooden clock-house; shoppers, belated marketers, post-officers, a bus taking passengers from the Corona Hotel, a lurching cab, and a straggle of strollers in the wake of a silver cornet band which was making its glorious way up to the opera house. One of the gargoyles was Hansen.

“Snook,” he said to his room-mate, “when this street has windows five times as far up, I wonder if it’ll seem any more like a city than it does now?”

Snook was too much absorbed over girls holding up their skirts at a crossing to have opinions about the dazzling economic future of the county town; wondering too, if the Baby sisters, modistes, in the room below were also gazing out of their windows.

“Band stopped; show soon be on, Herkie” (short for Hercules). “Darkies singing down by the market; guess they’re coming up street. Over a thousand darkies in this town.” Hansen went back to dish-washing. “Seems queer, Snookie, that as long as we’ve been here, neither of us knows where Sadie Barlow is living. Somewhere in the east end though. Oh well,” as he put wood in the stove, “she doesn’t know where I live either—I guess—so what’s the odds?”

He whistled *Steal Away* as the darkey quartette came by singing under the windows. Snook took his banjo, and they both sang it. Presently Hansen went out to fetch a pail of water from the pump below. He listened at the top landing as usual to make sure the modistes’ door was shut, because once he had met one of the sisters lugging up wood when he was going down for water, and when he offered to take the wood the whole armful clattered downstairs. Just as he came to the landing below the door opened, and in the light—

“Sadie!” he whispered. Pulling up his collar, shoulders hunched, he went slouching past in the low flare of the gas jet and vanished down the back stairs. “Close shave!” he muttered at the pump. “Wonder what she’s doing at the Modistes’?”

When he got back with the water, Snook was gone.

“Hmh! Sneaked off to the show. Good!”

With furious energy he swept the rag carpet, chucked the broom into the pantry where both the celibates kept their clothes, and went writing a spontaneous essay on “Molecules”, part of which he read aloud, glad that Snook was not there to yawn. Then he wrote his month’s experiences at Collegiate Form I which he headed “A Bushwhacker’s Respects to a Polite Education”, and ended with a letter of thanks to James Hagarty Esq., Chairman of the Collegiate Board, for his kind influence with the headmaster in letting him pass into Form II the following week.

“Daresay that’s due to the fine Italian hand of a lady in Form Four,” he reflected. “She’s a friend of the Hagarty’s. Ah!” he debated, pacing the rag carpet as though he were a great editor dictating a leader, “I remember—she told me in Jericho about a house the size of a small castle where she used to visit when she studied here for her Third. Hagarty Hall—that’s it; built by the lawyer that buys English money at three per cent, and sells it to farmers at seven—the firm that Peppercorn got his money from; the man that teaches Sunday School—sure to be elected Mayor on his improved waterworks scheme; born on a farm, too; real Canadian; copies his castle from a baronial house—hold on though! half

the materials in it are from the United States, and a Detroit artist decorated it—oh well, what’s the odds?” as he gazed out at the street; and there by the flare of an arc light, passing the Hotel Corona he saw Snook and Miss Sadie Barlow laughing like youngsters.

“Well, what’s the brilliant idea, Snook?” as the recreant with Christie hat and cane came whistling in.

“Oh nothing, Herkie, nothing. Why?”

“You walking with—her?”

“Me? Oh sure. Took her to *Alvin Joslyn*. Barrels of fun. Laughed my head off; so did she. Jolly girl that—what did you say? No, said she’d prefer to go home alone, thanks. No, donno where she lives,” tunking his banjo on *Litoria* from the College Song Book.

“Suppose you didn’t know she was down here at the dressmakers’ before the show? Got any idea why?”

“Oh! New gown I daresay. What do you think I heard though? Hagarty that teaches you and me in Sunday-School owns the opera house.”

“No! Don’t believe it. Opera house is a synagogue of sin. Let’s have a duet.” Hansen took his mouth-organ. Between the two of them they made such a midnight orgy of *Litoria*, both of them singing “*Swedelewedumbum*” in unison, that the Baby Modistes sent up one of the sisters in a kimona to ask, “Would the young gentlemen please to sing a little more softly when it comes to Sunday morning?”

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE “LIL NIGGERS.”

Sarah Shane at 74 Centre street was much mystified over her new and only boarder—who was equally perturbed over the premises of Mrs. Shane. Centre Street, running from the creek into the negro quarter, had lost an old gentility and was waiting for the new. The man who sold Sarah the plain, flat red-brick house with the iron rods holding the walls together said that the negroes ten blocks away were dwindling; that in time they would be gone.

“He did not say how much time,” recollected Sarah to her quavery old father, a widower. “But I’ll not be discouraged. I’ll have wan boarder in me front room up, anyway.”

The old man acquiesced; just as he had done when, after the demise of John Wesley Shane, Sarah had lured him from the farm to the town which he hated as much as she despised the country. With a hard-work hump on his back he looked after the coal, the ashes and the water, while Sarah who dressed constantly in black and resembled a human hornet in shape, did her best to furbish up the old house and prink the front room into a lure for some nice boarder—who after two years of patience came in the person of Miss Barlow.

When Sadie first saw that room with its old walnut bed, threadbare Axminster, tri-coloured gas jet and as much heat as could be coaxed in from a coal stove in the hallway, twin to the stove in the hall below, she decided that for ten months she would be the most unsociable young woman in Plainville. Nobody would ever look for a boarding-house here. With the creek at one end and the darkies on the other, she was socially safe.

“But will ye tell me, father, whyever that blossom creature came to us?” said Sarah to the old man, who shook his white whiskers and could give no reason, more than that all people were crazy who lived in the town. But Sarah loved the mud-hole town with its bells, churches, market, river and ships, its two lurching cabs and its hotel busses, as though it had been a city of magic. She went twice a Sunday to the Duke St. Methodist Church and saw in its congregation all the social strata of the town, except the negroes who had their own little churches. She listened to Hopkins Mus. Doc. play the little Boston organ, smelled the red carpet and sang the hymns; and when Miss Barlow came to be her boarder, Sarah believed that the age of miracles was not past.

Sadie at once made the best of a self-imposed bad job. She bought rose-coloured cretonne over-curtains for the dingy window, a few pictures for the drab-blue wallpaper, a pretty silk scarf for a small table which she used also for a desk, and a little bookcase which with the coloured bindings of her books seemed to play with the colour of the curtains. Even

her dresses, hung on the open wall, were to Sarah's misty but detective eyes a blessed decoration.

"'Tis a blossom she is!" said Sarah to her father. "And it's Blossom I'll call her, no less!"

But not even the thrifty magic of Sadie could have transformed the sad parlour whose dingy yellow carpet, glaring red wallpaper and wheezy cabinet organ with the enlarged opal portrait of the late John Wesley Shane directly above it, had for its dominant note of dejection a synthetic "calla lily" wreath in a glass case. She did, however, engage a man to clean the organ and mend its bellows; and the songs she sang before the windows were closed sometimes drew the picaninnies from Darkietown to the lower end of Centre St.; and as Sarah abominated negroes almost as much as she loved the songs, she was in a worse dilemma than before.

Hansen, with his own peculiar regard for the town as a Henry George evolution of the village and the farm, strolled through the negro quarter one hazy November afternoon, viewing the higgledy-piggledy white shacks, swarming chickens, little churches—all of which he supposed would vanish whenever Plainsville entered its second phase of development as a true Canadian town. He heard at a distance a strangely familiar voice singing one of the songs that Sadie used to teach the Jericho school. He shuffled along through the heaps of leaves to a corner. In front of a little white church, yonder was Sadie, among a group of lurid, kinky-haired picaninnies, who rolled their eyes and showed the white teeth in their little black masks of faces, as they sang the song and went through its motions, gazing up at her as though she had been a goddess. Then came a little impromptu dialogue game in which Sadie was the pretended mammie to all the little darkies, who when the game was over wallowed through the swales of yellow leaves, clinging to her skirts, till at a Centre St. corner she turned and said with a merry laugh,

"Now you lil niggers, we'll have Kemo-Kimo. Come on now—

' Away down south on Centre Street  
Sing-song kitty katchie kimee-oh!  
That's where de darkies grow ten feet,  
Sing-song kitty katchie kimee-oh!"

the second and last line only sung by the pickies, and then every little woollie-head yawping on the chorus,

"Kemo-kimo, diro-wah m'hi, m'ho,  
Merumstuck pummie that'll suit bake-billy  
With a nipcum nipcat  
And in come Sally singin'  
Sometime pennywinkle, nipcum nipcat,  
Sing-song kitty katchie kimee-oh!"

"Now lil niggers, run 'way home to your real mammies and don't get lost."

And away she went with a wave of her hand, more of a riddle to Hansen than what might become of Plainsville and its darkies.

When, at the edge of the first snowfall, Miss Barlow came home to 74 Centre Street with a new white satin gown which she hung on a wall of her chilly room, Sarah Shane was more mystified than ever. Even the old man, chucking coal into the hall stove took a peep at that gown before he went down to lug another scuttlefull to the hall stove below. "Guess she's loony," he would have said of anybody else but Miss Barlow.

"Is it a real party ye're going to, and not wan o' them crokinole things at all?" asked Sarah at the supper table which between the heat from kitchen and hall was somewhere above freezing point.

"Oh no, I'm going to sing at the Collegiate concert in the opera house, Mrs. Shane. You must come and hear me, Mr. Marberry," she said close to the old man's deaf ear. But he shook his whiskers and said, "Surely an opera house is a wicked place." When she told him that Dr. Strang, member of the Collegiate Board, was to make a speech to the students, he said that he knew the Doctor. "He's going to Windsor to practice," shouted Sadie, "part of the time in Detroit." The old man seemed scarcely to know where such places might be. "But I'll warrant they're wicked," he said.

A few days before the concert Hansen entered Form III of the Collegiate. His hunger for studies was abnormal. As he sat with Snook among students and citizens at the concert he dreamed still less of what Sadie was thinking behind the

scenes, waiting with Dr. Strang to come on stage. He did not know that she had engaged one of the two Plainsville cabs to bring her to the opera house, and that a queer, mystified woman like Sarah Shane had come with her and would be at the stage door to go home with her when the cab came again. He listened to Chairman Hagarty's concise speech, pointing with pride to the fact that forty-two per cent. of the Collegiate pupils came from villages and farms, and that at least a hundred of its students were now "filling important positions in Detroit, Cleveland and Chicago."

The speech of Dr. Strang—in the same broad waistcoat and squeegee black bow, with his black mane flopping like an Indian chief's—made even Sarah Shane shake her sides at the Humours of Geology. But to Hansen the most brilliant thing spoken by Strang was his introduction of "Miss Sadie Barlow whose beautiful old songs on platforms where I have been speaker have always made me jealous."

Sadie came on stage in the white satin gown *en traîne*. There was a sentimental story about that gown which Strang could have told—he had only extracted it from the singer behind the scenes when they both talked briefly about Hansen. She sang one of her old favourites, making no effort to follow the songs in vogue; and for the last encore gave a little comic mono-dialogue between a picaninny and its mamma, in which Hansen recognized part of the very picture he had seen among the November leaves in the negro quarter.

After that number, to him the splendour of the scenes and the pomp of the speeches from Henry VIII seemed the inadequate voice of a far distant age.

"I'd like to tell an audience some day she was my teacher," he thought half aloud to Snook as they went out with the crowd.

"Why don't you go back and tell her now, Herkie? Great Scott! Strang won't be jealous. Hagarty won't mind, even if he does ask her to Hagarty Hall."

"Ask her—what?" said Hansen on the sidewalk.

"Oh nothing. Lovely wet snow for a new Christie. Hope somebody takes the lady home. By George! there she goes now, Herkie, in a cab! But who's that with her?" meaning Sarah Shane who the moment the cab came to the stage door popped into it ahead of the singer, just before Chairman Hagarty and Dr. Strang had time to come out.

Hansen made a leap to reach the cab, bumping into Hagarty and Strang, knocking his hat under the horse's feet as the vehicle creaked away into the driving snow.

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## CHAPTER III.

### SEQUEL TO CHRISTMAS.

One Saturday afternoon near Christmas, Hansen at the Mechanics' Institute was buried in John Stuart Mill's *Liberty*, yearning to take it home and write marginal comments. He was thinking of the Collegiate; of the little hills of knowledge that a few weeks ago had loomed like mountains; of the mountains that towered ahead; of Parnassus, whatever it might be—while three lawyers were delving into books, making notes for a debate at the Disraeli Club whose room was up the dark stairs. Most of the young townfolk were still at the post office waiting for a belated mail; and what few of them might come to exchange books would get none of recent fiction in that library of diligent thought.

"Parnassus," he muttered, gazing out of a window at a load of pork, "A man has to be cradled in a college to climb that."

A shuffly old man with a reiterant cough, whose back had been turned at the book-shelves ever since Hansen entered, came and stood over him. The pockets of his threadbare overcoat bulged with copies of a paper headed *Market Gleaner*. His old Christie hat was battered, his head was bald, a pipe upside down in his mouth, and he bore the aroma of recently acquired whisky.

"Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring," he said thickly but with a concise accent. "What's that you have—ah! my old friend Mill. Knew him well—Huxley, Spencer, Darwin—I knew them all. Pleasant fellows. Poor Mill was sometimes a worse pessimist than even Goldwin Smith, who founded Mechanics' Institutes. In one of his essays he confesses that, the number of permutations and combinations of semitones in the diatonic scale being fixed, no new music

could be composed after that limit was reached—hence, his sadness.”

Hansen rose. He had heard of this old man, Burnham; born in Trinity College, Dublin—his father an eminent mathematical savant—addicted to speeches in Greek and Latin; who spent his days law-clerking for Hagarty and Bosworth, many of his evenings in bar-rooms, his midnight prowling about the town, the rest of the night on a straw pallet in a room behind the law offices, and his spare time editing the *Market Gleaner*.

“Mr. Burnham,” he said incoherently, when the bells rang five, “you make me feel as if this Canadian town, just one generation out of the bush, is as old as Canterbury.”

“Christmas coming,” coughed Burnham as he buttoned his coat. “Hogs heavy on market to-day; price light. Poor farmers! This town’s English enough,” he went on as they walked up the street. “That clock-house there—English as Bow Bells; that town hall—perfect replica of old English, facade, turret, belfry, market beneath and town hall above; little St. Jude’s church down at the end of the market cobblestones—Anglican as the Book of Common Prayer; cabbies both Londoners; Hagarty—mayor by acclamation—English as Lord Mayor without the accent. All’s English here except the mud-holes—bless my soul! half the farmers are gone home and I’ve not sold twenty Gleaners. Gleaner! Gleaner!” holding out his little sheet to the marketers. “Only newspaper sold on Plainsville streets. Prices and poetry, pork and philosophy. Vanitas vanitatum! But Solomon never drank whisky. Gleaner? Gleaner?”

A swift whirl of snow veiled the old news-vendor as Hansen, saddened at the futility of an old man’s knowledge, trudged away among the shoppers into a bookstore to buy a Christmas book for Sadie.

Christmastime flung its lights, shadows and colours over the snow-painted town. The market was gay with decorated beeves, paper festoons, snow-wheeled wagons and democrats, frost-blowing farm-folk, bundled-up townspeople with baskets, tolling bell and singing negroes, and betimes the organ of St. Jude’s where Hopkins Mus. Doc. was practising Christmas music to be in his beloved Anglican atmosphere. Saturday before Tuesday—Christmas—the shops were crammed. Snook bought Hansen a pair of woollen gloves. “Good of you, Snookie. How about this?” handing him a pair of cuff-holders. “Thanks Herkie, just what I wanted. But that pocket-book of yours must be in need of some new paper lining soon?”

Hansen unbuttoned his vest and drew out the pocket-book; snapping the elastic band he counted what he had left. “’Tis a little slack, Snookie; but I’ve got Hiram Flater’s note for balance of wages here; I’ll collect that when I see him after Christmas. He’s had a good crop. Hogs are up ten cents now.”

“Sorry I can’t ask you out to the farm, Herkie; but our thirty-second cousins are all coming, some of them for a week—and I’m going to spend New Year’s in Detroit.”

“Oh that’s all right. I’ll hold down the ranch here Christmas; out to Jericho the day after. Guess the modistes are gone; seems quiet below—thought I heard that door squeak at the landing, though. No,” opening the door, “guess not.” He gazed out over the arc lights that flickered like stars across the river and above the black funnel of the wagon-works. “Beautiful,” he muttered. “But how the dickens,” fumbling at a tissue parcel in his pocket, “am I to find her with this? I know! I know!” He banged back into the room.

“Well, Archimedes, what’s the Eureka?”

“I’ll give this parcel to the milkman; he’ll know where she lives; he covers all that part of the town.”

Half an hour later after the two had sung *Adeste Fideles* to a zippy banjo accompaniment, Hansen went out to lug up an armful of wood from the creekside yard behind the grocery. “Hullo, what’s this?” picking up a small cardboard box with his name on it and a pink ribbon. “What the Sam Slick? Say, Snookie—somebody was up that stairway.”

They peered together over the box which contained a knit silk green tie and a violet-perfumed note in a dainty envelope.

“I know that perfume, Snookie—it’s hers!” He took the note to the desk while Snook inspected the tie.

“Dear Olaf:

I hope this little tie has no more strands in its web—and I’ve just about counted them—than your Christmas will have golden threads of joy. I’ll be in Detroit for Xmas.

Sadie.”

“Herkie,” said Snook after the slow repetition of the words like a hymn, “you never can beat the tactics of some

women.” And the market bell rang twelve.

Hansen suddenly remembered there was a west-bound train at 12.15. He hurled himself into his coat and rushed down. She was not at the station. He went back past Hagarty Hall, ablaze to the attic. Music was still going there; banjo, guitar, piano. He recollected that in Jericho Sadie had told him of visiting there.

Sunday morning early he caught the red-bearded milkman below and gave him the forlorn-hope parcel. “You know where Miss Barlow boards, but don’t tell me. Please leave this for her. No, not a word about who sent it—not a word!”

In the choir at church he and Snook both wished Sadie were in the front row to keep the sopranos from gasping on the *Hallelujah Chorus* and Hopkins Mus. Doc. from glaring so at the looking-glass. Monday afternoon Snook went. That evening Hansen tried to study, bought eatables and hickory nuts that he cracked at the stove: went for a wild walk, called at the ugly house of Hopkins Mus. Doc. to wish him and his brawling brood a merry Christmas—which next day, cooking fried meals and plugging at arrears of Form III, he made as merry as he could for himself; and the next afternoon with a pack of books slung over his shoulder he tramped sixteen miles over hubbly snow roads—to visit Hiram Flater at Jericho. Cornelia thought he never would get done playing on Miss Barlow’s organ. But he went to the bush to help Hiram saw logs.

When Hansen, five days later, saw again the snow-flecked spires of Plainsville in moonlight he almost sang as his boots scrunched once more on the sidewalk.

Snook returned by the last possible train before school. He found Hansen making up lost time with his books, in a sort of Olympic calm.

“Took your good time coming, Snookie.”

“Yes and you’re a cheerful reception committee to a man that’s been seeing Henry Irving and Ellen Terry in *Becket*. Geewhiz!”

“Oh! Suppose you know who wrote it?”

Snook lubricated a cigar. “Well, if I didn’t I had somebody along who did. Guess who?”

“I daresay by your accent you mean—Miss Barlow?”

“Plato—you are absolutely right.”

“Well—glad you had such good company. What’s that infernal thing?” as Snook slowly covered the bed with lurid pictorial pages.

“Sunday paper, Herkie. Got the *Arabian Nights* beaten a mile. Whole page about Michigan couples that get married in Windsor with divorce coupons on the licenses. Half page about Plainsville——”

“I see. Picture of Mayor-elect Hagarty and his house—copied from English model but built mainly of American material and decorated by Detroit artist. Hmm!”

“Go on. Grab the hot end of the poker, Herkie.”

“Oh—smugglers! Wha—at?”

“Sure! Elite of Plainsville—some church people—caught at the border with old-fashioned bodices and skirts as full of Detroit silks and lingerie as a carpenter’s kit of tools; disgorge, pay duty, no arrests—no names given. Oh Hercules!” Hansen stuffed the whole Sunday paper into the stove and checked the dampers. “Ends that Snookie.”

Snook lighted his cigar. Hansen opened both windows.

“Well,” shivering, “how about the good time I had?”

“What about it?” standing at the window.

Snook began to make complete confession, not without some anguishing delight, of a little New-Year-Out party at the Boulevard Hotel. “Go on,” commanded Hansen, leaning over the back of a chair. “Well, it was after the play. Sadie and I met Dr. Strang on the way out. He suggested a cup of coffee; said they had such good coffee at the Boulevard. So they had. He told how the U.S. became experts in coffee when they put the ban on old King George’s tea. That got your friend Briggs into it, talking Stars and Stripes. ‘Have a cup of coffee?’ says Strang. ‘On New Year’s Eve—coffee?’ says Briggs. ‘No sir! I reciprocate the slur on our patriotic coffee by drinking good Walkerville whisky.’ He got so

uproarious that Strang took him out. Aw, don't look so gravestone glum!" as Hansen began to pace the floor. "She didn't do anything but drink coffee and smile and act like a perfect lady that needed a little exhilaration after pluggin' at books and the Lord knows what. Briggs apologized next morning on the telephone. I came with her to Windsor and we took the same train home. Any harm in that, Herkie?"

"And neither you nor she read the Riot Act to Briggs?"

"Make a scene? No. What's the use? We had a little lark with Customs though. She smiled sweetly at Brassie and got by. Then she goes back and says, 'Sorry sir, but I've been smuggling'. 'Smuggling what?' says he. 'Fun', she says. 'I've had a lovely time in Detroit seeing all the plays and not a cent of customs.' And all that time, Herkie, she had on a new silk waist, with her old one in her valise."

Hansen gloomily got up, took his overcoat and went for a walk. When he got back Snook was snoring the sleep of the just.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS.

Our Solon soon got a brief but cordial letter from Sadie, thanking him for the Christmas calendar brochure with a picture and verse for each month. His reply was as brief, but less cordial:

"Dear Sadie:

The book, like my taste in art, is nothing except that it may suggest the happy years of our future friendship. In my own view you are still my teacher whom I must continue to respect; my superior to whom I choose to defer. I shall always associate you with a very precious time of my life, in dear old stupid Jericho. I have been reading Herbert Spencer's *Data of Ethics*. Society, it seems to me, is a state of evolution almost biological in character. There are fixed differences between orders of being. You are endowed with humanizing talents to which I hope always to look up—as you also evolve.

With all best wishes for the New Year,  
Your pupil,  
Olaf Hansen.

P.S.—Everybody thinks the tie is bully. Thanks!"

This was sent to Form V, into which Sadie had managed to squeeze with low marks. It puzzled her, but disturbed her more—that he now had an easy way of knowing her address, yet had not found it. All the landlady could say about the book was that the milkman had brought it.

"But he refused to tell who gev it him, Miss—"

"What business was it of yours, Mrs. Shane?"

"Oh Miss Barlow," startled at these first angry words. "Nothing at all, at all. I meant no meddlin'. Sure ye'll not leave this house?"

"No, Mrs. Shane. I shall stay here, even if I do have to shiver every evening, and break the ice in the pitcher in the morning, and listen to the blue gas. But please never mention my name to a soul or give any description that would identify me. I just don't want people to know where I am—that's all!"

Sadie emphatically closed her door. Blanched and speechless, Sarah went to the old man in the kitchen. Words of dumb fury wrote themselves on her face; till she exploded, "Me house is me home! I'm as good as she is! Bang my door indeed! The whim of her—comes to this house to escape somebody, no less! Ah!" as the oil of cunning calmed her fury, "old man—'tis him that sent the book that she hides from. So 'tis. I'll find out—so I will."

The milkman, however, was obdurate; and as there was no other dairyman for that part of town, Sarah did not change her

milk. Her fear to tell a soul about her mysterious boarder was equalled only by her desire to know on whose account the mystery existed. She dimly recollected having seen a tall young man rush towards the cab the night of the concert; but there were many tall young men. Also, in an unguarded moment of excitement in the cab Miss Barlow had said she was nervous for fear Mr. Hagarty would insist upon taking her to Hagarty Hall for supper.

“So she that has the *entree* to Hagarty Hall,” said Sarah to the spookish enlarged opal of the late John W. Shane, “chooses to live at 74 Centre St. Why, John Wesley? Why?”

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To such versatile uses had Burnham, M.A., descended in adversity, that the Mayor in his office said to him, “Burnham, you’re a human directory of Plainsville—where does Miss Sadie Barlow board?”

“Seventy-four Centre,” said Burnham promptly. “Opposite the old terrace occupied by factory folk.”

The Mayor elevated his eyebrows and whistled. “Add that to the list for the inaugural ball, Burnham.

“Yes, your Worship.”

On a January afternoon after a snowfall that made 74 Centre look like a Georgian igloo, Sarah Shane sat by the coal stove in the upstairs hallway, paring apples and talking about Mayor-elect Hagarty and the inaugural ball to acknowledge the citizens’ endorsement of the new waterworks scheme. Sadie at her doorway was trying to write a letter, as near the stove as possible without sitting beside Mrs. Shane, who did not fail to note that the letter was going to be at least twelve pages. A nobby latticed cutter with a buffalo robe hanging behind drove up to the door. The doorbell rang. Sarah in a state of social panic hastened down and came briskly up.

“Miss Barlow,” in accents of sad disappointment overcome by suavity, “’Tis Miss Emily Hagarty to see you!”

“Heavens!” gasped Sadie. “What on earth—?”

Tenderly Sarah gathered her spilled apple-parings as her guest went below. A tumult of desires and curiosity surged through her thin being as she stole into the front room and saw the letter on the table. Her fingers tingled and her eyes snapped to be reading that letter. But her ears drew her out to the hallway again. Leaning over the balustrade she heard a jolly clatter of tongues, such as never she had heard in 74 Centre St.

“Oh the hypocrites!” she thought. “Each letting on she’s perfectly at home in me poor sad parlour!”

From tantalizing cadences of the dialogue Sarah deduced that Miss Hagarty was extending to Miss Barlow an invitation—to be a guest at the grand ball in Hagarty Hall—to sing a few of her old songs to the accompaniment of a lovely little Detroit orchestra; and in recognition of the negro vote at the municipal elections—all to be reported in the newspapers and perhaps in a Detroit Sunday illustrated—to give her singing mono-dialogue with the picaninies.

To Sarah’s incredulous consternation, Miss Barlow sweetly declined the invitation and politely let the lady out. Then and there did Sarah wish for time to turn the pages of that long letter to see whose name was on the front; knowing as well as her own name and nature that the letter contained the sole reason for Miss Barlow’s preposterous refusal to sing at the ball. But as Sadie came up she sat herself calmly down to paring the apples again. Casually scrunching a piece of Northern Spy, she coolly asked, “And what did Miss Hagarty be wanting?”

At the door of her room Sadie stood trembling with deeper excitement than all Sarah’s suavely suppressed emotions.

“I shan’t tell you,” she snapped. “Please go away—and let me sit by the stove.”

“Oh well, if me room do be better than me company,” sighed the crestfallen but cunning Sarah as she went below.

Towards suppertime Sarah heard her boarder trying to write again. When she called, “Supper, Miss Barlow?” Sadie said, “Please go on without me.” The room was so cold that the door could not be shut; when even the clatter of the old man with his spoon did not prevent Sarah from hearing a letter being torn; shortly after which the door was shut and when the old man went up early to bed there was no light under the door; wherefore Sarah, listening later, heard what sounded to her acute ears very much like stifled sobs.

Next morning Mrs. Shane spent a long while at the waste basket in the front room just to piece together one word—not another syllable—and the word when she got it was “Olaf”.

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## CHAPTER V.

### AMERICANIZING SYMPTOMS.

There was but one place where Sarah could identify "Olaf" as the tall young man whose hat had bowed under the cab-horse's feet after the concert; the church. From her pew in a side gallery Sarah had spent many a sermon trying to read the lives of worshippers by studying clothes and faces. From the Hagarty pew with its gilt-edged hymnbooks to the few picturesque negroes in the back gallery, the church was Sarah's society novel. When two young men, one half a head taller than the other, came into the choir shortly before Christmas, she had described them to Miss Barlow who at Sunday dinner had abruptly changed the subject. To identify the owner of the hat she went to the side door to see the choristers come out. Yes, the hat had one very bad dint. The very next week Sarah called on Hopkins Mus. Doc. who had nine children in a wooden house, to ask if she might join the choir.

The choir was a strange little family of music and rows, much to the delight of Sarah who was delighted to sing a very squawky alto directly in front of Mr. Olaf Hansen, and to realize the privilege of hearing the choir scolded at rehearsals for being such bad readers compared to English folk.

"If I want to form a choral society," said Hopkins Mus. Doc. glaringly at one Sunday morning rehearsal, "how can we ever do the *Messiah*, if you don't read better?"

At the intimation of a Plainsville choral society the singers, including Sarah, smiled with delight. But Sarah was electrified to hear Mr. Hansen just behind her say aloud,

"Dr. Hopkins, you must remember that Canadians are not brought up on sol-fa from childhood. We don't know the *Hallelujah Chorus* from memory, but if you'll form a choral society to get singers from all the churches together, every one of us will be proud to learn—if you'll have the patience."

So of course Sarah joined the choral society also, still further adding to the cold discomfitures of 74 Centre St. by droning the *Messiah* choruses at the old organ with the pale shade of the late J. W. Shane just above it. But all her persuasions could not induce Miss Barlow to join, even though she was aching for good music and not even singing in her own Presbyterian choir.

In all her casual conversations with Mr. Olaf Hansen at the Society rehearsals, Sarah kept her pledge never to mention Miss Barlow's name: she did not even linger after rehearsals to see if Mr. Hansen would offer to escort her home. But she learned a great deal from other folk about Mr. Hansen; not least that since last September he had gone from Form I to Form III in the Collegiate, and that he had an ambition to become a school teacher in Plainsville for the rest of his life.

When it was given out from the pulpit that Mr. Hansen would read a paper at the next meeting of the Epworth League, Sarah went. Here she heard what was surely a strange thing for a young man to be saying—about the need in Plainsville for preserving old British landmarks such as the wooden clock-house; the fine old town hall so much like a bit of stately, merry England with its market; the steep-roofed church of St. Jude; the Londonesque bridges over the river; the English customs and carols at Christmas, because as he said dropping his paper,

"This town, founded by Britishers in the forest, is in danger of becoming a distant suburb of Detroit. Sunday papers, American magazines and plays, smuggled goods, Fourth of July celebrations, American capital invested in our industries, American furniture, ready-made clothes, cart-wheel dollars and dimes, cigars, chewing-gum, slang, popular songs, shop fronts, architecture, arc lights, coal-oil, telegraph wires, big through trains short-cutted through Ontario—all these, ladies and gentlemen, are what we get from over there. Twenty years from now, unless we are careful, the only British things left in this town will be the old town hall, the home of Mayor Hagarty, the redcoat battalion, the choral society, the monogram E.R. on the mail bags, and a few old people smoking pipes and talking with accents as foreign to the rest of us as Siwash is to a Chinaman. That's commerce, and we can't help it. We get things cheaper and more of them from over there. But if we can't import most of our foreign-made goods from Britain, we can at least continue to import many of our ideas, our political practices, the best of our literature, and as many as possible of our songs and our immigrants from Britain—and we can do something to stop exporting our educated young men away from Canadian farms and villages to Detroit, Cleveland and Chicago."

Gasping with sceptical admiration at this burst of jagged eloquence, Sarah turned in her seat—just happened to do it—and saw near the door Miss Barlow, “smiling like a basket of chips” as she afterwards related to the old man at home. But when the meeting was over and Sarah hastened to the door to walk home with her lodger, Sadie was not there; and when Sarah got home the young lady was up in her room, wrapt in a quilt trying to study Second-Class algebra.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### A CALLER FROM DETROIT.

The glorious mental cyclone of memorizing facts by the use of imagination sent Hansen, about Easter, into Form IV some of whose youths wore Boston-creased trousers. The daily whistles and bells of Plainsville filled him with economic joy. Unable to co-relate the ecstatic jumbles of his own heterogeneous studies, he was still more bewildered whenever he tried to understand how Plainsville could become more Canadian and British without a tariff on American goods. The only clue he had was that anyhow the country needed more and bigger market towns, and with enough of these the farmers might sell more goods at home and therefore import less from abroad. However, what he thought about this was in no danger of starting a real estate panic in the county town. His Liberalizing aspirations were quite forgotten, for one evening at least, when he and his partner Snook were invited to have dinner at Hagarty Hall. News of this was indirectly imparted to the ears of Sarah Shane, when a noise like an auction sale came to the front door of 74 Centre St. and a breezy gentleman in a check suit asked to see Miss Barlow.

“Briggs from Detroit, Madam,” he announced cordially and sat in the horsehair parlour to commune with the “calla lily” while a rather furious but smothered dialogue went on upstairs. Of course poor Sarah was tempestuously blamed for admitting him.

“How did he know I was here? Who gave him my address? Tell him I’m not in—”

“But sure I’ve told him ye are!”

“Then tell him I’ve got a sick headache—have the grippe—anything!”

“Och! sure and that’s no way Miss. He’s a nice gentleman from Detroit, no less. Oh the contrariness o’ that sweet but terrible-tongued young woman,” moaned Sarah to the old man as Sadie came down.

Mr. Briggs at once remarked on how ill Sadie looked, and no wonder—considering the kind of house she lived in; which, wafted to the ears of Sarah, did not make her feel less like flaming into the parlour to say once more that the house was Miss Barlow’s own choosing, and that in so cold a winter as it had been, without a furnace and bath-room it was impossible to—but already Mr. Briggs was saying the same thing about the house on behalf of his Eureka-Hydro, which he said was ready to instal waterworks and, through subsidiary companies, baths, furnaces and basins in any town where water was drunk, baths used and houses heated and lighted. For fear of getting the blues in so dejecting a parlour, Briggs talked with more resounding energy than ever he had done when buying logs in Jericho.

“S—say!” he moderated as he heard a creak upstairs, “if this here bouquet has anything to do with that chromo over the organ, I shouldn’t wonder if he died happy. But that’s no reason why you should predate your own funeral living in a joint like this.”

“Please don’t talk about me, Mr. Briggs. Who gave you my address?”

“Oh, the Mayor. Yes, y’see, I called there las’ night to sell him Eureka-Hydro before he pikes across to London to sell debentures. Say, that’s some swell house for a town the size o’ this; built by a Detroit architect, decorated by a Detroit artist—from cellar to ballroom up the spiral staircase it’s a nineteenth century dream. Been there lately? No guess not; he spoke about you—yes, y’see I quizzed him about the ball that was featured in the *Sunday Sun*, and asked him if you’d been there, and he said ‘unfortunately no’ and—ah! that reminds me; when I said that, a young man in the library that seemed sort o’ huffy when he declined one o’ my cigars—kind of on his uppers I judged—scowls over at me as much as to say ‘Briggsie, you’re in as wrong this trip as you were the day I first saw you at Peppercorn’s in Jericho.’ You remember that afternoon Sadie, first time he set eyes on you—yes, Hansen, that’s the boy I mean; goin’ to High School \_\_\_”

Sadie startled and went to the pensive fuchsias at the window.

“Yes, Mr. Briggs,” putting a hand to her head that suddenly thumped and ached. “Yes, I know he doesn’t dress well, but he does the best he can, poor boy! And if he’s invited to Hagarty Hall, I’m sure that’s something in his favour. So glad you like Dr. Strang,” she added.

“Oh, he’s the boy to make a nervous wreck think he’s a success in life, Sadie. Heaps o’ patients, bamboozles ’em all, and they all pull around. I’ll tell him he’s gotta put you on his list. You need it. Heard him say once he’d give a week’s income to hear you sing a song—say, I s’pose it’s too much to ask you to sing *Florence Nightingale*, eh? No, girl, you aint well enough. Please don’t. What’s this on the organ—oh, Handel’s *Messiah*. Bet the landlady sings that. Well, look—I gotta ketch that Wabash flyer, but you take my advice and skidoo out o’ this shebang, which how you come to be in it beats me. Let me know when yeh come to Detroit. Good-bye girl.”

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## CHAPTER VII.

### A CASE OF NERVES.

Dr. James Strang was trying to calculate how many thousand wild ducks and geese had migrated over the St. Clair flats for the past two weeks, and how much wiser they might be than the few hundred thousand people in Detroit, when he wrote Sadie Barlow a reply to her recent letter. He was thinking as he wrote—about a boy who a couple of weeks before had a paralyzed leg, whose father he had asked for a handsaw with which he had sawn the boy’s crutch into bits, told him to let his foot hang over the edge of the bed to-morrow and in a short time he would be able to walk.

“That boy’s leg,” he said in his letter, “is something like your mind has become by habit. You’re suffering from a fixed idea centring round one object for which you are sacrificing social intercourse, health, happiness. The only way you can get better is to get away from the fixed idea. Plainsville as you make it is worse for you than Jericho was. That boy, Hansen, doesn’t need you. It’s only your self-sacrificing egotism that makes you live in a house such as you describe and keep clean away from society, because you don’t want him to think you are better than he is and do want him to have the use of the money you save by doing it. My advice is—quit it all. Any other advice from me that will help you must be given where I can talk to you. Come over.”

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By the time the first schooner crawled out of dock down the Snye the two bachelors had conglomerated a spring poem, intended as a Collegiate essay on Spring for Snook, of which Hansen wrote the first and every alternate stanza, the varied metre expressing the peculiarities of each writer:

In spring the birds are not, I trow,  
All song and feather;  
Some tresses wear, and wiles enow  
To burn the heather.

In the spring the maidens in our choir  
Do put on hats of beauty;  
To say I love to sing makes me a lyre—  
It is a deed of duty.

The lunar silences are loud  
With moonstruck tabbies;  
In mud-hole cabbie is kowtowed  
To see where cab is.

Soon, ah soon, the sizzling cafes call

The soda fountain trickles;  
Believe me, girls, I'd like to treat you all;  
Alas! I'm down to nickles.

The baching pots and pans do crave  
For my ablution;  
Exams horrific me enslave—  
No absolution!

God gave the trees long green, the bakers dough,  
Themselves the breezes blow;  
The birds have notes, the sand has banks, I know,  
But I have bills to pay, heigho!

As Hansen was reading the “poem” aloud the landlord grocer called at the door to collect two months arrears of rent. Snook blandly offered him the poem.

Two weeks later Hansen entered Form V. The first face he clearly saw in a daze of so much gentility was Sadie, dressed as he afterwards recalled, in a dark red, simple sort of gown that intensified the pallor of her face. He had not seen her for weeks; and he had never seen her when she seemed so spiritually beautiful; so pale and thin, the native sparkle of her eyes changed to an intense, fixative gaze at one side of the room, at the other—without seeming to see him.

Buried in books, in baching, in adolescent economic theories about the town, in the problem of how to pay for suitable clothes, he had only of late begun to dream of the day when he would at last become the intellectual equal of his teacher by being a student in the same Form.

The sensation struck him as a new, glad wind strikes a sailor. In the moment when he expected her to smile him welcome, when all the muddle of memorized knowledge should be illumined into a dawn of perfect if limited understanding, and the day should be a glamour of golden trumpets on the skyline, she laughed in a white, uncontrolled way, gathered her books and left the room.

Disregarding the master and the amusement of the class, Hansen left his books and went after her. When he got to the street she was gone. He waited; she did not appear. She had escaped, with the speed of a woman flying from she knows not what. Willing to feel ten times more a fool, he tried to find her on the streets. It was no use. He met ‘lil niggers’ who might have seen her; but he did not ask them. He knew that she had left school for good.

Something was wrong. But for his own self-centred egoism he might have reflected that in all the months she had hidden herself socially from him, he had made no effort to find her; he had paid stupid respect to her wishes; he had gone along in a sort of maudlin triumph of books without her. Living in the same town, going to the same school, they had been in worlds apart—when he should have flung himself out of his own stubborn world into hers, discovered where she was living, why she was buried in such a place, called her affectionately angry names; anything but crawl into one shell because she had crept into another.

That evening, after rowing a boat miles up the river and back, blundering across the back of the town he saw a haystack beginning to blaze and pulled out of it old Burnham who with his pipe upside down in his mouth gazed up at the stars and repeated a superb Latin translation of the psalm verse beginning, “When I consider the work of Thy hands”. The old man had evidently been drinking. He confessed that he had been discharged by Hagarty that morning for “intensified inebriety” during the Mayor’s absence in Europe, and that his last clerical act for his Worship had been to indite a memo on the case of one Eli Snell which he had investigated re foreclosure of mortgage if necessary through continued negligence as the case seemed to be—

Suddenly Burnham felt himself almost hurled over a fence and led by the arm at a furious pace down to the Market Hotel where Hansen flung down two quarters for the old man’s bed and breakfast.

Next morning after a peremptory note from the landlord and several nervous journeys round the market, Hansen bolted upstairs to the law office of the Mayor, stormily but deferentially got the Mayor’s consent to reconsider the cases of both Burnham and Snell, and then stood twirling his battered hat.

“Well, Hansen, what’s the next item?”

Hansen mopped his neck, yanking his collar off the button, and packed the handkerchief into the crown of his hat.

“Nothing sir, thanks. Nothing at all. Guess I’ll go back to school!”

Hagarty smiled. He knew what the third item was, but he said nothing.

That evening Sarah Shane’s delicate nostrils detected the pungent odour of bank bills as she heard Sadie in her room slowly counting money into a large envelope, along with a carefully printed note “From a friend who expects no interest and who will disclose identity only when repayment seems convenient”. She printed “Olaf Hansen” on the envelope, and came out, just as the human hornet flew into an adjoining room. She went out, down across the creek bridge to the main street, quietly up the dark stairs that led to the room of the bachelors.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### A MATTER OF CLOTHES.

Hansen scorched the porridge next morning. First up, going down for water he picked up the envelope. Its contents were now stowed in the pocket of the lining of his vest which every now and then he casually felt to make sure the pocket-book was there.

At breakfast he was as mum as a clam; Snook uncommonly cranky.

“Prize grin you’re wearing, Herkie—what’s the joke? Dream some millionairess wanted to marry you?”

“Prize fighter often grins without a joke. Can’t I?”

“As you are the high panjandrum of this joint in moods, morals and industry and all that success stuff—yes! That’s right—grin and I’ll bear it! Ha-ha-ha! Yes. These Lares et Penates will decorate the sidewalk to-morrow—grin again! They’ll be down at Cheap John’s auction next, knocked down for seven bones to a nigger man—more grins! Wish I had a camera to snap that misfit merriment.”

“Some people laugh at a funeral, Snookie. Can’t I?”

“Peasant’s prerogative—yes. Pity you hadn’t pigeonholed your pride and been more of a peasant when you had the Mayor in his office almost coaxing you to ask him for a loan of twenty-five, so you said.”

“I did—stuffing my hank into my hat like I used to a wet burdock leaf on a hot day mowing fence-corners.”

“And he with his hand in his pocket when you said ‘Nothing—oh nothing me good lord—no thanks!’ Herkie, you’re a collegiate crawfish.”

Hansen laughed so hard that he gagged over his tea. Incapable of further concealment, he rose, drew his long pocket-book from the cave of his inside vest pocket, solemnly snapped the elastic, took out a roll of bills and dropped them on the table. Snook rose as though to an unseen magnet in the ceiling.

“Her—kie!” he screamed. “Capt—ain Kidd Santa Claus! Hypnotist! Say! Let’s not—wake up!”

“Oh, just a hundred dollars,” growled Hansen, mooching to the window. “Slipped under the door in an envelope; my name on it; guess it’s the Mayor. How about it, Snookie?”

“Good Mr. Mayor,” prayed Snook, dropping on one knee, his hands clasped towards Hagarty Hall. “For this proof that you are a mind-reader, and that the spirit of Santa Claus is not dead in the rent-collecting, furniture-moving month of May—accept our united thanks! Amen! Well Herkie—ahem!—now for a triumphal march down to the landlord; then for the tailor-shop, prestissimo! That pepper-salt hand-me-down and that horse-doctor hat of yours have given me the P-I-P ever since we’ve had ’em.”

Snook’s ecstasy, failing of language, resorted to the banjo. He twanged a wild medley while Hansen washed dishes. He sang *Solomon Levi* with staccato emphasis on “That’s where you buy your hats and coats and vests so very neat.” The morning sun crept between the shutters and he cavorted round Hansen with the abandon of a spinning dervish. Breathless, he lapsed into a meditative silence as he brushed his hair, tweaked his tie and polished his patent leathers.

“Where you going Herkie?” as Hansen clapped on his old hat and grabbed his books.

“Five to nine, Snookie. We’re late.”

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In the tailor-shop, that same afternoon. “Same cost as for a man my size,” said the lean tailor to a question of Hansen, after Snook had spent half an hour selecting a dark grey worsted. “It pays to be big. My word, but you are a Hercules!”

Hansen felt like a patient being treated for a new ailment as the tape line explored his curves. He had never been measured. Regardless of what the tailor might think of his Port Sand readymades, he debated trimmings, buttons, side pockets in trousers—then coming into vogue—pocket in the coat-tail.

“I’ll never use it, but put it in. Don’t give me skintight on the trousers; may be stylish, but it won’t suit me. Just moderate; oh, and the vest—not too close up at the collar; yes, put a pocket in the lining, comes handy, and—oh, that’s about all. Saturday sure?”

Pointed-toe boots, grey fedora, grey socks, pleat-fronted shirts with detachable cuffs, a tie and standup collars were the next items inventoried by Snook.

“No standups less than three inches? Give me turndowns,” demanded Hansen, much to the amusement of the Gents’ Furnisher. “Oh yes, a pair of cuff-holders.”

“Sleeve-holders too, Herkie. Garters—”

“Draw the line at garters. The jig is up. How much?”

Saturday afternoon in Celibate Lodge Hansen inveigled himself into the complete regalia, closely valeted by sartorially envious Snook.

“Don’t know which is worse, Snookie—to wear everydays on Sundays or Sundays on week-days. Think I’ll have to get a black alpaca, ready-made pants and straw hat for the rest of the term. The students’ll boo if they see me coming in all this. Thank heaven, the Mayor’s away; can’t make my fashion thanksgiving parade to his office for a week, anyhow. Ho-hum!” yawning at the window.

“Gloomie! What’s gnawing you now? Oh, I know. Sadie B. Haven’t seen her for weeks.”

“No, she’s not at school lately.”

“Wonder if she’s ill. Time you looked her up. You know where she lives. I don’t. Girls put a premium on clothes. Time you gave her a chance. Break the blockade, I say. She’s never seen you in decent clothes. She won’t know you.”

“Too much like a Sunday School kid.”

“What you need. So does she. Herkie, if you don’t look her up, you’re a lobster.”

There was no argument. Sunday morning the youths went as usual to the choir. From her gallery pew—she had left the choir—Sarah Shane observed the would-be nonchalance of Mr. Hansen in his fine grey cutaway. The organ, to Sarah, had never sounded so seraphically sweet.

In the afternoon Hansen went to 74 Centre St. June leaves, decorating the old terrace opposite, half hid Sarah Shane’s ugly flat house, and even that took an aspect of beauty in the clean, sylvan picture.

“After all,” he reflected as he timorously rang the bell, “man’s part of Nature, and she puts on her best clothes in spring \_\_\_”

His rumination was cut short by Sarah who, sombre as usual in her widowed black, came to the door; and a whiff of pungent odour swept out from old carpets that never came up, and old wallpaper that never came off. Sarah’s house-cleaning had been retarded this year.

“Oh Mr. Hansen!” she smiled with sudden sweetness; and he, startled by the apparition and the queer smell, said with equal surprise. “Oh Mrs. Shane! I never knew that—” An awkward hiatus. Never at all the rehearsals had a certain name passed between them. Sarah had kept her word. Handel’s *Messiah* would not be sung until fall. Now was her time for a studied and exquisite revenge.

“Do be coming in, Mr. Hansen?” she insisted before he could recover from his surprise. She lured him into the sad parlour, which she knew would shock him. He sat on the horsehair sofa and blinked at the memorial lily. She sat on a chair.

“Is Miss Barlow at—here?” he corrected himself.

Sarah intently picked a thread at her knee.

“Miss Barlow is not—at home,” she replied.

He marvelled that a voice which exuded such a dismal alto in Handel’s “Glory of the Lord” could be so inflectionally musical now. He did not understand Sarah’s vocalism.

“Oh! She has—gone out?”

“Yes, Mr. Hansen. She went out several days ago.”

He shot up; and she rose with him.

“You mean—she’s left town?”

“And you never knew that? Poor boy!”

“Great heavens! Where did she go?”

“She vouchsafed no information, Mr. Hansen.”

“I know,” he blurted. “She’s ill. This house—”

“Ah—ah!” Sarah could hiss when she chose. “This house—is my home, Mr. Hansen.”

“I beg pardon. Yes. But what was—?”

“I am not Miss Barlow’s physician. Perhaps—you’d like to see her room? ’Tis still vacant.”

“Yes,” he said jaggedly. “Show me.”

“Please to come upstairs?”, with what joy in her vocal hauteur he could not know. Past the hall stove with its broken micas, she grandiosely flung open the door which for months had been so psychologically interesting to Sarah.

For a moment he stood, surveying the iron rod that held the walls together; the ornate dove-blue pitcher whose ice Sadie had so often broken in the morning; the scabby-painted low window-sill and the sash that let in the driving snow; the scuffed old yellowish carpet and the drab-blue wallpaper with its scars of visible plaster.

“Do you mean to say—she lived in this?”

The pride of womanhood yearning for insult spoke in the sharp poised curves of Sarah’s sable figure.

“And why not, Mr. Hansen?” she said, promptly, quietly, with an upward inflection.

“Because it’s not worthy of her.”

“Therefore, neither am I, Mr. Hansen?”

“That’s not the logic, Mrs. Shane.” He moved away. Sarah blocked the door-way; a black, menacing figure. “People are not to be judged by the homes they inhabit. Most people deserve better homes. You do. It’s homes we all work our lives away to get.”

“And—clothes, no less?” she insisted with superb self-restraint.

He blushed. Did Mrs. Shane surmise—that money from Hagarty Hall had bought his clothes? Would she say so?

“Yes,” he admitted. “Clothes are important.”

She laughed like a screech owl: her large lips and sad full eyes made a rather disenchanting picture.

“The very clothes—ye have on this moment,” she said with delicious deliberation, “were bought—with the money she saved—on boarding third-class with Sarah Shane, 74 Centre St. She refused a standing invitation—to Hagarty Hall—so that ye might not think she put herself socially above ye. That’ll be good news to ye—Mr. Hansen.”

With a staring, cold smile she noted the spasms of Hercules; his gasping to speak; the colours on his face. Then suddenly

her whole manner and expression changed.

“O—oh!” she moaned, closing her eyes. “Wretched spite-spitter that I am, I’ve blabbed it all—when it’s me, Mr. Hansen, that’s sadder nor ever you can be—that never again will that angel be entertained unawares in this house. Oh!” With a sob she lurched forward and fell upon her visitor who for the first time felt the quiverings of a female form in distress. “Forgive the spite, Mr. Hansen?” He pushed her gently towards the door. “Manny’s the time I’ve wished me old house could be fit for the likes of her to inhabit,—but she always smiled and said she knew ’twas hard, and she kissed me good-bye. Sweet mortal! So, if ye do be seein’ her, Mr. Hansen, tell her for me how glad I was in me lonesome shebang to see the best friend she has. Good-bye!”

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## CHAPTER IX.

### PSYCHIC PHENOMENA.

Dr. Strang’s Windsor waiting room was crowded, as usual of an evening, with general patients more or less amused at the old parrot who at abysmic intervals called loudly, “Down with John A. Hooray!” Strang’s philosophy of Canada and the United States at that period was epitomized in the fact that in Windsor he dealt mainly with prescriptions; in Detroit where he practised in the afternoons, his sign was “Nerve Specialist”. One by one townfolk and farmers’ wives filed in and out of his inner sanctum. Some of them looked critically at a tall young man, who the picture of health, played with the parrot, listening restlessly to the odd humoresques with which Strang dismissed his patients. With one of them he had evidently been discussing murder, saying with new-born emphasis that if he were judge and had his way no murderer should know the exact date on which he was to hang, because the worst of a hanging was the fear of it—when the young man in the dark grey suit stepped forward.

“Hullo Hansen! What’s up with you? Come in.”

“I’m not sick. Doctor,” as Strang shut the door of a room oddly long, dim and narrow.

“I thought not, Hansen,” came the voice from the far end of the room where the Doctor’s huge form and aboriginal visage flickered in a low light. “You’ve come to ask me about Miss Barlow. Well, she’s not here.”

“But she’s in your care?”

“Yes. At present in Detroit. She is curiously ill.” Yawning—“Curiously, strange—ly ill.”

“I want to see her. When—?”

Strang leaned on a big dark chair as though it had been a lectern.

“That’s just what she came to me, on my advice, to avoid. When she is better, perhaps you may see her. Till then—plug at your books, and have patience.”

“Patience? Good heavens,” half up the room, one hand in a pocket. “You don’t understand. I’m not a mere prying relative. I’ve a particular, personal reason—if she were my own moth—”

Strang held up two fingers. Chucking a lozenge into his mouth, “Sit down Hansen. Let’s avoid excitement.” With the merest flick of an eye-lash at his visitor, he himself sat down, easily two inches taller by comparison than when he stood; Hansen had to look slightly up at him—the chairs being close.

“So you—intend to see her?”

“If I have to chuck my exams. I brought my books. Study on a rail fence if I have to; wait as long as I must; but—”

“Ah! But you see, Hansen, she is in what is practically a hospital—in my Detroit office—for another week; perhaps longer.”

“Never knew you had a hospital.”

“I call it a nerve hostel. Some of my patients need nurses.”

“Surely she doesn’t—?”

“Tell me—why not. You should know.”

“Oh! Then she has told you?”

“Everything I suggested, that I did not already know without asking.”

“But what business—? Your diagnosis judges me—makes me—”

“One of the major symptoms, Hansen. Possibly. Hmh!-hmh!” scribbling a memo. “Here’s my Detroit address. If you want to write Miss Barlow your letter will reach her—as soon as she is well enough.”

“Thanks! Oh! Yes. Er—”

“And if you intend to stay along the Detroit river for a spell, you may indulge yourself the luxury of a daily call at the hostel, and being politely refused admittance. That’s the way I’d be if I were a hot youth and in your place—with my own little teacher practically in jail. Fond of old houses? Well—you’ll find my hostel worth looking at. One of the old French houses built before a game of lacrosse won the siege of Detroit, you know—”, twiddling the fingers of a huge descriptive hand, “big, romantic, dormer windows, queer gables, little Juliet balconies, thick old garden and a large court overlooking the river; all inside a stone wall. Pleasant place for—sojourning. However, in a week’s time she may be able to come out a little. Even if she does, on my advice, Hansen,” a huge paw lightly on the youth’s shoulder suggesting the door, “you may be the last person she will see for a time. Now,” at the door, “have I made myself clear?”

“Was there ever a time—when you didn’t?”

“Oh! Hansen! Er—leave me your address; you know—in case she wants me to write you anything further.”

“In case—you advise her to want to?”

“Hmh? Here’s a good thing, Hansen,” picking up a book. “*Psychic Phenomena* by Hudson. One of these days somebody is going to write a popular novel about some phases of that subject. Take it along for a week. You won’t go to sleep till the robins come in the morning if you read it to-night. Good-bye, boy.”

Hansen took his valise. The next patient went in. The old parrot suddenly croaked, “Down with John A. Hooray!” The sanctum door abruptly opened. “Oh Hansen—here’s your hat. You’ll need that to put *Psychic Phenomena* under.” A flickering aurora of a smile!

That smile followed him like a spot-light. He kept trying to brush it off. He felt it when he stood among a ferry crowd from the Detroit theatres and star-gazed at the sky-arc lights of the American city. One group of merry-goers from a seance thought he was hypnotized. The hotel clerk thought Hansen was drunk as he signed the register and said jaggledly, “I want to live here—anyhow a week: a room where I can see the river. What’s the ante?”

“Dollar a day; five a week. Forty-seven.”

The moment he locked the door of 47, without even unpacking his bag, Hansen sat on the bed and began to read *Psychic Phenomena*. The further he read, the oftener that weird smile seemed to peer at him over his left shoulder. It sometimes seemed as though Strang had written the book; as a great pianist makes some people feel that he is the composer. The fact that Strang had told him that he would read the book until the robins came was a mere coincidence: he would have done so, not of his own volition, but because the book fascinated him. When the robins came along the river, he was still reading.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE UNPROFESSIONAL HYPNOTIST.

Hansen went to sleep at sunrise. No doubt he dreamed about a man that looked like Dr. Strang. He awoke thinking about Strang. The things that the Doctor had told him he would feel like doing were the very things he wanted to do. He wanted to write Sadie a letter; and he did it; mailed it to the hostel. He wanted to stay “along the Detroit river”, and he stayed. He wanted to pry into anything he thought might be psychic phenomena, and that book was with him to lure him on. Strang no doubt had known of the nightly seances then being given by a professional hypnotist in one of the Detroit

theatres, and that Hansen would be sure to go. That very night he went. In a window on Woodward Ave. he saw a subject whom the hypnotist had put to sleep for days and made his flesh a pin-cushion. In the theatre he saw the hypnotist make sensible people imagine themselves birds, elephants, millionaires, great singers. When he closed his eyes the hypnotist became Dr. Strang. The hallucination of the face of Strang on the body of a professional hypnotist haunted him back to the ferry, to the hotel. He dreamed about it; when the subject on the stage was Sadie Barlow. The strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, then the talk of so many people, was to him only an elucidation of Strang—who up till a few days ago had seemed like a very benign, though clever, gentleman.

For days as he worked algebra and chemistry in his room Hansen divided mankind into hypnotists and hypnotized. He began to understand better—as he thought—the power of some revivalists, of medicine-men, of great actors, singers, politicians, orators. A strange species of morbidity.

Out of the obsession Hansen evolved the definite, stupid and staggering conviction—that Dr. Strang was a hypnotist, and that his most plastic subject was Sadie Barlow. From the Doctor's memo he found the Detroit office accurately described by Strang as a "sort of hospital". The old place was still beautiful; a big frame, partly bricked, many-dormered house along the river-front; a stone wall, green at the base with mobs of sumachs and overhung with great elms. On the street side clumps of sumachs and shrubs obscuring the drive-way portico; a peculiar but suitable hostel for nervous people, commanding a superb sweep of the Detroit river.

But there was no admittance here without credentials. Hansen merely noted the topography. From his window at the Windsor hotel he could now make out the Strang hostel, and a near view of all the ferryboats that kept the Canadian town arteried to the American city. Punctually at two o'clock every day he could see Strang's black horses driven on to a ferry by the black-haired doctor; regularly, seldom late by more than one ferry, saw him drive back to Windsor.

One evening as the sun slanted on a lordly maze of silent ships and steam-blasting whalebacks, the hotel gazer saw a white female figure in Strang's buggy on the ferry. He would have given one of the dwindling bills in his pocket-book for a pair of binoculars. But he did not make himself ridiculous storming down to the dock. He strolled to the street and covertly saw the black horses turn south towards the river road that led to fish dinners in the village of Sandwich. Disobeying his impulse to run after the rig, almost hypnotizing himself into restraint, he went back to the hotel, worked algebra for an hour or so, took the ferry to Detroit and walked out along the riverside street to the Strang hostel.

When he heard the hoofs of a team Hansen dropped behind a thick clump of sumachs. The sound of a laugh that for months he had not heard thrilled him like a thrush at sundown; then as the black horses turned in and the shadow of his new Mephisto spoke in that glib, seductive voice, feeling like a justifiable spy in his ambush, Hansen half rose to listen.

Some timid question had just been asked. "Child" as the flare of a lighted cigar flashed over his indeterminable, psychic mask of a face, "we're all crazy. I haven't had what Dr. William Osier would call a day of continuous complete sanity since I was old enough to vote."

"Fakir," muttered Hansen. "Hypnotist!"

"God alone is perfectly sane," went on the tantalizing voice, "and He sometimes gets lonesome. He wrote the universal plays and built the stages, and left us to be the more or less happy actors. This giddy, revolving, rotating old globe is but one of His stages. When we consider the seas, and the rivers, and the mountains, and the valleys, and the plains, and all the ships on all the seas, and the people and cities and churches and mad-houses and human angels and murderers and professional politicians and money-jugglers, all developing and struggling and worrying together in the evolution of religion and science and art with all its pictures, music, literature and sculpture, we think that's big drama. But look at the millions of others, child, in that Milky Way."

"Makes me feel like a mere atom," she said childishly.

"Just what I want, child. Blot yourself out. Get into the atomic orbit where volition is useless. Presently you can sing as you used to, teach picaninnies if you want them—I'll get a few back here in the garden."

"Then I'm to see—nobody yet; or write letters?"

"Nobody that you call anybody. Leave that to me, child. Put that conscience to sleep. Forget there ever was such a thing as 'Duty, stern daughter of the voice of God'. Above all—forget that prize soul disturber of yours, Hansen."

If there had been any sound in the sumachs at that moment, it would have been that of a grizzly bear.

"Next week you'd better go for a cruise on the lakes. I'll send a nurse, get your berths for you—oh, any of the big boats

will do.”

“But suppose—there’s a storm?” she shivered.

“Child, when God Almighty blows on the water a human being is only a cosmic atom. You’ll sleep like a new-born baby and never know there was a storm till the nurse tells you. Now,” as he opened the door, “be a good child and—good-night!”

Once again, if Hansen had not made himself believe in self-hypnotism, he would have leaped into Strang’s buggy. But he waited till the hoofs were out of sound; then he walked back to the ferry.

Hansen spent most of a week on the docks. Some ship, probably northward bound in the hot weather, would have for passengers, Sadie Barlow and her nurse. He took a chance that it might be the Norland to Duluth and shipped as a waiter. From the passenger deck he saw Dr. Strang, Sadie and the nurse come aboard, and the doctor go off again. He did not make a scene. He calmly bided his time, sure that before the Norland got to Duluth he would see her. But she was not at breakfast and did not once leave her stateroom. He had the pleasure instead of waiting upon Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Beech from Jericho who were on their honeymoon. Between meals he tried to study Virgil in his bunk and quarrelled with a mansard-roofed waiter about tips which he refused to take. That night his books were thrown overboard. The next night in a storm he would have been coated with red paint from ears to toes by waiters and deckhands, but for the timely arrival of Tode Beech who, unable to sleep because of the storm, went prowling on the lower deck.

Next day Dr. Strang in Detroit got a wire that the Norland had limped into Fort William with a damaged propeller. He sent a wire back. When the Norland steamed on to Duluth, Sadie Barlow and her nurse were not on board. Hansen left the ship at Duluth and worked his way back to Detroit on an ore-boat. He had not seen Sadie. It was inconceivable to him that she had not been somehow conscious of his presence on that boat; but she was evidently under some sort of psychic control by “the unprofessional hypnotist” who would perhaps—but no, he had never dreamed of Sadie marrying anybody, particularly Dr. Strang; she was a heaven-born teacher for whom mere marriage with all its sanctities was too conventional.

But of course the whole phenomena of love in all its amazing intrigues over people were as yet a thousand times more nebulous to Hansen than his feeble knowledge of biology in plants. He had a stubborn belief that the love element in a great novel was a mere interpolation intended to sell the book. He went back to Plainsville and his exams, feeling like a very uncommon species of idiot. To Snook he was brusque, telling him nothing of his experiences; he viewed the market town as a morgue; glad of the exams which swept him into a three-day simulation of juvenile omniscience as he mowed down the questions on the papers; gladder still when the show was over and he was free to go back to the ship lines—somewhere in the labyrinth of which he might still find Sadie, if for no purpose more romantic than to pay back the money, which he must earn before the summer was done.

He arranged to meet Snook in Detroit on the Fourth of July, at what was then considered a large hotel, with a French name. Rivers of hats and colour swirled in trails of explosion down fanlike canyons of walls into a spacious plaza of noble dimensions and impressive architecture. A quadriga of flamboyant bronze horses galloped in Napoleonic fury over a ledge of the Courts. From the City Hall tower the tourist from Ontario, painfully climbing hundreds of stone steps, used to gaze at a scenorama of American ships and the shore lines of two countries, one of which was a strange collective egoism in the form of a nation. The cyclorama, Battle of Gettysburg, was that day acclaimed to a few hundreds of people as “the greatest event in all history and the most colossal spectacle ever reduced to a single canvas”. The temple Wonderland with its subway “chamber of horrors” looked over that concourse for the edification of Ontario Sunday School excursionists.

But these, to Hansen, were *divertissements* from the grand holiday cyclorama of the crowd. He had the strange sensation of exulting that day in the victory of George Washington against George Hanover; thrilling at the memory of sublime Lincoln; trying to sing the *Star-Spangled Banner* which no American ever can sing; hearing the voice of universal humanity in *Ol’-Kentucky Home* and *Swanee Ribber*; twisting his tongue round the idioms of American slang and shouting when he talked; looking at specimens of half the war-sick peoples of Europe with an intense desire to see them melt into the grand patriotic pot in which Republicanism and Democratism were the two master ingredients instead of Toryism and Liberalism; buying pea-nuts and chewing gum and talking about baseball; and in all the crescendoing headache of punksticks and cannon-crackers bringing back to himself, regardless of race, the first and last battles fought for that astounding enigma known as American Independence with its bountiful concession to all men of an “equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

On that account young Snook, doing his best to have a good time by the expenditure of money, found his comrade a terrible incubus. At the six o'clock bells and the end of the second movement in the apocalyptic sonata, they stood in the rotunda of the sumptuous Boulevard Hotel.

"Gee-whiz Herkie!" as he looked at the red face being fanned with a hat, "you seem to think this show was all staged just to make you want to write history in blank verse. Chuck it! Time to eat. Follow me."

At the door of a pillared dining room hung with plush portieres and tapestries, Snook handed his hat and cane to a darkey. Hansen, dazed with excitement, took his hat with him. They walked what seemed a long way over a thick green carpet into a clatter and buzz of dishes and tongues, above which a small orchestra on a dais tried to make itself felt; following to a table next the bass fiddle. Snook gave a punctilious order of consomme, porterhouse steak and mushrooms. Hansen, without glancing at the card blurted, "Oh ham and eggs, apple pie and tea."

"Swell dining-room this, Herkie."

Hansen did not hear. The orchestra close to him screamed and thumped. In such a noise he had no desire to say a word. Ponderously tucking his napkin under his collar as the waiter came, he gave a sweeping glance at the noisy crowd. Suddenly he rose, napkin and all. The orchestra stopped.

"Look!" he said, leaning over and pointing to the far side of the room. "Look who's there!"

He put a dollar bill on the table and reached for his hat. At that moment a hush like oil calming waves crept over from the far side of the room and a seductive voice came over:

"Ladies and gentlemen"—Hansen sat down, still holding his hat—"in honour of that great Americanized Englishman, George Washington, my friend Miss Sadie Barlow from Canada has consented to sing *Ol' Virginny*. Thank you!"

Hansen remembered having played *Ol' Virginny* on the mouth-organ when she sang it in Jericho. But just now he wanted to get out of that Detroit dining-room, back to Windsor, on up Lake Huron into some region so cold and gaunt and crude that nothing singable except some ballad of bloody battle ever could reach him. He wanted to dream that he was putting a roll of ten-dollar bills into an envelope for Snook to give to Miss Barlow—and then to slip silently out. But there was no escape just then without her seeing him; she had already risen at her table.

"Queer custom this—smoking at meals when ladies are present," he said to Snook to make himself appear unconcerned. "Drinking is worse. A lot of these American habits—"

But Strang was already escorting Sadie across to the orchestra. She had a little Old Glory and a bunch of roses pinned to her white dress.

"Suppose that's to please both parties?" he said, gulping a whole glass of water. He closed his eyes and hunched down by the wall behind the orchestra. The players tuned up and she sang; and for the first time in his life Hansen felt the sentimental tyranny of a plantation melody over Americans—and other people. The setting was almost perfect for the end of a Fourth of July; the negro waiters, the long-haired doctor who would have been picturesque even in Virginia, and that young born-Canadian woman with the tender crystalline voice and the merest touch of negro accent. He tried to argue to himself that he had heard other voices and other songs as fine and powerful; but it was no use. When she came down to the chorus about "where the cotton and the corn and taties grow" the band died down to a muted pianissimo, and everybody stopped smoking. He opened his eyes in a storm of applause—and he was foolishly crying.

"Cigar smoke smarts my eyes!" he mumbled to Snook. "Waiter—I don't want these eggs; too much like a pair of cold eyes. No, never mind the pie, either. Keep the change."

"Not going, Herkie? Don't you want to speak to your best friend—you totem-pole!"

"No! Leave that to you. She doesn't know I'm here. Strang's telling stories now. When they start to laugh she won't see me. Tell her—I'm off up the lakes on a freighter; that I'll be at the Model School in September: that I hope she'll come back to Canada and sing something English that makes Canadians feel as sincerely sentimental about their own country as Americans do when they hear a plantation melody. Tell Strang—that if he expects to become an M.P. he might begin by doing something to make Dominion Day as interesting to Canadians as the memory of the scrap between the two Georges is to the Yankees. But of course you won't remember a word of it—and it won't matter. So long Snookie!"

When Strang and Sadie began to laugh almost as loud as the orchestra, he bolted from the room. As he got to the rotunda he had a wild sensation that she was following him—calling him. Not daring to stop, he almost jumped into the hurlyburly of the street.

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## INTERLUDE

### A TABLOID OF TWO YEARS.

*Three months at the Plainsville Model School convinced Hansen that teaching him how to teach was one of the undiscovered arts; in spite of which, by means of a glowing testimonial from the Collegiate headmaster as to his ability to imbibe information, he became the “teacher” of a class of boys in the Kirkville, Ont., Central School. Kirkville still has one of the most complete collections from the Tomahawk Era in Canada. Minutes of the Kirkville Historical Society will shew that in the years 1891-92 one O. Hansen was the mover of a most eloquent resolution on the demise of Sir John A. Macdonald, Bart., and the author of a paper in which he pointed out that a town with three kirks in one block, names of Shakespeare’s plays for its Wards and a Roman Catholic cathedral on its highest hill, was worthy of a more enlightened system of education. During his first summer vacation the dissatisfied pedagogue went as a watter on a St. Lawrence steamboat down to the Saguenay. When he came back he tried to persuade the bandmaster of H.M. Kirkville Rifles—and of L.O.L. No. 63—that his band would yet play the tune called “O Canada” in preference to “The Maple Leaf”. Turpin who was a cabman made the memorable reply, “Like ’ell they Will Mr. ’Ansen!” During his second winter he got leave of absence for half a day to go to Toronto and hear Henry Irving and Ellen Terry in “Hamlet”—his first play. When he came back at two in the morning he stalked tragically about the square between the Court House and the Post Office declaiming “To be or not to be”—till the night constable advised him to sober up and go home. “Home?” he repeated with a hand on his forehead. “Good sir, in what part of Denmark were you born?” During the last two months of his second year at Kirkville Central School, Hansen read a paper to the Town Teachers’ Association on “Why a School is not a Knowledge Factory”. At the conclusion of the address the Principal blandly asked Mr. Hansen to prepare a paper for the next monthly meeting on “What a School Ought to Be”. The day afterwards the pedagogue received a curtly polite letter from the Chairman of the Board of Education asking for his resignation—which Mr. Hansen had already sent by mail. When Turpin the cabman drove him to the station Hansen remarked, “Well, Turpin, they will want me back as Principal of the School as soon as the band of L.O.L. 63 play ‘O Canada’ instead of ‘The Maple Leaf’.” “Wich they will do—like ’ell!” was the memorable rejoinder. “Good-bye Mr. ’Ansen!”*

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# BOOK THREE

## CITIES AND SENTIMENT

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### CHAPTER I.

#### A NEW JERUSALEM.

The Pettigues in Toronto lived on an opposite corner to the Macklems, went to the same big church and had moved from Northampton, Ont., with the Macklems during the “boom” of 1888. Otherwise the families had nothing in common—except that in the town Stewart Macklem had been the head of Canada Woollens, and Thomas Pettigue operated one of the looms. Popular songs like *The Children’s Home* and *A Terraced House* had begun to express a social contrast which Hannah did her best to rub out when she decided to keep a home-cookery boarding-house on the corner opposite Macklems. But the song that Hannah sang most was *Here I raise my Ebenezer*, dusting her bow window quite as big and folding-doors as high as those of the Macklems.

“Thomas” she reiterated at least once every full moon, “I do believe this is the very house Sir Oliver Mowat used to live in.”

Then, after two years of “Ebenezering” Thomas came home on a winter evening and said as he savagely twirled his whiskers, “I’m out of a job. Macklem-Hobbs, Clothiers, are on half time. One Government contract for uniforms finished; no more in sight. Yankee readymades glutting the market, one side; British woollens the other; and the boom’s bust!”

Hannah knew that Hard Times had poked his lean head through her New-Jerusalem drop curtain. She had seen crowds at the ten-cent restaurant, workless loafing on the church lawns, derelicts down at the Mission. But the music of the great organ, the grand sermons and the daily carriage clatter of the Macklems kept her singing *Here I raise my Ebenezer*. And again she made a financial census of her boarders: Mr. Mumford (real estate agent), large front room first floor up at seven dollars a week, with his memories of the tanbark sidewalk on Yonge St., and his theories of why a city grows mainly west and north; Miss Harriet Lowther with yellow-grey ringlets and black headpiece, and her forthcoming book for the Methodist Book Room on old families and new churches; Miss Muma, the black-haired typist, little front room at the head of the stairs, with her shuddering mandolin and her practices for the Banjo and Guitar Club; Signor Corelli (English), who had made a small conservatory of the drawing room with the side entrance, and took his meals out; the two Shotwell sisters, large front room at the top; Henry Hooper, undergraduate, brilliant revolutionary, but very pale and thin with a midnight cough.

This was the transient family of which in January, 1893, Olaf Hansen also became a member. It was early afternoon, snowing a trifle, when he burrowed through the human fly-trap known as the Union Station and began to prospect a little before he settled down to a boarding-house. He found himself with his brown valise passing the Cyclorama, in which the Battle of Gettysburg was then on view. Front Street was then a grim, thrifty perspective of wholesale fronts and warehouses, half of them Scotch. Past the Bank of Montreal he came among dark-stoned, granite-pillared fronts with statuettes, caryatides and gargoyles, up to the spire of St. James on King where he paused for a moment to estimate the height and turned west among three busy hotels and two great stores with carriages in front. Up Yonge Street with its dingy little shops he met a crowd of shoppers coming from some big store, at the back of which he discovered a vast half-building of grey stone which took ten years to become a city hall; westward from that along a great iron fence enclosing what looked like the law courts of London; on to University Avenue, so broad and sweeping under its elms that he was puzzled to behold on the east side, rows of rickety shacks which seemed popping with queer people. He let himself digress here into what was evidently a large slum in which ramshackles on the street edge were screens for tumbledown tenements behind; where banana vendors, street-pianos, bearded patriarchs, Irishwomen, Billingsgaters, slouchy negroes, senioritas and swarming, strenuous juveniles jostled in a cosmopolis of humanity—the famous St.

John's Ward.

Here Hansen was soon busy trying to elicit from a swart curbside pianist, his black-eyed seniorita and a querulous cockatoo the story of their lives in a strange land. Slipping the maestro a quarter he followed them back a lane into a shed, where he drew from the two a confession of what streets they covered in a day, what tunes people liked, the average of coppers, quarters, nickels and dimes, where they went to church and school, and to whom in Milano they sent the money—when the patience of the maestro giving way to suspicion, he said angrily, “For a quarter—you tella me alla your peeze?”

“Excuse me? You're right. I wasn't trying to buy you so cheap. Good-day!”

From the Slum Quarter he made his way up to another uprising decade of masonry destined to become the Parliament Buildings of Ontario. After trying to estimate what this mass of brown stone designed by an American architect would cost, he followed a low ravine through a sweep of trees and stood on a snowy campus from which he gazed as one in awe of the Taj Mahal, upon the rugged Norman tower of the University with its grey quadrangle.

Not taking time just then to adore at this shrine, Hansen strolled along through the Park out to a street which a year or so before had been the north line of the city, but was now a highway for a new city of houses, many of them smokeless, away to the west. Eastward, he passed a large garden park with a miniature Crystal Palace enclosed by an iron fence, into a sort of valley of big churches. Here he paused to compare the heights of the two tallest spires in Canada, and as the gas-lighter went his rounds, he woke up to the fact that as yet he had not found a boarding-house.

Two blocks along he was attracted by some one playing Chopin in a large red brick house and opposite, next to a grey-brick bow window, a sign, ROOM AND MEALS, and here he rang the bell. He liked the bustling, grey-haired lady who came to the door and showed him the only vacant room she had left, the little one with the dormer on the top. He descended to the dining room into a most hilarious clatter of tongues in which the black-bearded land agent was conducting a furious argument with the pale undergraduate about the Scott Act, both of them and all the others laughing so hard that Miss Lowther with her hat on at supper was the only one who gave the newcomer a glance of welcome—and she was startled to behold him so very tall. Hannah bustled in and told him inaudibly the names of the company. In a moment of silence when pale Hooper gazed at him expectantly, Hansen blurted as he put on his napkin:

“Well, it's no wonder this city gave birth to the National Policy and *The Maple Leaf Forever*, when it has little Great Britain on the waterfront and a slum in seven languages between the City Hall and the University.”

Hannah in the kitchen at eight o'clock, helping Thomas wash the dishes, put a new urge into *Where Mansions are—prepared for me*, because her house was now full. And Hansen at his open dormer, airing his chilly room, heard from the bow window opposite some music that sounded to him much like what Hopkins Mus. Doc. in Plainsville used to call Bach.

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Stewart Macklem, head of Macklem-Hobbs, still wore his Northampton whiskers. Mrs. Macklem had hopes that he would adopt the pointed beard, while Dora, the only child, preferred a paternal goatee. But as long as Senator Marks, president of the bank of which Macklem was a director, kept his whiskers, the manufacturer determined not to despoil his own, though he was much perturbed by the fact that Thos. Pettigue also wore a full beard.

“Do be consistent, papa!” said Dora one evening at dinner. “Mrs. Pettigue chooses hats like mamma's.”

Mr. Macklem surveyed his daughter with his customary critical smile. Dora had a face like a young St. Cecilia, a passion for music, and a talent for modern languages at the University. Spoiled enough to be adventurous, she had profound respect for a man who from being the industrial creator of a small town could within a few years become president of a big city merger, bank director, trustee of a large church, prospective member of the University Board of Governors and a possible senator. She believed her mother was right in calling Toronto the Boston of Canada; but not in wanting to make her what was then known as a Blue-socking.

“Why shouldn't the Pettigues, poor things, be as ambitious in their way as we are in ours?” she pointedly asked.

“But not on the opposite corner, my dear,” said more suave mamma. “That's where they show their lack of taste and judgment; as we might have done had we presumed to live opposite Government House.”

“But we’re going to move away from this corner, aren’t we?”

“That’s a matter of tariffs, markets and wages, Dora,” said Mr. Macklem. “Meanwhile the Pettigues are with us. As they are fellow-Christians, we may recognize them in church—”

“But not on the street,” agreed Mrs. Macklem. “Never! No, that’s quite a different matter.”

“Fellow-Christians, but not fellow-citizens,” reflected Dora who still had somewhat to dissemble, and was still taking tea instead of coffee for dinner because she enjoyed reading her own tea-cup at the evening hour. “But the Pettigues can’t be so fearfully common, or Henry Hooper wouldn’t board there.”

To which her mother severely replied, “On the assumption, my dear, that Henry has better taste in boarding-houses, than you seem to have had, in allowing him to dream of ultimately marrying you, when he is not only a rebel at our great and beloved University, but undoubtedly has galloping consumption.”

Dora flushed with anger, but she continued to turn her tea-cup, seeing in its fanciful kaleidoscope a pale youth whom she had passionately admired at the Northampton High School because his frail-bodied courage in sports equalled his brilliance at books; a boy who could fight like a demon with his fists or his tongue and smile like the dawn of day; who, when he came to University, boarding with the Pettigues because he liked Hannah’s home cookery and wanted to walk to college with Dora sometimes, had first discovered that he had quick consumption and had frankly told her that he must give her up because he was not fit to marry; and to whom, so pitying his frailty and admiring his pluck as a rebel at college, she had said, “Henry, as long as you live I shall never marry any one else—because we love each other.” All this she confusedly saw in her teacup, and kept silence.

“I hope Henry graduates before he is rusticated for rebellion,” said Mr. Macklem, passing his cup.

“No young man from Northampton ever should be so intellectually arrogant as to oppose such great men as we have in the faculty and administration of our University,” said Mrs. Macklem fervently.

Dora banged down her cup and rose from the table. Her eyes were flashing. “I don’t care! The fight is on; and Henry Hooper, the editor of *Varsity* and all the other rebels with him will carry on the fight to reform the University—”

“Reform—the University!” shuddered Mrs. Macklem. “Do—ra!”

“Yes, and if the Senate stops publication of such articles Henry will carry the scrap into Philo Sullivan’s *Plaindealer*—and see how they like that!”

Mr. Macklem gulped his *café noir* so hot that it made him look ill.

“My dear Dora,” said Mrs. Macklem with intense softness of tone, “one might at least hope that your studies in music would have given you gentler impressions and greater respect for—traditions.”

“Music!” said Dora more mildly. “The most human and simple and unsnobbish art in the world. Handel was a Whig with a big wig; Bach was a reformer; Mozart detested princes; Beethoven despised Emperor Napoleon; Wagner was a political revolutionary—”

“And they all died poor,” laughed Macklem. “Meanwhile the one social rule of this house is—recognize on the street nobody from Pettigues, except Henry Hooper. Now my dear—a little Bach if you please.”

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## CHAPTER II.

### DII IMMORTALES.

In a dormer alcove decorated with a coil of lukewarm pipes, Hansen set up his university extension. Early after his arrival he took his First Class “C” certificate and went to see the President about lectures. Nervously he walked twice round the grimly beautiful Norman tower and quadrangle, hearing strains of *Vive le Roi* in unison, and Mendelssohn’s *Antigone*, as he afterwards found out, in choral harmony of men’s voices—like monks in a mediæval cloister. He dared to enter the noble doorway; too late—here came the President; Norse patriarch of white whiskers, Inverness cape and silk hat, author of vast ethnological works, friend of newsboys; walking along the corridor with him, a lean unbearded

gentleman of Dantean visage, and him he recognized as Goldwin Smith, ex-Regius Professor of modern history at Oxford, apostolic successor to Froude, the friend of Carlyle; slightly behind these, a Græco-Roman with a goatee and a stick—probably the Principal of University College.

“O dii immortales!” he mumbled; in that cloistral corridor startled to hear a couple of chattering “co-eds” whom he compared to the Birds of Aristophanes in the temple; still more startled to observe in the glimmer of gas jets—which should have been Grecian lamps—that one of these was the grave, dark “Cecilia” whom he had heard play the piano across the street. Apparently by accident, at the doorway they met Hooper, his pale face peering like animated wax out of a thick coat and swoggly muffler, laughing merrily as the trio of students skirted the snowbound campus one direction, while the *dii immortales* went the other.

At the boarding-house Hansen avoided Hooper who at the table sometimes shocked dear Miss Lowther with his rabid criticism of “imitation Erasmuses”. “Please don’t tell him I’m a student?” he asked Mrs. Pettigue. “I think he’s blasphemous—” desisting when he suddenly reflected that she admired Hooper, not least as the “friend” of Dora Macklem.

Deciding that the President, or the Principal, or anyone who walked with Goldwin Smith, was too august for trifling mundanities like a bushwacker’s exams, Hansen carried his case to the Bursar. Having had experience with a Grand Trunk conductor telling him he was on the wrong train, he was much impressed to find the Bursar a rajah of still greater official solemnity. With the meticulous brevity of a timetable he was informed that his First Class “C” certificate was invalid for matriculant registration. The Bursar seemed to feel that the said certificate with its red seal of the Department of Education, was a very amateur, if not offensive, document.

“But the papers set were identical with those of Senior Matric., sir, and I got seventy-five per cent.”

“With the important difference that one is headed Education Department of Ontario, and the other University of Toronto.”

“But that’s only a label, isn’t it?”

The Bursar gave him a sub-arctic look.

“A label which cancels the pro tanto,” he said. “In any case to enter First Year lectures in January is—officially impossible.”

“But I intend to plug like sin.”

“In what department do you seek registration?”

“Classics and Political Science—both.”

The Bursar rose like the little cloud that Elijah saw before a big rain.

“Absolutely unprecedented! Abysmally absurd!”

“Then what do you advise me to do?”

“Write off your senior matric. next June.”

“Is there any bar to my writing on First Year, without lectures if I pay my fees for the full term?”

“My dear sir, you may write a check for one million dollars made out to this University, and the Bursar thereof may return it to you just as often, if you enclose postage. So far as this University is concerned, until you have written the senior matriculation examination, you do not personally exist.”

“Cogito ergo sum,” murmured Hansen. “Thank you. Well, at least I may pursue my studies of the works specified for First Year in those departments, without paying copyright to the University. May I crave a copy of the curriculum?”

The Bursar heaved a sigh and gave him a copy.

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Mrs. Pettigue was bewildered. Mr. Hansen was not a conventional boarder. He stayed in his room all day; often went out at midnight when all the others were asleep, returning at two in the morning, when he trod the ends of the stairs to keep them from creaking and felt his way with catlike stealth around the banister. Since getting his books Hansen had become reticent. At the table he listened hard, talked little, and went abruptly to his room. Occasionally in the afternoon,

when Signor Corelli chanced to be out, he went and played in a strange way without music on the flat piano in the parlour behind the front room; never when any of the other boarders were about. Hannah was shrewd enough to notice that he sometimes did this just after the Macklem piano across the way had ceased playing. He was the only boarder who had ever bought a picture—St. Cecilia at the organ with flowers on the keys and cherubs above, to which he had taken a sudden fancy at a second-hand bookstore and had hung at the head of the bed.

“Not because she’s a woman, but a saint and a musician,” he said to Mrs. Pettigue who admired it when dusting his room. “Yes, I sometimes kid myself thinking I hear her play when everybody else is asleep.”

With one of those sudden inspirations that seem to arise from a duster, she said, “Mr. Hansen, have you seen any young lady that—looks almost the very image of her?”

He looked at her suspiciously, confusedly.

“Hmh-hmh! And she plays the piano, till little angels come too,” murmured Hannah, gazing out of the dormer. “Coincidences are queer, but they will happen.”

After she had gone out Hansen wrote an ode *Ad Ceciliam*, which he meant to translate into Latin, and pinned it to the frame of the picture. Next morning Hannah read it and said it was “lovely”; might she show it to Mr. Hooper? She took his silence for consent and told him next morning that Mr. Hooper was “highly amused”.

“Good heavens! I never meant him to see it.”

“Mercy! there’s no harm done, Mr. Hansen.”

“But I understood you to say they have been friends since their High School days.”

“Oh yes, but you see—he’s not going to marry her.”

“Marry her? Why how could he? He’s—”

“That’s just it, Mr. Hansen. He’s got galloping consumption. Poor Mr. Hooper!” she sighed low at the window. “He’s as gay as a lark, but I know sometimes his heart must be breaking.”

“Mrs. Pettigue!” he gasped. “You don’t mean—oh Jupiter! it’s no business of mine what you mean. But tell me.” He took hold of her wrist. She was a bit frightened and told him—all she knew, which was much less than half the whole truth wisely eked out from the imagination. She had no idea of the silent storm blowing across the mental tracts of her dormer lodger, who taciturnly planted himself at the window, wishing to heaven she would stop finding so many curly-corners to dust where there never was any dust—and go out. The moment she had gone “Ebenezering” to the next room, he tore the ode *Ad Ceciliam* into smithereens. With a terrible rumpus he moved his desk away from the dormer and the steam pipes; but the rest of the room was too dark—and still more cold. He found Mrs. Pettigue and abruptly asked her for another room. She gasped that she had none.

“Surely ’tisnt so cold as all that. Mr. Pettigue left a real good fire—”

“No, it’s not the cold—I can stand that. It’s the heat,” he said to himself as he shoved the desk back to the window, once more to struggle with the temptation to watch for the home-coming of “Cecilia”. He turned the picture to the wall.

In the back parlour that evening he apologized to Hooper, with curious dignity. Hooper was puzzled. Here was a young man declaring almost proudly that he was an immigrant; that he would graduate double from the University without lectures; that here in the first city he had ever felt himself anything resembling a citizen, he was conscious of wealth, intellect, old families—all above him—and of poverty some of which might be still more superior; that he had no right to strive for social equality with people born to social gifts; that his only excuse for the ode had been a passing fancy born of a resemblance of a picture to a young lady.

“Forget it!” said Hooper. “I wrote six odes to as many different girls at High School. Part of the joy of living.” He smiled.

“Why should a city be regarded as a series of social preserves?” went on Hansen hurriedly to avoid further talk about the young lady. “It’s only the economic test that divides it into college halls, drawing-rooms, maids’ bedrooms and back kitchens, tenements, shacks, parsonages, police stations, political meetings. Why not regard it as a state of flux; a professor as a potential policeman, a criminal a suppressed prosperous citizen, a politician a pulpiteer gone wrong? Oh I know—that’s all poppycock! Can’t express it. But I want to. The ancients loved their cities; tried to make them beautiful like women—”

Hansen became conscious that his voice was talking; that he was being drawn out of himself by this pale, round-shouldered consumptive who had such a deep kindness in his tone and such a fighting gleam in his eyes.

“Hansen, you’re much too serious. The lady will never know you wrote the ode.”

“Then you’ll promise me—never to mention my name to her, even as a piece of news or a joke?”

“Not till you’re introduced.”

“She won’t want that—any more than I do.”

“But you’re not a Carthusian monk.”

“No, but the only safe way for me is to be as near one as I can. Women and books can’t blend—in my way of working. Women are a world all in themselves; like music—poetry! They’re phantoms!”

He felt himself almost foreign to Hooper who, to be sure, reckoned that Hansen lived in a very different world from his. He told briefly about his tangle over the exams; startled at Hooper’s sudden excitement declaring that he himself would fight the case through.

“But it’s only my own stupidity, Hooper.”

“Yes, but it gives me one more chance to worry that Family Compact. You write a letter to *Varsity*; I’ll publish it.”

“Thanks, old man. Good of you,” he mumbled as he went to his room. “Hope to Heaven he’s not pitying me. Guess I blab too much. But he’s dead right about intellectual freedom; and when he talks quietly he’s not just an out-law either. But—what under heaven ever makes a man like that fall in love with a woman? If he knows he can’t marry her why doesn’t he set her free—and himself too? Simple enough. Should be. Ho-hum! Now what?” gazing at his books. “Well if the classics are full of amours of gods with mortals, they certainly mixed them up with a lot of complicated grammar. Anyhow political science is sexless—thank heaven! Glad I took both. Political science begins with the study of a city. Here’s one under my nose. It’s got churches doing one thing and bar-rooms the opposite. What’s the use of this being a college town if students don’t study it? The old boys of antiquity studied their ‘urbs’ and ‘polis’.”

Then he heard a piano across the street searching the highways of heaven upon earth, and he could say no more. The world and the city became a romance too beautiful for his theories about becoming a monk with his books. He wanted to write more odes to Cecilia. The thought of her in a fur coat stepping into her carriage made his head spin like a top. He thought he had indigestion and went out for a walk without his overcoat. He came back and ploughed Herodotus for three hours; and when everybody else at Pettigue’s was asleep he went out, in a raw wind down among the bar-rooms that blinked near the Bay.

“I don’t want to meet her,” he said to himself. “As sure as I do she’ll make some remark that kills the illusion of her being a goddess. They all do it. The fact that I’m crazy about her proves that I’ll never meet her till she’s married to somebody else. I’m an immigrant. She’s a Canadian. So is Hooper. But if he can’t marry her—”

The cycle was endless. He gave it up and made a lunge to pick up a sidewalk sailor who persisted that his way home was the direction in which he was looking.

“But that takes you plumb into the Bay. Where does your wife live when you’re not at home?”

Street and number being uncertain, the vagrant compromised on being taken to No. 1 Police Station. By the time Hansen had finished explaining to the Sergeant that he had nothing to do with the fact or the cause of the man’s inebriacy, and up till ten minutes ago had never seen the man, Hansen began to wonder if he were not himself a criminal; because he was so very much out of order. But he was let go.

“No promises not to do it again,” he grinned. And it was only a couple of nights till he led another to No. 1.

“Must be the cheap meals, Sergeant,” he guessed. “When a town has as many bar-rooms as churches, your men can’t be expected to pick up all the stewed owls at midnight under the cathedral clock. Can’t expect these benedicts to prop up the bars in hard times and have enough cash left to pay the grocer or enough nerve to argue with their wives. Say—I’ll bet you came from a farm,” after a squad of constables had catechised him on his own origin.

He was invited to drop in again, which he often did for a game of euchre or to curry the fine horses. He sometimes spent half an hour in the drill room with dumb-bells and horizontal bars; got the constables to teach him various clinches; had many a strenuous wrestling bout with one or two of the men training to meet Yousouf “the terrible Turk”. Many an hour

he listened to yarns, to common drunks singing old song choruses which usually became most fervently sentimental about the time the cathedral clock chimed two of a Sunday morning.

Hansen observed that there was never a Jew and seldom an Italian among the drunks and disorderlies. On casual rounds with the night shifts in "The Ward" he noticed that most of the disturbers there were English, Irish, now and then a negro; that the three-ball signs, conspicuous on downtown streets, were never seen in "The Ward"; that even the most pauperized Hebrews, living in shacks that would have driven most Anglo-Saxons to drink, were seldom out of work.

One thing led to another. The chain of progress and poverty was endless. About half-past twelve on a snow-driving night he met a woman, with great difficulty carrying a large shawled baby against the wind.

"May I carry that baby?" he asked. "Live far from here?" taking the infant. "Well, hang on to my coat if you're tired; can't carry both; say, how do you tote a baby anyhow? Oh, up on the shoulder, that's better. Sure," feeling himself into a new world of tenderness that had no limit. "Poor little thing! Look!" as the mother paused at a window glaring with warmth and smelling of cookery, "if you're hungry, come in."

He took the family in to a table where the reticent mamma ordered a large, leisurely meal for herself and a porringer of some new breakfast food and milk for the infant, whom Hansen himself had the pleasure of feeding with a spoon. He was glad when the ordeal was over and the procession began again in drives of snow, block after block, up a side street to a rough-cast house.

"Yes, here," she said with a queer laugh; a being suddenly transformed. She leered. No, not drunk; but—such a laugh! "Come on in, kid?" Something seemed to stab him bloodlessly as he gave over the baby. He looked close into her face. She hung her head. "No 'taint my baby 'tall kid. Sorry I fooled yeh. Had a job at Macklem-Hobbs once. Oh, but this is the hell of a life!"

In his rather comfortable dormer room that morning Hansen wrote a vivid description of the incident which he longed to tell to somebody because he only half understood it.

For three successive evenings, when home-comers were thickest, Hansen observed a threadbare-looking man who, as he strolled past, gazed fixedly at a meat-shop hung with halves of pigs at the windows. The third time the man hunched himself away, Hansen followed him to a side street of plaster-cast shacks into one of which, gargoyleed by unkempt children, he vanished. "Naw!" he heard the man say in the back yard to a woman, who called him Bill, "I didn't have the nerve. Cop too close. Hungry kids? Can't help it. Garn! It's a job I want—not thievin'!"

The next evening just at dusk Hansen saw this same man reappear at the meat-shop corner. At a moment when no "cop" was visible and when the crowd was thickest, the man swiftly brushed past Hansen, heaved half a pig off its hook and ran. Hansen after him. When the looter turned into an alley and reeled under his load, Hansen seized the half pig.

"Come on," he said hoarsely. "You'll drop it!"

Far up the dark lane two men blocked him. One struck a match, flaring it in Hansen's face. "You thief! Give that here!"

"Not—yet!" Hansen slung the pork to the fence as the chief of the thieves came up behind. "You men are a gang!"

"Enough fer you, me boy," growled the looter. "Yeh bloody plain-cloesman—unprofessional cop!"

"Unprofessional thieves," retorted Hansen, as one tried to trip him and another, trying to vise his wrists, began to butt him in the face which was a trifle high for the reach. "Not so chummy, boy!" landing the man behind a horse-kick with his left and backing to the fence. "Here Bill—you're going home by a short cut," and he hurled Number One over his head into his own back yard in a head-on collision with a clothes-post that gave him a glimpse of the Milky Way. "Here you're next," to the third, who was looking for a safe way to do something. "Oh! All settled eh? I guess you fellas are hungry. Now then—about this meat—one o' you got a real knife? Thanks. Now we'll have a square deal." Snicking the half-pig into quarters he threw the ham over the fence. "Here Bill—you've earned half. Take it. No use sending you to jail. But next time you want to rob a store in hard times, try a big one. Good-night!"

"Strike me pink!" gasped Bill becoming intelligent, "if that aint a noo species 'v plain-cloesman!"

Hansen calmly trudged back to the shop where the proprietor was still trying to tell the officer how the thing did not happen.

"All right officer, I'll settle for the pig. There are three unprofessional thieves up the alley whose families are as hungry as bald-headed eagles."

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## CHAPTER III.

### SEAMS AND SCHUBERT.

Israel Highstone, alias Hochstein, sewed garments with his wife and as many of their children as could thread needles. Their shop was a plaster shack with faded-grandeur lace curtains down near the Law Courts. Their back door looked out into "Highstone Court" walled with tenements, side-built with ramparts of rusty iron, decorated with a small corral of dull-blue and dingy-red wagons, and swarmed with children. An harmonious, heaven-gilded squalor which made Highstone's small eyes twinkle out of his enveloping black whiskers like large dewdrops in the grass.

The Hochstein family of seven children was the most striking in that clan of shops and rag-pickers, because in the Hochstein group could be seen vividly the two grand types of Hebrew, the golden-blond and the raven-haired—three to four.

"But we must keep the colour scheme balanced, Rebecca," he said to his wife in Hebrew; and more to the stout rabbi who came so often to the Court smoking bad cigars. Hochstein was a socialist who in Germany had heard Karl Marx and read his books. From his reading, much talk, many needles and later a second-hand sewing machine, there arose in the family as much diversity of ambition as of colour. Esther, pale, black-haired, was a young and glowing Zionist with a zeal to go to New York and hear Zangwill and to become a lecturer. Miriam, blonde and luscious, yearned for Broadway plays and for the time when a Hebrew theatre should arise in that slum—concerning which the rabbi had spoken of an old Methodist church soon to be for sale. Young Maxie, pent-up and puny, had a passion for the fiddle with which on summer evenings he thrilled the vesper holiday-makers in the Court.

Sometimes the girls, fixed up fine, strolled out to the broad elm-swept Avenue and from the sprawling boulevards beheld the passing show of Anglo-Saxons in carriages; not least familiar of which was a dapple-bay span of bobtails with a dark Cecilian lady behind the coachman.

More unconventional than these, the Hochstein family—two of whom were young men keeping a bicycle and repair shop—became accustomed to a tall, blue-eyed student who so often on April evenings strolled into the Court and talked to Israel about his work, his prospects, his family, his theories, his hopes. And his name was Hansen.

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One of the annoying coincidences of Cromar St. was that Hansen heard "Cecilia" play two oddly beautiful pieces, which by inquiry from Signor Corelli, front room below, he found were *Aasa's Death* and *Anitra's Dance* from Grieg's setting to *Peer Gynt* by Ibsen. This drove him out to buy a copy of the poem from a second-hand book-shop, and he was so impressed with the prankster who made the whole world his shop that he wondered what Peer would have done in a college town with a slum in the centre. His Peer-Gyntian desire to see part of the world with the eyes of other immigrants, led him to observe how from that strategic slum the Jews were spreading fan-wise north and west along with the migrating Gentiles; how the worker families in that Court were a clan of labour slowly evolving into capital; and how of all the Court, the clever diligent family of Hochstein were most dominant and aggressive.

Because he was so direct and simple in talk and so sympathetic—apparently—with Zionism, drama and music, he was once admitted to the shop, in which there were two beds. Father, mother, three girls, all sewing silently; each girl glancing at him in turn; the scarlet fabrics brightly gleaming in the gaslight.

"Uniforms, I see. But Jews don't go into armies."

Israel gave him a keen look. Threading a needle, "Ve are not military—no. It is better to work—at low vaitches. Glat to haf—his low vaitches. Yh!"

"But your people will keep shops here yet and sell fine fabrics to Gentiles, perhaps?"

To which Israel squinted with his little eyes, to see how much of a spy the young man might be.

"Oh yes? But for a long time—low vaitches; hard times; families beeg—each vun to grow up. But ve haf patience."

He said they were always up at daybreak, sewing at six in the summer, stopping only with the light—"Oh, fourteen hours a day avritch, yes."

"But you have two Sundays—one of each."

Again the Jew's eyes narrowed as if for a spy.

"And a poor family of Freimanns—on his Sebbath," he said softly with emphasis, "ven his spy comes breaking his own Sebbath to see—lost every stitch dey had to sew. His Sebbath ven his church bells rring-ng-ng!" The voice carried on in a sardonic vibration.

"Mr. Hochstein—whose Sabbath?"

Narrowly eyeing him again—"Tell me, you are not of him a spy—to repeat vat I say? No? Listen—Macklem!"

"I guess this is a real sweatshop," said Hansen after a silence when he thought too hard to speak. "I think—this is something for the Grit press—"

"Nein, nein! Not de newsspaperss! Mein Gott!"

"Oh you'll have your own some day, Hochstein. No," as he got up to go, when he felt like running, "I'll write an article myself and sign it, about the Tory sweatshop on government contracts protected by a tariff. I will! Yes, when I get the facts. But no names mentioned, Hochstein."

In a solemn fear they bowed him out.

For days afterwards anything that Hooper said at the house about academic Tories seemed to Hansen idle talk. He had a long article sketched out, about sweatshops. But he must have more facts. He went to see Hochstein again, an evening of bursting chestnut buds. Hochstein was angry; refused to admit him, but talked, plucking his beard—about wages which even in a week had gone down. Hansen went back to write about pittances lower than any he had known on a bush farm. Hooper casually wanted to know what he was writing about: prompted by some remark Hansen had let drop at the dinner-table.

"I'd hate to tell you," he said. "It's devilish."

That evening Hooper spent at Macklems. From his window Hansen could see him in the drawing room, talking to Dora who seemed uncommonly animated, describing something. Next evening Hooper casually admitted that he had come home through "The Ward", mentioning a vacant shack down near the Law Courts, in which he said there might soon be a social experiment; something to do with music.

Robins were chirping among the shacks when Hansen paid his next visit to Highstone Court. Plaster-cast walls and dull-red wagons were bathed in golden lustre. The Hochstein family sat on a stoop. Children played over the wagons. The two girls were sewing in the light that would soon fade; Israel reading a Hebrew paper from Germany. Bearded men in the Court examined a crate of chickens. Two or three young men talked in Hebrew near a spangled line of washing.

Israel greeted him cordially.

"I was at your synagogue yesterday," said Hansen, noting the expectant look; which was not what he had come to tell.

"Oh yes, ve saw you. You—like it? No?"

"Yes, but I couldn't sing a note of the music. Seemed to me very ancient, beautiful in spots, solemn, intense; not warm and cheerful like Gentile hymns. One tune must have been centuries old—"

"More dan one t'ousant years," said Hochstein stroking his beard. "It is set in de opera *La Juive*, by Halévy. You—know it?"

"I've never heard an opera. Jews don't write operas much, do they?"

"Nein; but goot ones perhaps."

Hansen could now see a way into the talk he wanted on Jewish life: conscious, but careless, that he was about to ruin his article on sweatshops as a newspaper story by too much colour and detail. The girls perked up and stopped sewing.

"Of course Mendelssohn was racially a Jew," he went on, leaning by a rain barrel. "And his oratorio *Elijah* that the Gentiles sing sounds like an opera. Jews seem to be into theatres and music more than they are into literature; though there are no Jewish composers much now; and of course there's Heine and Disraeli—one of the first books I ever read

in Canada was a book of his speeches; never had a chance to read his novels; one of them—*Lothair*—attacked Professor Goldwin Smith, your neighbour up here. There are so many sorts of Jews. You think so many people here are plain Russians, or Germans or even French and Italian—why even Sara Bernhardt is mainly a Jewess—”

Israel gazed at him in critical wonder; never having heard so many casual things about Jews in so few words. He laid down his paper and put away his spectacles. Miriam, hoping for a career at college yearned to talk back to this audacious youth, but was restrained by Israel who wanted to know, “Vat idea you haf—inmost, Mr. Hansen? Huh?”

“Races should understand the best in one another,” he answered. “Every country should try to understand the Jews—historically; especially the Anglo-Saxons. The British—yes, there’s a wild preacher here who says they are the Ten Lost Tribes—hewed this city out of the bush. I wonder how many of your men can swing an axe? You make clothes and buy Gentile houses and lend money to Gentiles; but in a country whose chief business is farming and whose farmers are crowding to towns—”

“Vy did you leaf de lant, Mr. Hansen? You haf not a trade—as Jews haf—to make you a city man.”

“Books,” he said. “Just what will draw your children away from this, as music will make of young Maxie a citizen of the world. None of you want to be just garment workers at starvation wages; and the day will come when those of you who now work in sweatshops will become rich in shops of your own.”

“Sh!” Israel held up a hand. “Who made of you a prophet?”

“Pardon me? I have no such gifts. But if Gentiles study Jews of old in the Bible, it’s surely as important to try to understand the Jews of to-day who are here to become citizens like the rest of us.

“We make Sunday-School heroes of Moses, Abraham and David. We ought at least to try to discover what we can admire most in the Jews who are now living. We are all ambitious. In all countries the city draws people away from the land. The Jews were once a pastoral people. Now they live in cities of all nations. They could be successful as farmers—but it seems to me as much a religious as an economic problem, why they are not. I know the difficulties that backwoods people had over churches. And it’s quite obvious,” he laughed, “that if you were to go back to raising sheep like Abraham, you’d have trouble keeping up a synagogue on a country road.”

He scarcely knew where to stop; the subject was so big, and he was only a blundering youth in the presence of an old, old civilization which he could no more avoid studying in his amateur way than he could ignore the study of Greek civilization in books. To him, people were all living books; and he felt a curious, though critical friendship for the Hochsteins—whom he preferred to regard as typical of the race in contrast to the caricatures sometimes presented on the stage.

Gradually the group in the Court became conscious of a sound that silenced the words and caught the notes of the vesper robins on the shacks into a throb of low broad music. Israel smiled. “Maxie!” he said. “He is playing de *Ave Maria* of Schubert,” pointing towards the Law Courts.

“Yes,” said Hansen quickly as he saw the little crowd in the Court begin to move to the street. “That’s what I came to talk about. Do you know—who is teaching Maxie in a scratchy little string orchestra down yonder in a shack, with a piano that she put in there at her father’s expense—because she doesn’t know a thing about you and your sweatshops, and because she loves music as much as you love children and business? Oh, it’s a queer matter. It would be none of my business if I had never bothered meddling in things that should have remained mysteries. Her name is—Macklem.”

To his surprise Hochstein showed no emotion, except to say, “Yes, maybe to skvaire mit de low vaitches.”

“No! She loves music, and likes a bit of slumming—and it looks as though I did too, but I don’t. I wanted to understand people. She wants to reform them with music. I’ve never even met her, and don’t expect to. In fact—”

But the throbs of the violin and piano over the roofs made him glad to stop talking. He had said too much already; his besetting weakness. He bade the Hochsteins good-evening and went out to the little crowd that listened to the music down by the Law Courts.

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## CHAPTER IV.

## COWSLIPS.

One warm evening Hooper came away from Macklems' in a fury of excitement. He had called at the boarding-house from college, but Hansen had been out, not back for dinner as usual. Talking hectically to Dora who urged him to go home to bed, he had watched Hansen's window for a light, and the moment he saw it away he went. He found the big fellow in a loose-collar flannel shirt, hanging green boughs, sticking hepaticas in his shaving mug, packing the water-basin with cowslips. Panting like the boy who gave the message to Napoleon, he rushed in and shook hands.

"Got your permit through, Hansen," he gasped. "First rebel victory!" Smoking a cloud from his cigarette he blazed away at his recital, giving Hansen only time for a spasmodic "How?". "Yes, you see, the 'Lit.' authorized me to write an article for Philo Sullivan's *Plaindealer* on Hansen Immigrant vs. Educational Tories, if the powers refused the permit. Of course that turned the trick. *Plaindealer* terrorizes them. I moved the Lit. resolution. They'll rusticate me yet. What's the odds?"

Hooper glowed like a firefly. He seemed to be up for the night.

"Henry, you're a brick! I don't deserve it."

"Oh, we'll have it again next year. Permit is pro tem for First Year only—pending legislation, etc. What's this flower-show? Bacchanalia in a bedroom? Where's the barrel of grape-juice? Where are the odes—the damsels—the Sapphics? Where have you been?"

"Rowed up the Humber about seven miles and back: walked home. Had to do something to work off steam."

Hooper looked up and down the near-giant.

"No, guess you don't take strychnine for a stimulant. Makes me jumpy. Don't see how you can plug up here in a belfry, twelve hours a day, without a crib."

"Sit down Hooper. Here—lie on the bed."

"Can't! Too excited to rest; can't work; all up in the air. Excuse me. Hullo! what's this junk?" picking some manuscripts off the table.

Hansen blushed. He had not expected Hooper to notice those. He wondered how much the rebel might know about some of the things he had written.

"Oh just rough stuff, Hooper; sort of a miniature hotchpotch Odyssey; midnight prowlings in a small city. Life's a series of pictures between dreams. Sometimes as hard to tell where a dream quits and the day picture begins as 'tis to tell when you go to sleep. You know—after midnight you're like a cat; see things vividly right next to you; in the morning you have the glorious projection of a dream vision clear to the skyline when you just feel like shoving down some of the walls to take it all in."

"Mind if I look these over? Might be something we can use in *Varsity*. Some darn good descriptions here. Hmh! Bully! Police stuff's good. Why don't you go and study in Montreal; get some real national colour? . . . St. John's Ward eh? . . . Beats the deuce how those Hebrews—"

"Interview with Goldwin Smith there somewhere," said Hansen feeling dry in the mouth. "Er—covers everything on earth, the heavens above, the waters under the earth—did my best to get the exact words and manner—wonderful *savoir faire* from a sage to a greenhorn like me—excuse me, Hooper, you—"

Uneasily Hansen recognized from the sheets that he had carelessly left the sweatshop article among the others—and that Hooper with an almost savage editorial instinct was actually reading it.

"Excuse me, old man, you mustn't—" He put a big hand over the sheet. Hooper sprang up. Blood rushed crimson into his waxen face.

"What's that—spoof stuff?" he said, hoarsely.

"Oh, just—just a bit of economic fiction."

"Then why did you want me to stop—?"

"Nothing, nothing. Here—you lie down. You're excited."

He gently pushed Hooper on to the bed. Hooper refused to lie down; sat with hands sprawled on the bed, breathing heavily through his mouth.

“My God, man! you must have nerves of cast-iron to play with stuff like that. Did you—invent Hochstein?” Ominous convulsive little coughs which he tried to suppress with his hand over his mouth stopped his words.

“No—Hochstein’s real. I can show you the Court. Maxie’s real. The music, I heard that.” He glanced nervously at Hooper who was now so helplessly dumb. Quickly fishing the cowslips from the basin he held it out and grabbed Hooper, as a swift torrent of blood gushed from his nose and mouth.

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For days it looked to Hansen as if Hooper would miss his own exams. Mrs. Pettigue insisted upon rushing over to Macklems’ to tell them about his illness. Hooper impressed upon Hansen the absolute necessity of nobody uttering a word to anybody about him. With amazing self-control he lay quietly on his back for days, eating next to nothing, seldom saying a word, too hoarse to speak. Then he got up and went to the exams.

“Pshaw, none of the men knew I had anything,” he said to Hansen when the papers were all done. “That’s one advantage of always looking ill—that you lack, my boy. So cheerio!”

“What did—she say, though?”

“I didn’t ask her. She’d have had me up in Muskoka if I had. Oh, I’ll go up for the summer; have a rest; back in October, fit as a fiddle—out of tune. What’s your summer programme?”

“Chain-gang on a survey in Algoma; country I’ve never seen; wish you could make it.”

“Lucky devil. Then—down to Montreal? Oh yes, you must. If you’re going to plug without lectures, you might as well do it where you can learn French on the side. Yes, I’m writing to Marechal, avocat, friend of mine down there; we had him at the Lit. last year; brilliant, sociable—oh you’ll like him and he’ll give you all the French dope there is. May be a bit revolutionary, but you can judge for yourself. Anyhow Marechal has ideas. There’s a big intellectual life down there. Quebec isn’t all habitants. You lumberjack! somebody has to look after you. Leave it to Henry. What’s this junk?”

“Oh, dunnage bag, mackinaw boots, overalls, fly-oil.”

Hooper laughed—in envy of a robust world to which he never could belong.

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## CHAPTER V.

### BACK FROM ALGOMA.

Three months later, with camp beard and a dunnage bag, Hansen trudged through the Union Station in mackinaw boots and lumberjack corduroy coat. Not caring to dismay a street-car conductor with such togs, he walked to Pettigue’s. As he turned the corner he saw Miss Dora Macklem on the verandah, reading. She had passed her First Year; and so had he. She did not look up.

“Sakes alive!” gasped Mrs. Pettigue at the door. “Wonder you wouldn’t lead a grizzly bear up the street on a chain! My, but you look fierce with a beard!”

Hannah usually jibed at people when she loved them most; just for the present, she positively adored Hansen for looking so rough. He banged upstairs with a swish and a roar, talking so loud that she was sure the Macklems would hear him, as she followed his trail of ejaculations up to the dormer room which in his absence she had repapered and hung with new curtains on the window; but he merely grunted his approval, took a look at his beard in the glass and began to laugh. Such a laugh. It shook the floor. Hannah had heard some primeval man in a play laugh like that.

“My stars! but you are—robust,” she said, feeling as though he might pick her up and dandle her like a baby. “Here’s a letter Mr. Hooper left when he went to Muskoka.”

“Hmp!” tearing it open. “Good! Introduction to Marechal. Mrs. Pettigue, I’m hitting the trail to Montreal—” “Oh never!” “In the morning—” “Mis—ter Han—sen!” “But I’ll keep the room. Looks fine. Yes, I’ll be back in May for the exams. How’s Hooper?”

“Much better. He wrote me—a comical letter,” she said ruefully threatening to use the apron on her eyes. “What—makes you laugh so, Mr. Hansen?”

“Oh nothing. This town makes me laugh. Seems like a place for dwarfs and pigmies. Say, you could plant this whole city, St. James spire and all, in one of those jack-pine canyons with a big blue lake in the bottom, and think it was an Ojibway camp. Fact!”

“Mercy me, how you do—shout!”

“Do I? Been shouting all summer. Echoes! Tremendous! Feel like it yet. Here’s a book that ’ud shock you; read it three times in camp; Peer Gynt. Oh—how are your friends the Macklems? Now don’t tell me they’ve invited you over to afternoon tea. That would be a shock. Poor things! Phew! For three months I scarcely knew such people existed, except for thinking about Henry. Well, Mrs. P. if you’ll excuse me, I’ll rake off this beard.”

“I think you are in love, Mr. Hansen.”

“I could love a king of the cannibal islands, think a donkey was a philosopher, snigger at a funeral—ah!” as he shut the door. “Thank heaven!” When he tried to shave he laughed so hard that he gashed his chin. Lather on his face, he sat down and furiously wrote a letter about Algoma, which he meticulously addressed to “Miss Sadie Barlow, care Dr. Strang, Detroit, Mich., U.S.A.” Then he was sober enough to shave; presently went out to post the letter, laughing at the ridiculous thing called a letter box, feeling like walking in the middle of the street, or climbing a wall for a hill—till he reached “The Ward” and the street-piano precinct. He returned with half a dollar less in his pocket and a queer glint in his eye as he glanced at the Macklem house feeling like a Halloween who might knock at the door and sing a foolish song to a young lady he had never met. Now he understood why in old times they used to wear masks; he felt like that. But the piano that evening made him a little serious; almost pensive; no, that would never do; he had arranged a prank for “Cecilia” bright and early in the morning.

When he got up he was annoyed to find himself with a queer feeling of sadness.

“Positively exudes from this town,” he muttered at the window; sunrise just glinting the Macklem shrubs, house silent, none of the other lodgers back from vacation; shutters drawn on Cecilia’s bow window—as a green-covered street piano trundled past the big church square, stopped in front of Macklem’s, and the Italian in charge cranked out a quick march that made Hansen say “Damn!” The shutters clicked and he drew back.

“Go away!” said a feminine voice. “Go!”

Promptly the maestro wheeled his hurdygurdy across and cranked it under Hansen’s window. The shutters clicked again. And as the young lady peered through the tilt she saw Hansen leaning from his dormer; heard him say, “Be off! Sun-rise is no time for a serenade, you scoundrel. I’ll have you arrested. Listen,” leaning out in a guttural whisper. “You agreed to play *Then You’ll Remember Me*—and you played *Hot Time*—you proper hyena! Skidoo!”

The laugh that broke from the Macklem shutters must have roused Perkins over the stable. Trudging down to the Union Station, Hansen recalled that merry laugh, when he mopped his neck. In the day coach he thanked his stars that he had not stayed among round-hatted parsons, smug financiers, clubbing politicians and policemen who stopped men swearing on Sunday streets. In the Montreal smoker, where he did not smoke, he raved about hæmatite rocks, opalescent lakes, mystic serpentine rivers, forests of spruce, shooting auroras, birch bark canoes and wigwams, trading posts and York boats, missionaries and colossal liars, prospectors who said that gold, silver, copper, nickel and iron were deep enough in Algoma and beyond to dazzle the world, and others who said that an empire of prairie wheat would yet drift out of Hudson’s Bay. And when he got sight of the rivers that swanked into the St. Lawrence, he ached for the streets of Montreal.

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## CHAPTER VI.

## A TOUCH OF MONTREAL.

When Louis Marechal, cold-eyed young avocat in Montreal, a week before Hansen's arrival got a letter from Hooper in Muskoka, he mentioned it casually to Heloise Laflamme his fiancée from Quebec City who began to surmise an adventure.

"Some Parsifal perhaps; impressionable, imaginative, writer for the press—oh you must be friendly to him, Louis. Make him—what you call a Nationalist?"

"On the principle that a Frenchwoman never fights for political petticoats, because she is born to them. Heloise, you are too temperamental."

She was a beautifully moulded brunette, oval chin curve perfectly balancing the trefoil of nose and eyebrows. Marechal, a cold-faced, blond young avocat of brilliant wit, with a taste for art in nature, had almost forgotten about Hansen till the pilgrim turned up at the old Londresque terrace on Dorchester St. W., where Louis lived simply with his mother.

"Well, how do you like Montreal?" asked Marechal in the dim, lofty drawing room used for a parlour.

"The splendidest, laziest, dirtiest, most cosmopolitan city I've ever seen since I left London," he gasped.

"You must have seen—some of it?"

"At least seventeen miles," glancing at his dusty boots. "I've tramped it most of the day, from the top of the mountain, over to Westmount, down to Maisonneuve, across the Victoria Bridge and back. I've counted fifty-four Catholic churches, heard more French and more church bells and more organs in one day than in all the rest of my life; for the first time seen baby coffins displayed in windows; poked into Notre Dame and across the Place d'Armes into the Bank of Montreal; went through the C.P.R. offices and the University; saw the Archbishop go up the Palace steps; mooched over the docks and rowed a skiff across to—what's the name of the Island? And what's the church that has the sign of the gilded angels looking over the harbour? Suppose that's to give travellers the impression of a holy city—but I'll bet Montreal some day will be as sinful as Paris—or New York; why the whole place feels like a celestial slum as soon as you're in it long enough for a square meal. A man could talk theology in a bar-room here—"

"Or drink Oka wine in a monastery," suggested Marechal with a smile when he could get a word edgewise into the big child's clatter.

"Oh yes monasteries—I didn't see those! Where are they?"

"Mother?" called Louis. Madame Marechal came into the plain old drawing-room; genteel, dignified, sparkling. "A new type of young man—Mr. Hansen—has discovered a new kind of city in Montreal, mother."

"Ah! I hope—you will live here?"

"Yes, I want to learn to talk, think, if necessary act French while I study second year classics and political science for the University of Toronto."

"Positively piquant," said Louis. "Allow me to send for your trunk."

"But I must find a *pension*."

"Upstairs—if you will. We have as much room as a small hotel and my mother has a maid. The rate will be what we decide after you like it. Breakfast is at eight."

"Good heavens! I have admired Hooper's qualities as a man; I must now admire his taste in selecting friends."

"Which is part of manhood, perhaps?"

Hansen tried to imagine any old lawyer-descended family in Toronto showing such practical courtesy to a French-Canadian so obscure as himself. Months under the Marechals' roof, he found their benign hospitality unailing. Madame had a tact for simple talk on dignified subjects. She had acquaintance with many old French families, some of whom were still moderately affluent; but never once did she eulogize wealth or criticize poverty. Of a generation of lawyers, Louis had the forensic style, even in conversation. Mother and son frequently engaged in mild duels about people and politics. Both of them knew Laurier well; talked of him as simply as though he were a boy, with none of the devout adoration lavished upon the Liberal leader in Ontario. Hansen remarked upon that.

"All Tory communities are abject in adoration of something—wealth, royalty, ancestry, political eminence," said Louis.

“We have as bad Tories in Montreal, even among our own people. An Archbishop, a Cardinal, are usually Tories. All authority tends to Toryism. Your Anglicans in Ontario make a fetish of the King—”

“As your people do of the Pope?” suggested Hansen, as in one of their numerous walks they gazed from the mountain at the October sunset painting of the bilingual city.

“Mistaken, my friend. The Pope is an Emperor. He rules Rome and its dependencies; but not Quebec. The King rules in Ontario. Your village curate is a hopeless Imperialist.”

Hansen began to see why Hooper had taken such a fancy to Marechal; both were radicals.

“But there are Ontarioans as Canadian as any in Quebec,” he argued. “Those who for generations have pioneered the country.”

“Never!” corrected Marechal. “English Canadians are Imperialists. The French Canadian has no mother country; that vanished in the Revolution with the kings; to him republican France is an anomaly.”

In October the city was uncommonly inspiring to the eye, as seen from the mountain a mass of colours and cramped chimneys and dotted washings that went like chained butterflies amid the towers and spires of Roman churches that peered down to the broad blue river and the Victoria Bridge.

“In Quebec expect some of us to be extremists,” went on Marechal whiffing a cigarette. “A city governed in its religion by Rome, in administration by French Canadians, in commerce and transportation by the Anglo-Saxons—some of whom are Americans—must be paradoxical.”

He touched his hat to a habitant and his daughter on a one-horse load of hay up from some queer old market.

“She will be the mother of six before you are married, Hansen. Think what that means to Canada!”

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## CHAPTER VII.

### DIALOGUES IN FRENCH.

Heloise came up from Quebec. Hansen met her at the door, Marechal being at the office, Madame shopping, the maid gone out—so he told her, noting her luxuriant eyelashes, lightly pencilled eyebrows and oval chin.

“Oh!” as she glided in, her coif of dark hair in opulent contrast to the neat tailoring of her grey travel suit, little boots just peeping out, and delicate odour of lilies of the valley. “So you are—M’sieu Olaf Hansen? Louis has told me about you.”

“Yes, Mam’zelle,” confusedly, “I am studying here. Daresay I look like a parson caught making a sermon. Do you—excuse me?”

“I am Heloise Laflamme,” she said quietly, prinking the cushions. “Has Louis not told you—about his fiancée whose great grandfather lost his head because he rode in a tumbril in the French Revolution, and whose grandfather was a voyageur in the Great Northwest Fur Company? Surely!”

He blushed. “Well, you see we talk politics so much, and I had no right to discuss intimately a lady whom I had never met.”

“Oh! Well, Frenchwomen are politics. Please sit down. I have not been in Montreal for weeks; have been down in Nova Scotia among my kinsfolk the Acadians. But you will see too much of me now perhaps. I am here to shop for Christmas and to see plays and hear music.”

Her English enunciation so delightfully crisp, Hansen let her talk. Madame came and he went to his room, dumbfounded at the ingenuous intrigue of the Marechals. Louis when he came merely cajoled the pique of Heloise at not having been mentioned to Mr. Hansen—who protested again that he had no right and added:

“But I hope to make up for what I have lost while you stay, Mam’zelle?”

Which as days ambled along seemed to be a certainty. The three went for many walks together—to old Bonsecours Market with its church of the gilded angels welcoming the mariner; to quaint old Chateau de Ramezay, not then so

cheaply exposed to tourists; to the Place d'Armes and Notre Dame.

"Pure Canadian, even if imitated from Canterbury and Rouen" said Louis revering the great facade. "They even have cuspidors in the galleries. There is talk now of a cathedral, a miniature répliqué of imperial St. Peter's in Rome—with a dome like that Bank of Montreal," pointing across the square, "which is the cathedral of the C.P.R.; what Madame de Staël calls 'a temple erected on a church.' Bourgeois ecclesiasticism!"

"You see Louis abominates federalism," said Heloise, deftly filling in the gaps of the conversation. "He is for—Canadianism."

"With a capital 'C'" said Hansen drily.

On Christmas Eve through valleys of pure snow they went to midnight mass in Notre Dame when Louis, taking Madame, left Heloise to Hansen; where the two great galleries each jammed with a separate concourse, looked down like a Roman amphitheatre upon the hazing, candle-flecked, incense-laden concourse below, and the rickety sweet organ throbbed out of the ages, and the Latin fell in cold mystic monotones out of the silence. It may have been only a wish-born fancy that he saw Laurier in the marvellous crowd that sang so vastly *Venite Adoremus*, its slow, broad cantabile with its old-style bits of *fioritura* so changed from the quick-march hymn *How Firm a Foundation!* as they had it in Ontario.

"Why are you so—taciturn, Mr. Hansen?" asked the furred damsel like some charmed clarinet as they walked out of the colossal crowd through Place d'Armes shrouded with snow, thronged with cabriolets, snow-shoers, tonsured monks, shop-girls, villagers in great-coats and mufflers.

"Thinking," he said almost piously "of people in Ontario—away back in the bush—whom I should like to have had help to sing the music in that Mass. It was wonderful!"

"Louis," said Heloise deftly as they turned a corner, "he seems a young man in love. I wonder—if she is French?"

Hansen soon realized that Louis Marechal was a very extreme type among a cultural diversity of French-Canadians in Montreal. There were in Ontario no such intellectual groups as almost any Sunday afternoon came by twos and threes to the Dorchester St. *pension*; avocats and politicians sprinkled with poets, painters, musicians; some of them members of *L'Ecole Littéraire* to which Marechal belonged, and in five minutes with *vin* and cigarettes and wit and music they made the old drawing-room sparkle with *bonhomie*. Here, while Madame, in her black silk, gravely listened, they made Sunday afternoon as different from Sunday in Ontario as Notre Dame is from St. James; while snow-shoers in red tuques and many-coloured woollen coats and stockings went in great red sleigh-loads singing *chansons*, away to the hills, after the solemnities of the Mass.

"Amazing versatility—and vitality!" said Hansen to Heloise after his first experience with one of these matinees. "I think you are pagans. Up in Ontario we gather after evening service to sing hymns!"

"Ah! but perhaps you talk politics, too, on Sunday?"

"Oh yes, if it's a moral issue. But we sing some of the saddest hymns in the homes, just because we like the tunes. You people leave the sadness in the church. Now I get some faint notion of what they call in Paris the *salon*—is that it?"

"Oui. Something so. We discuss life broadly, convivially—as they did in old France. We read *Le Temps*, *L'Illustration*, *Le Figaro*. How else could Quebec have produced a Laurier, a Fréchette, a Belcourt?"

"But Mam'zelle, that is too fine for me. I want to get at the root. I have read some of these men's writings in *Le Mond Illustre*; brilliant, graphic, witty—full of light. But to get a plain picture of the habitant I must read Drummond. These French writers are so kind to me, they surely have a democratic feeling for their own peasants?"

"Oh well" with a shrug, "you see Quebec is so vast and cold, it is a comfort to have sparkle and *camaraderie* in a city. But I advise you M'sieu Hansen, to go to St. Sulpice . . ." painting such a homely enchanted picture of a village of spinning wheels, wayside bake-ovens, corncob pipes and *le tabac canadien*, cob-horses and river drivers and *coureurs de bois* and a convivial *padre*, that the very next day Hansen packed a bundle of books and went. He stayed two weeks. When he came back he spoke with great vim of having chopped in the pine woods a race against a *coureur de bois* whom he called Jean Dubuc.

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A letter from Hooper a month after the holidays informed Hansen that trouble was coming to a head at the University.

“This is my rustication *annus mirabilis* without a doubt; but I’ll go out with a bang or two, one of which will be another interim permit for your exams. Some of our men think your Montreal articles are O.K. but rather too pro-Quebec. But I’ve got Philo Sullivan’s promise to print some more. Think you’d better shoot one on Laurier who may be guest orator of the Lit. this year. Pettigüe ménage is dull as ever. Lowther has her book almost hatched. Muma’s mandolin is mute—pending her marriage. Poor Hannah still sings her new Jerusalem ditties, but when the Macklems; move into a big new house that Mumford’s trying to dicker them into she’ll be a moulting bobolink. Seems to be an exodus of fashionables—began last fall—from the east quarter to the northwest. Oh, if they rusticate me I’ll pass up my degree and quill-drive a year or two for *The Imperialist* of which Macklem is now a director. Be sure you see Laurier. Try a shot at the Archbishop. So long.

H. H.”

Hansen began to see men as trees walking. Gothic Toronto with its obvious political fight between two old historic parties, he thought he understood. Montreal with its mystic webs of spiritual intrigue, its thick monastic walls and its plain contempt for the village intrigues of Toronto, completely dazed him. The more he tried to penetrate the labyrinth, the more baffling it seemed. He realized that he was only an ingenuous school-boy who at an age when some men become political leaders, was groping in a fog of nebulous ideas, hampered by a fatal desire not to be a partisan and to submit to no programme smaller than the interest of all Canada—concerning which he was as yet woefully an ignoramus.

However, he must obey Hooper and see both the Archbishop and Laurier. Philo Sullivan had promised to publish his articles in the *Plaindealer*, on the express condition that he should “give them Hail Columbia” if he felt so disposed, in his editorials.

Through Marechal he obtained audience with the Archbishop, whom to his disappointment he found less haughty than Wolsey, though highly colourful in his vestments and wearing a wonderful ring. Suavely in a narrow room the would-be Cardinal replied to questions of varied intensity; and when at the close of the eclectic interview Hansen asked, “Your Grace, if the Quebec government grants separate schools to Protestants as Ontario does to Roman Catholics—why not also to Jews?”, the Archbishop calmly said, “My son, that would be perfectly feasible if the discoverer of the Plains of Abraham had been a descendant of Abraham.”

“Oh, you mean the French here are historic equals—?”

“Superiors, because prior to the English, my son. Add to that the efficacy of the Empire of the Church of Rome, and you will see how irrelevant your question is. Are you—married?” was his parting practical shot. “Ah! Perhaps you will marry—a Catholic?”

When Marechal announced laconically that he had arranged an interview with Laurier—Hansen felt as though he were going to be either married or hanged. The meeting was in a law office which at once became a picture gallery of one superb, animated painting set to music. None of the hundred questions he wanted to ask seemed to belong to such an occasion; presently it seemed as if he were singing a duet with an archangel. An impeccable morning coat that seemed to be as much a part of the man as his aureole of grey hair; a face of perfect beauty belonging to the age of French monarchies; a form of exquisite contour and ineffable grace; a marvellous sunrise smile changing instantly to austere gravity; that was the picture. British constitutional history, American democracy, French-Canadian aspirations, were the three topics, which soon became one subject more directly momentous—the man himself. Laurier talked of London as though his hair had blown out of a fog; of struggles for British liberty; of Dickens; never a word about Paris. He was reading *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and he talked with passionate reverence of Lincoln. Of French-Canadianism he spoke guardedly and said little—which seemed to be much.

“But of course—you are French Canada, as Louis the Fourteenth was the State,” suggested Hansen in French, which on a subject so intimate seemed to be as necessary as music to a song.

Laurier replied in French. Hansen was glad when he came back to his glorious cadenzas in English. When Laurier ingenuously questioned him about Ontario, and about himself, Hansen felt as though he were a very essential but small actor in a spontaneous play, of which Laurier was the overwhelming actor, in a spot light that seemed to glow from himself.

During the dialogue he excitably felt himself asking Laurier about ecclesiasticism, Jesuits, illiteracy, large families,

Nationalism, types of French intellectuals in Quebec—a score of things from which he discovered with a shock that much of what he had imbibed from Marechal had no place in the intellectualism or the patriotism of the Liberal leader.

“One learns from the English to combine practicalism with ideas” said the statesman as he rose, “That is why the English succeed in planting ideas of toleration the world over where Frenchmen fail.”

When Hansen went out to the dingy clatter of the streets his legs felt like stilts which any moment might become wings. He wanted to stop anybody he met and tell him about Laurier; as though nobody in Montreal had ever truly seen and heard the man before.

Then he stopped in the middle of St. Catherine Street at a crossing and was almost run over by a baby funeral as he recollected—that he had never even asked Laurier a practical question about a Liberal platform for the whole of Canada.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### TWO WOMEN.

Hooper shut his editorial door when Dora Macklem came in one May afternoon; in her fresh spring gown a poem of vigour and beauty, an almost perfect Cecilia, but panting for breath. Hunched over a proof at his pigeon-holed desk, Henry seemed like an incandescent skeleton. She had never seen him so haggard. She knew the reason. He had debated with her a prospect of graduating in California where the climate would help him; but he had a deep-rooted objection to putting what he called an American label on a Canadian education; he had love for his Alma Mater that only a rusticated rebel can feel to the limit; and he had no money. Leaving college, surrendering his own franchise as a student along with his leadership, had made its mark. Hooper was a young man suddenly grown old. She pitied him; but what could she do? He had a deep contempt for the compromise he had been compelled to make in writing Conservative editorials; but what could he do? Editorships were scarce and poorly paid.

“Well Dora, what’s the brain wave to-day? Another Yid orchestra? You look excited.”

“Yes. I walked all the way up to avoid people in the elevator. It’s highly improper for a young lady to visit you—here. But there was no other way. Listen, Henry. Father and I have had a quarrel.”

“About me? Not worth it. But how—?”

“I threatened to pass up my exams as a protest against your rustication.”

“Oh no! No! You mustn’t. The tragedy act’s over. Comedy’s on. Here I am writing hold-the-fort platitudes about the amazing vitality of a government that was embalmed two years ago. Makes me laugh every time I think of it. But if a government can chloroform its conscience, why shouldn’t a young editor?”

“But you’re unhappy. It will kill you.”

“Oh no. I’ll just work the machine and be a professional editor; write what I’m told; get used to anything. Oh, when I quit somebody can take this desk with more ideas and power to drive them than I have. After Laurier is up this paper must broaden out, or go under. I know the man that can do it, too. But what’s on your mental programme?”

“I shall teach music. Simple enough.”

“You silly girl! Don’t you see that bowls me out of my job?”

“Surely there’s some other newspaper?”

“Yes, understudy to Philo Sullivan on the *Plaindealer*. That means playing up social column one page and lambasting it on another; ripping up shams independent of party; going after social humbugs, fads, churches, sweatshops—”

A rush of colour came into her face.

“But Henry—is that really true?”

“Dora, did you ever dream that a hundred-thousand house for the Macklems in times like these would be possible, if it

weren't?"

"Then I'll never live in it. Never!"

He smiled. "Dora your indignation is superb, because it's sincere. But a galloping consumptive sometimes has brilliant intervals. Listen! A boy rocked in a Tory cradle may become a rebel, as I did. But a girl can't. She has to keep up the prestige of her family. Do you see? You dare not leave home—because your doing so would wreck the home."

She was silent. A mist came into her eyes as she gazed out of the window at rifts of steam across the dazzling blue. Louder than the rumble of distant presses that shook the floor, she heard him breathe through his mouth. He rose and stood at the window; a mere phantom. A robin whistled on the crag of a gable and flew chattering down to a grassy court. He turned as he heard the rustle of her skirt. She was standing. What could she say? Flipping a paper-knife on the desk, what could he say? She must not excite him. That lean hand so spasmodically over his mouth—she knew what it meant. With caution he might last a year—or two—or three; when his life would be only a compromise to him but an absolute bondage to her, through the voluntary pledge that she had made and never would abjure—not to marry till after he had gone.

He thought of it; so did she; when neither needed to say a word. He smiled; that dear old fighting smile, full of more than a woman's tenderness. With a low sob, but a smile that to him was the light of the world, she kissed him like a mother and left the office.

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When Hansen went up to Toronto for his examinations, Hooper was out of town; gone early for a vacation, said Mrs. Pettigue because only so could he keep up his strength. Hannah was becoming dolorous over the decadence of Cromar St. and the prospects of Macklems moving away within a year or two, whenever "times" began to improve.

"But of course they won't improve till after the election, will they Mr. Hansen? That always makes a difference. Yes, Mr. Mumford advises me to sell now; but I can't leave here—till the Macklems do anyhow."

"Mrs. Pettigue, what on earth can the Macklems mean to you?"

"Or—to you, Mr. Hansen? Oh, but you are the strange person. I'm sure Mr. Hooper would be delighted to have you know Dora. It's a silly shame that you don't. You're his best friend. She's his—oh dear! nobody knows what to call it, when they're not even engaged."

"My friendship with Hooper has nothing to do with his fondness for Miss Macklem," he said stiffly.

"Oh! Daresay you'll marry a French girl down in Quebec. Just like you—so independent! Well, goodness knows she can get beaus enough just by snapping a finger, but she doesn't seem to care about anybody but him. It's lovely and all that—but it's so stupid!"

"Lovely but not stupid," he insisted. "And you and I, or any other common outsiders shouldn't be so meddlesome as to say a word about it. I don't know a thing about those people's mutual affairs that you haven't told me; the subject is tabu between Hooper and myself; he understands why. And I can't see why you shouldn't respect them both as much as I think I do, without wanting to know more about their private affairs than I do—which is very little and with my consent isn't going to increase."

"Mist—er Han—sen!" she deprecated, sadly, shaking her head. "Tut-tut! How you have changed! I declare, I don't think you ought to live in Montreal. Makes you so uppety. It's lovely of you to keep the room all this time, and I certainly 'preciate that. Not many young men—"

"My dear Mrs. Pettigue, don't be so sentimental! I haven't even paid the rent yet."

Wondering why her remarks should have irritated him, especially about the "girl in Quebec", he paid the rent, telling her more gently, that after the exams he would be away again.

"In Que-bec," he said incisively; "and farther. I shall be absolutely alone every day, seeing as much of Canada as possible for as little money as I can. Some of the time I'll be such a rough to look at that you wouldn't want to recognize me. I shan't be back in this extremely proper town until some time in October. And I'll pay you in advance now for the room."

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Early June found Hansen deck-handing on a St. Lawrence freighter. For months he had not seen Heloise. The freighter would be two days in Quebec. Sunday evening he changed his clothes and went ashore, up to the Plains of Abraham from which he counted seven vesper bells as he gazed across at low-lying Levis with its quaint, horse-dotted, habitant-laden ferries.

As the bells died, he turned to go to the Basilica for vespers; to find a hotel; to tramp, tramp uphill and down half the night, and again from sunrise—till he had seen this queer old dowager of a city who seemed to clutch the Old World while putting on the garlands of the New. He thought casually of Heloise, but hoped he would not happen to see her at the Basilica. He wanted to see Quebec, to re-live what he could of Canadian history—for himself. Women, he said to himself, were fatal as guides. It was the town, the people, the past and the present that he wanted.

And as luck would have it, after he had passed the Gate, and the old house of Montcalm, and a maze of dormered roofs, into a crowd of hastening people—at the door of the quaint wooden Basilica he met Heloise, white dress, blue-flowered hat, blue parasol. He did his best to shrink small and dodge her; but she loomed up like a lovely cloud right in his way.

“Bon soir!” he gasped, lifting his hat. Scarcely hearing the inflexional music of her voice, or recognizing the beauty of her figure, he went on incoherently, “Yes, I’m off the Cartier—deck-handing down the river—leave her in the Gulf somewhere and go on to the Maritime Provinces—” And as he felt his words jamming his breath, he muttered to himself, “Oh the devil! what shall I say next, or what will this siren do with me?”

“Ah—ah!” she said. “Then you will be much too engrossed with Quebec—to bother with a friend in Quebec?”

“Oh, is Louis here?” he gulped.

“Look!” she said, pointing with her parasol, at what he suddenly realized was a gathering crowd; festoons of people that swirled away from gabled gardens and white walls into narrow streets; Lower Town sending its holiday folk up the long hills; caleches with cob horses trotting briskly past; crowds from the canyon of Sous le Cap with its cobblestones and lanterned trade-houses—mustering up to the Terrace which of all populous plazas in Quebec was the most picturesque, dominating a riverscape unrivalled in America. “You have come to see Quebec—and its people; here they are, M’sieu Peer Gynt Hansen!”

“What is the concourse all about?” he said in French. “Is it St. Jean Baptiste Day? I don’t know your calendar by saints.”

“Oh—Louis,” she said lightly. “He makes a Nationalist oration on the Terrace this evening. The city is full of his *plastiques*—impressionables, yes? He is perhaps speaking now. You will—come?”

What on earth could he do but go? Such a pied and panoramic crowd! Such chattering undulation of *patois* and fine French! Such a spectroscopic furore of hats, ribbons, skirts, sashes, belles and beaux, padres and peasants, redcoats from the garrison, rare old grizzly habitants smoking clay pipes and corncobs, buxom spouses and blooming damsels and babies.

“Why didn’t Louis hold his forum on the Plains of Abraham?” he asked as they skirted the rear edge of the concourse towards the railing that overlooked Old Lower Town and the valley of St. Charles.

“Foolish to ask!” she murmured. “Do you not remember—who were conquerors there?”

“Which even Laurier and the Ecole Littéraire regard as a mere matter of history, Mam’zelle.”

He blushed. In the far distance a lone figure in a blaze of torch-light, with a blue-coat band behind, stood flamboyant and dramatic on a stage; and across a flowerlike jungle of people came his voice in a palpitation of passionate French.

“Mon dieu!” gasped Hansen. “I never knew Louis was such an orator.”

Heloise shrugged. “Oh! everybody he meets is audience to Louis. But he speaks—the truth! Do you not think so?”

She stood close. Her lilies of the valley smelled like the incense of June love. She listened. Was she—proud?

The voice ceased. The jungle of people became a surging sea that flung pebbles of plaudits on the beach. Brass instruments blared. Hansen startled—to hear the solemn, sweeping largos of “O Canada! terre de nos aïeux,” as the St. Jean Baptiste tune of 1881 swept back over the crowd in a vast choral flood of patriotic song.

“You also are—a Nationalist,” said Heloise as she heard Hansen sing.

He stopped in the midst of a word.

“You love Canada First—whose soul is in Quebec. Do you—not?”

Her voice was a separate song as the crowd broke, swept them away—parted them, when he scarcely knew where she had gone, till as he came out to the Rue he saw Louis kiss her in a caleche.

Next morning at daybreak Hansen went aboard the sleeping Cartier at her dock, gathered his togs and jumped aboard a lumber-laden schooner drifting out to the tide.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### MARITIME VISIONS.

Morley Hackett was born to know the world without travel and to understand many sorts of people without reading many books. Son of an itinerant school-master, he had become familiar with apt words, a few places, some types of people and much poverty. And he was as lean for adventure as a hungry dog for the hunt.

In all his junketing across Nova Scotia Hackett had never seen Chester, N.S., till the September evening when he toiled up the longest hill he had ever seen except at Digby, and sat down in a clump of feathery hackmetacks to gaze down over the navy of islands called Mahone Bay. A slipshod, thin-legged, thick-lipped young man with snapping restless eyes, he watched down hill a spire of blue smoke from a wigwam of basket-making Micmacs. A tall tramp stood there parleying in French with the Indians, and then came swinging uphill: dusty, a red kerchief knotted round the tan of his neck, a stubble of beard and a storm-smacked felt hat.

As he topped the hill the tramp indulged the unspeakable luxury of gazing out from Chester to the sea: folding his arms, he chanted the grand lines of Keats.

“Much have I travelled in the realms of gold

.....

Silent upon a peak in Darien.”

“Bravo!” said Hackett, rising in the hackmetacks. “Have you counted the islands in Mahone Bay?”

Hansen glared confusedly at this poised personage.

“Heavens, man! did you ever see such a Valhalla of scenery as this?” he said.

“There is an island in Mahone Bay for every day in the year,” said Hackett impressively. “On one of them the late Captain Kidd is said to have buried a fabulous treasure. I had some notion once of a syndicate to dig it up; but there’s a sucker born every second, and I try not to have been one of them.”

“You are too clever,” said Hansen.

“No, my friend, only too hard up. I am dallying awhile with poverty that one of these fine mornings will fold its tents like the Arabs and as silently steal away. My name is Morley P. Hackett. I always mention it in full, because I expect Canada some day to pronounce it as an advertisement of things bigger than myself. What is yours?”

“A name to me is only a label,” gruffed Hansen.

“Ah! Then as I have just read Sherlock Holmes, permit me to observe that you have spent the summer tramping from town to village in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, farming with the farmers, fishing with the fishermen, lumbering with lumberjacks, accosting pretty Acadians and—now, what am I?”

“A financial agent,” said Hansen with a twinkle. “You have already multiplied one rundown bank into another to eliminate the deficits in both. Yes, I’ve heard about you. Going into politics?” as they moved down hill.

“My friend, Ottawa is burlesque. I want drama.”

“What about Laurier? Isn't he big enough?”

“Ah! A great versatile actor in the role of Hamlet to right the wrongs of our gigantic Denmark. Yes, Macdonald left his monuments. Laurier must leave his. We shall have another transcontinental; perhaps two; a period of unparalleled expansion followed by—heaven knows what.”

“And you expect to play the market while it's going up?” said Hansen as they dropped into the town.

“My friend, you are slow but not stupid.”

In the dusk a villager rose by a curbside well with a yoke and two pails of water.

“Well, my man, that's cheap water-works. Where is the main street?”

“Main street!” echoed the villager. “Why—she's all over the town.”

“Is that your train whistling, Mr. Hackett?” said Hansen at the hotel.

“Yes, but in these haunted highlands a whistle travels as far as a train does in an hour. Good night Mr.—X. We may meet again.”

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Bored with Quebec and habitant villages and what she called Marechal's “auroral ideas about politics”, Heloise Laflamme abruptly decided to spend a winter in Paris. She would have preferred to sail from New York, but that would have been more expensive. Heloise was not so much a Nationalist that she scorned to use railway passes wherever they were reasonably available. Mid-September she was in Halifax. With her facile luck, through an Acadian friend, hostess in a hotel, she met Morley P. Hackett who with his adroit *savoir faire* contrived to elicit the news that she was more or less a friend to a person answering his description of the tramp he had met at Chester.

“Ah!” His eyebrows flashed up. “Last week he was chucking coal into a Norwegian tramp collier at Sydney Mines, trolling old sagas and folk songs with the crew, and telling them about Peer Gynt. I happened to be at the mines and he told me he might ship with the Norwegians direct to Montreal—or he might not. As I had business here next day and wanted to see more of him—?”

“But why should you? Is he—?”

“No, not clever—but he may become useful; one never knows. He seemed intensely interested in the late statesman Joseph Howe and his contemporary Sam Slick. At my suggestion that in Halifax one almost meets the shades of those gentlemen on the street, he is now handling freight at the docks by day and burrowing into Haligonensia by night. Thrifty rascal with money; extravagant with ideas. So, Mam'zelle, as you sail on the *Athabasca* to-morrow, you may get a parting glimpse of a splendid stevedore!”

“M'sieu Hackett, you have wits enough to become a Premier!”

“Wits enough to use Premiers, if I have to, Mam'zelle; which may be better.”

Next morning, wheeling baggage into the *Athabasca*, Hansen said to a fellow-stevedore, “Ods, Pogie! such a great harbour for such a miserable port. When that tub docks here next she ought to be jammed in the steerage with British-born; and I'd like to trundle their bally boxes, by Jove, hundreds of 'm, as the immigrants come and squat on 'm till they're checked out. That's what this country needs.”

Casually he glanced at the tag on a trunk. “Heloise Laflamme, Paris via London.” he muttered. Glancing up as his mate read, “Morley P. Hackett, London,” on another, he saw Heloise leaning over the rail. Lifting his storm-banged hat—“Not for good?”

“And why not—for better, Peer Gynt?” came in a witching smile.

“Gar!” said Pogie to a mate in the shed when the whistle blew. “That Hansen sure is one queer bird. His alibi is Peer Gynt. Believe me—when he picked up them handle-bars agin, that lollapulooza that looks like a princess—by the lord Harry! she started to come off ship—but my friend M. P. Hackett stood plumb in the way and lifted his lid! Queer things on ships!”

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE NEW SONG OF 1896.

In the early summer of 1896, day after the election, Jericho village was uncommonly excited. Peppercorns Ltd. had sold out that very morning. Bo Brown, theologian, was there on a visit. And the first "century" bicycle race, Plainsville to Windsor and back, was to go through Jericho, over the gravel roads inaugurated by Peppercorn. Eli Snell, palsied and feeble, was there to see it; so was Tode Beech, with a wet burdock leaf in the crown of his hat. Maggie on the Back Line was now nursing her fourth girl baby, and her autograph album was still on the centre table. Phil Kearney, station agent at Jericho, was the father of three, all very much like Bella Donahue. One of Cornelia Flater's girls was married and two of the boys were about to go West for cheaper land.

But all these mundane trifles, and the growth of Jericho with its two stores, dismantling mill and wider sidewalks, were of small interest to Eli compared to what he had to say about the coming "stars" in the Laurier Cabinet, and the election of Dr. Strang. He was in the midst of an unheeded monologue about this when the village rose with a whoop as a low cloud of dust swept by, with Bo Brown rushing out to give a Jericho slave of the handle-bars a cool, wet sponge.

"Well, this wunt buy a noo dress fer the baby," grunted Tode. "Me fer the haycocks agin!"

"No," lamented Eli as he climbed into Tode's wagon, "Jericho without Zach wunt ever be the same, any more than it wuz when Sadie Barlow an' Ole Hansen quit—er than Canaday wuz when old Jawn A. kicked the bucket."

Tode's horses leaped as a train thundered in.

"Guess Bo Brown's off t' Detroit t' see the lady he's ast seven times to marry 'im," said Tode as he watched the passengers go aboard. "Beats the doose how these doods with the tongues hung in the middle git ahead without workin'."

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From sea unto sea the name of liberation was Laurier. But when great lorries of grand furniture creaked away from the Macklem house, and for the last time Perkins the coachman cracked his whip round the corner, and at last the baby grand piano went on a truck, and after a while men with red and blue caps and women in poke bonnets took over the house, and the sign Salvation Army Hostel went up, Hannah Pettigue sat at her own bow window and wept. Most of her boarders had gone. Hansen and Hooper remained. So the Laurier *jubilate* spelled no new Jerusalem to Hannah who had raised her Ebenezer four blocks north of St. James spire; and when triangles and tambourines took the place of Chopin and Bach fugues, for the first time she put up the sign ACCOMMODATION FOR EXHIBITION VISITORS, wondering how Mr. Hooper, whom she had expected to die in her house for almost a year, could be so madly excited over the election as to insist upon taking Mr. Hansen to Ottawa in the heat of August.

Ottawa in all but its Parliament Buildings and its noble river, was a glum disillusionment to Hansen, who the very day he arrived insisted on rowing Hooper up the Ottawa for miles; and as they came down in the cool shadows when sunset flung all her pots of magic paint on the towers of Parliament Hill, he turned the boat across and shot out his long right arm.

"Henry," he began, fumbling for words, "those towers like a temple of the Orient here in the North, at a time like this should have bells in them calling all Canadians to political prayer."

"Put the lid on the rest," grinned Hooper. "Let Laurier finish it."

At the grimy hotel in a rotunda under a Confederation dome with panels for all the Provinces, they smelled political whisky and saw millennialists, caballers, caucuses and common inebriates wrangling hotly in a jubilant chorus of reformation. Hooper seemed to know who many of the national reformers were and what they were talking about. Hansen saw and heard it only as a Dantesque pandemonium. There they met Marechal whose brilliant, cocksure cynicisms were now rather jarring to Hooper; Heloise, who charmed him instantly—though he criticized her later—and who was peculiarly, but at first guardedly gracious to Hansen as she told him about Europe; yes, she had even been to Christiania and seen the fiords and met Grieg: and that dazed him so that he stopped looking for Laurier in the melee and

let her talk. Soon a heavy-browed, thin-legged young man of intensely snapping eyes came unobtrusively through the crowd and spoke to Heloise who introduced him at once to the three as "Mr. Morley P. Hackett."

"Ah! So Ottawa draws us all here, whatever our beliefs, as Mecca the Mahometans," he said simulating a pinch of snuff. "What a phenomenon a general election is when it turns one set of rascals out!"

He quickly vanished among men whose surnames he knew not; men whom to-morrow he would be calling Tom and Billy. And before Hansen could think of a phrase to express to any of the other three what he felt about so algebraic a personage, there came into the glare of the rotunda a huge, black-maned man with mystic eyes and a vast mouth playing with a cigar; and Hansen felt his breath lurching as he gasped, "Hullo, Dr. Strang! Congratulations! What portfolio do you—ah!" as he caught the expectant eye of Heloise, "Miss Laflamme, may I—?" He made a spasmodic bungle of all the introductions and stood back to watch his friend the "hypnotist" impress himself with such instant suavity upon the group. Startled to realize what an incongruous lot of people he had begun to know, he was seized with an ungovernable impulse to have Strang meet Hackett. Suddenly intoxicated with people, he strode across the rotunda and almost dragged the cynical optimist over to Strang. He stood like a boy who has flung a match into a barrel of gunpowder to see the contact of these two similar yet uncongenial persons.

But the uplifting things these men might have said about the future of Canada were camouflaged with commonplace wit.

"No doubt when the House sits, Ottawa is a wonderful place" said Hansen to Hooper. "Just at present it's more deadly dull to me than Jericho. I don't want to know anything about the social show at Rideau Hall, or the ambitions of members' wives, or the latest scandal in the parliamentary restaurant. Let's get out!"

He was glad when at last he got Hooper on the train for Toronto; and because a smoking-car was second only to a bar-room for prophecies, he went to keep Hooper up till long after midnight reconstructing Canada with transcontinentals, immigrants, new Provinces and *entente cordiale*. They discovered so many liberating forces in Canadian humanity that Hansen fervently repeated the new-born campaign slogan of Bryan, "You cannot crucify mankind upon a cross of gold!" The only way they could devise of getting their joint message to the people was to start a new Liberal paper—for which they seemed to have everything but the money and the experience.

The Flaters suddenly sent word that they were coming to the Fair. Hansen met them in a cab at the station where Hiram, infallible in the forest, got hopelessly lost. Their first visit to any city, Hansen found himself telling them all about it as though he himself had just discovered it. At the Fair in the evening he piloted them into the rhythm, the fun, the music, the Midway, the crowd—and just as they were going to hear the band play they met Peppercorn who, having sold out, was now on his way West. He began to tell the Flaters all about it, when he suddenly discovered that Hansen was standing near and gave him a look as genial as a pair of glass alleys.

"Beats all what yeh will see when you aint got a gun," he said as he blew smoke down over his fancy waistcoat and heavy chain. "So long, Hiram."

To the drone of the hot-doggers they heard a redcoat band play some big piece with tremendous brass climaxes which Hiram said was too deep for him and Cornelia said was "grand"; but when a cornet played *Ben Bolt* they both sat back in sad ecstasy and Hansen told them the story of *Trilby* which everybody was reading; and when they heard *British Grenadiers* Hiram worked one foot on the faded grass; and just before the fireworks, came a sweet old hymn played mostly on the brass, and Cornelia sang low along with the band as Olaf hummed the bass, thinking about the revival in Jericho as something a hundred years old, wondering if Hiram had all his bush down yet, and if he was growing wheat in the field that he had helped to log up in—was it 1888?

Then the fireworks shot sprays of colour over the south stars and the full moon, and they all gazed up, out over the lake, back over the weaving, shuttling fabric of the crowd, and it seemed to those outposts in Canadian civilization as though they were in one of the luminous courts of heaven.

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## Chapter XI.

### A LONG SHOT.

That winter of 1896-97 Hansen first heard what to him was the apocalyptic harmony of Wagner; the Overture to *Tannhäuser*, played by the Theodore Thomas Orchestra from Chicago. From a twenty-five-cent seat in the top gallery he looked down upon tierages of empty seats in a vast hall and heard the furies of Venus against the solemn chant of the pilgrims; it made him think of the furies that wanted the body of Henry Hooper but could not capture his soul. When he heard Henry George, a few days later on that platform, ask all the students in cheap seats to come down and fill the dollar seats, he was reminded of Hooper's radicalism at the University. Moody, the stout evangelist, stimulating as a sea breeze, made him wish Hooper would attend some of the services; but Henry had no use for that kind of religion, even as a tonic. A great Canadian choir sang in that hall under a conductor who made choral tone seem to split rocks and creep like white tone-ghosts out of shadowy silence. Hansen heard the choir sing Grieg's setting of the Björnson poem, "Olaf Trygvason, sailing o'er the great North Sea." Again he thought of Hooper: the tonal energy of the music and the simplicity of the Viking story, so much in contrast to a wasting rebel.

Hooper had a wretched winter. A week in the office often sent him to bed for half the next. He had hemorrhages of varying intensity, known to nobody intimately but Hansen who moved to a room next Hooper. The consumptive's cough was so familiar that he could spring from a dream at a certain ominous prelude to a hemorrhage. The enormous strength and vigour of Hansen seemed a tonic to Hooper, even to contemplate. Some days Hansen did his studying in his comrade's room when Hooper for two weeks had lain on his back after a bad attack caused by a scene with Macklem in his office at *The Imperialist*.

Days later—it was then spring, and some more of Dora's daily flowers and a letter from her were on the table—Hooper recovered his voice enough to tell Hansen something of the cause.

"Yes, you see the old boy warned me that conditions might emerge when I'd have to—defend his industrial policy against attacks in the Grit press. Some things were bound to come out, he said. Oh yes—they're an old story to—some of us."

"Don't get excited, Henry."

"No danger as long as you're around—you bromide! But you stimulate some people. You're a prize puzzle."

"Never mind. Tell me about Macklem."

"Pshaw! you know most of it. You started the sweatshop story."

"Oh, that juvenile effusion!"

"Never had it published—why?"

"Because I heard a Yid orchestra, I guess."

"Hmh! Funny thing that Yid fiddle band. Never met Atkins, did you?"

"Tall, dark man that came to see you yesterday while I was out? Graduates in law this year, doesn't he?"

"Brilliant boy that. One of our best fighters for free speech in the University. Idolizes Laurier—worth his while I guess. Ho-hum! Yes, Atkins has what they call a future. Wonder what that feels like?" After a pause he said, "Hansen, somebody with more strings to his bow than I have will take that desk of mine some day and make that paper as broad as the country. If you want it—you can get it."

"Me!" Hansen turned. "Henry you're getting delirious. But what has Atkins to do with the—"

"Yid orchestra? Oh, give a guess."

Hansen sat back and closed Mill's *Liberty*.

"Henry, if you mean that—I'll say that he fell in love with—Cecilia."

After a silence—"Hmh-hmh! Guess that's right. So he said. Though she never told me—he did. He supposed I was a mere chum of Dora; that of course I never could dream of marrying her—but lord! a man can dream if he wants to. Oh, we agreed long ago to act like friends only and let people imagine the rest. Atkins didn't imagine. Thinks she'd love him in time, if he made it clear that he loved her. Maybe she might, if it wasn't for me. I never asked her. No. No, there are a few things even comrades can't discuss. Oh you great big stiff," he said in a dumb show as Hansen turned to the window. "You indeterminate lump!"

Hansen came and sat by the bed.

“Henry, let me finish the Atkins story—see if I get the hang of it?”

With a silent white grin at the wall Hooper acquiesced. Ponderously pacing a seat between the bed and the window, Hansen began:

“Atkins’ dilemma is between his love for Cecilia and his ambition for a career as a politician. He’s been looking for a way to get his name before the public and the Liberal party as a true reformer. Decides that sensational attack on a churchgoing Tory on behalf of an allegedly down-trodden race is the best method. Discovers the Macklem sweatshops \_\_\_”

“Getting warmer!” said Hooper hoarsely.

“Oh, that’s about all, I guess.”

“But what’s—the other person’s dilemma?”

“Hers? Oh yes. Well, that’s not so easy. ’Tisn’t just turning his end for end. Er—depends on whether she loves him—how much—what love really is—how much and how soon she may expect to—” He began to perspire. “Henry—don’t get excited,” he coughed. “Heavens man, keep cool!”

Hooper laboriously laughed. “Guess it’s your turn now, boy. You’re wriggling. Go on.”

“The rest drags you in,” said Hansen bluntly. “Why—why if she loves Atkins, then she’s got to stifle the memory of her self-imposed pledge to you—”

“Gamble on how soon I’ll kick off,” suggested Hooper, opening his eyes. “Well, that’s a long shot. Guess I’m a dark horse in this race. But,” as he turned uneasily, “if you were in my overcoat—at present without buttons—what would you do? Would you—tell the best friend you had?”

“Why yes; what else could I do?”

“Well,” with a smile like a gorgeous lamp suffusing colours over wax, “you great big chunk of dynamized putty, that’s what I’ve been doing. Hansen, when I get out of here. I’ll commit the unconventional crime of introducing you to Dora. Then you’ll begin to know how much a woman—might mean to you—when you quit thinking her an angel.”

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## CHAPTER XII.

### CONVOCATION.

On a June afternoon, in spite of his efforts to remember *Sweet Rosy O’Grady*, the lines of a hymn kept dingdonging in Hansen’s head: *To holy convocations, the silver trumpet calls*, tune Aurelia. He went and sat in the park on the far edge of which two men seemed to be working a crosscut saw in a little forest of oaks. On a day so solemnly impressive, when a hundred graduates were to be decked with bays, why should men be bushwhacking in a park? Hansen vaguely picked out the grove, the campus, the knoll, on which he would have had Convocation—trailing among the trees instead of across an open campus; a solemn music of pipes and voices; satyrs and odes; people representing the sages and poets of old. Yes, it needed a Wagner; Hooper, thank heaven, was up again; but of course would be absent—even from her graduation.

Hansen was excited. Convocation—in the iron-rodded gymnasium—was a pawky, huddling affair on a very undramatic stage not devoid of impressive personages, and to one in a back seat no doubt enormously picturesque. But there was a play behind this show; of which “Cecilia” graduate, Atkins, and Macklem were the chief actors present; one absent—Hooper. All through the show, Hansen tried to work out a binomial theorem of love and ambition. Hooper’s statement of the case since recovering from his illness, had been very lucid. But Hansen had no head for romantic intrigues; this one was worse than the muddle of Montreal. As he listened to the mumbling Latin and the *honoris causa* addresses, a problem more baffling to him than the square of the circle caused him to perspire. He worked it out in the form of an inwardly spoken argument thus:

“Atkins tells Hooper he has actually written that article about sweatshops for *The Whig*—at present omitting names—

because of duty to his party and to himself; for days he has kept it, undecided as to its publication, with no mention of it to 'Cecilia'. Being a sincere man, as well as ambitious politician, he has frankly confessed himself in a hopeless dilemma; willing to suppress the article and postpone his entry into politics—if she gives any sign of wanting to love him. Queer business, this love. But apparently she's been suffering from nerves—no wonder—and has been utterly feminine—whatever that is—anyhow reckless, and has left Mr. Atkins very much up in the air. Now what is either of them going to do about it? Does she know about the Atkins article? Will he use it at last to force her hand? Is the thing already set up, waiting for his O.K., his 'hold' or his 'kill'. Will he tell her? If he does, will she capitulate? Not likely. No, she's not that kind. Why doesn't Hooper urge her to be reasonable? He's the only one that can. But no—this isn't reason; it's what they call love and ambition—a bad mixture. Phew!" he concluded as the ceremony was at last over and he heard the stately Chancellor say *Convocatio dimissa est*—"this is far too deep for me. I guess I never should have left Jericho."

Olaf Hansen, B.A., went to the park again; on the bench where he had sat two hours before when he felt like toggling up in skins and blowing a pipe—now he sat as gloomy as a stove-lid, hands in his pockets, boots crossed, hat tilted over his eyes.

"Oh well anyhow," he cogitated, "I'm an academic rubber stamp now; perfectly free to leave my mark on the Yankees if I want to—as so many do. Ho-hum! Drat the Faculty Tea! Thank heaven, though, I'm clear of any mess of love and ambition like Atkins has got himself into, and I'm a million times better off on this earth than poor Hooper who didn't even get his rubber stamp—just a plain, plug-ugly immigrant able to eat up exams without lectures and go back to a farm if I have to and—oh Lord! wish I had somebody to blab at for an hour. Guess I'll go and dig up Henry."

He lunged away, head down, hat on the tilt, hands in his pockets.

Who was that among the bird-flickering leaves calling "Olaf"? Who in this Londresque town knew him by that name? "Olaf! Wait! My goodness, wait a minute." The voice of some woman; as fresh as the whistle of a high-holder scooting away yonder into a ravine. He stopped short; turned—and there she was coming with a swish, brightly dressed—just how he never remembered—alert, eager, girlish as ever.

"Good heavens," he gasped. "Is it—you Sadie?"

"And why not? Did you ever dream I wouldn't be here to see you—graduate?"

"Oh yes—that! What was it?"

"Wonderful! I wouldn't have missed it for—oh, but you are the glummy old thing."

He saw tears flood her eyes.

"Heavens, Sadie! if I'd ever dreamed you were coming! How could you; of all people—you? Er—come and have supper with me; at a hotel or somewhere? Yes, I was just going down to see my friend—oh, I want you to meet Hooper! He's a hero! Wish I could tell you about him. But you must meet him. You're just the sort of person he needs—that anybody needs sometimes."

He hailed a cab. All the way down University Avenue he praised Hooper, ignoring her questions about everything, except Montreal. "Oh, that stuff! Did you read it? Strang did too. Yes, I met him in Ottawa. Thought he'd have been in Congress instead. Strange man! Please don't talk about him—just now?" He said nothing about what had seemed to happen ages ago—that queer trip on the Norland. "So you're kindergartening? Tell me all about it. Suits you—oh, yes it's one of the soundest of modern illusions. That whole University is—a sort of kindergarten, Sadie. Fact! Never mind, though."

"Oh, you big child," she half spoke. "I wish I had you in a kindergarten."

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### A TRIANGLE.

The meeting of Sadie and Hooper in the big hotel sitting-room after dinner was not the simple *jubilante* Hansen had

expected. He saw Sadie startle when Hooper came ghosting in with the lambent flicker of a glorious, spiritual smile as he shook hands; saw a knot of mothering wrinkles in her forehead as she began to talk to him; saw Hooper, unfolding like a bud in the morning sun, become at first as gay as a lark. Then, at his request, Sadie sang—just some of the old Jericho pieces—and Hooper grew strangely sad; began to talk to her as though she had been a sister, about his hopes, defeats, failures. “Absolute failure of all my ideas,” he insisted, “except that I’ve been some help to a few people.”

“No failure anywhere,” blurted Hansen at a window. “I tell you, Henry, you’re like John Brown’s body—your soul goes marching on!”

His intensity startled Sadie; something to her at once more peculiar in these two than the contrast in physiques; they were like adult children; they began to badger each other, almost quarreling as children sometimes do for a show in presence of some big person.

“Pretty hard on you, Hansen,” laughed Hooper, “if a man’s soul has to be judged in inverse ratio to the size of his body. Excuse the academic lingo, Miss Barlow? I don’t suppose you talk that way in Detroit.”

“Oh indeed, we—may I say ‘we’ Americans I wonder?—just thrive on big words, concepts, visualizations, crazy ads, spoiled women and bad children. You know, it’s a way we have to—”

“But you’re a Canadian!” said Hansen.

“Oh yes, always shall be. But you know, Mr. Hooper, it’s so much easier to live over there, because people spend so much and talk so loud, and aren’t all so sewed up as we are here in Canada. Oh yes, we’re quite as sincere over there, and just as serious, but somehow we mix so many different ideas all in a sort of gin fizz or something at once, and that’s—what we call humour.”

“Can’t hold a candle to English humour!” barged Hansen solemnly. “*Life* for instance, hasn’t half the subtle spontaneity of *Punch*. Think so, Henry?”

“There now you’re off!” laughed Sadie. “You see, Mr. Hooper, when I taught this boy at Jericho, I used to have visions—oh, just like any mother or sister would—that some day I’d come down to see him graduate, and he’d look as wise and talk as learnedly as any professor, and I’d be so proud of him and—oh well, it’s not that way exactly, but it’s just as wonderful as if it were. We’re all young yet, and even if neither of you come to the States, I’m sure Canada is going to be a great country. Dr. Strang—” “You remember him—in Ottawa?” interrupted Hansen—“thinks that not even Bryan is the equal of Laurier. Oh, and the old parrot—what do you think, Olaf, the very day after Laurier was elected, the poor old thing croaked once more ‘Down with John A. Hooray!’ and fell over dead. Now—what was I saying? Dear! my tongue does run away with my head sometimes. Oh, Olaf—who was that splendid girl graduate you were gazing at so hard in Convocation?”

“Oh—that was ‘Cecilia’,” he blushed, with a glance at Henry. “That’s my pseudonym for her. I don’t know her—”

“Hooded the same day and—don’t know her,” gasped Sadie.

“Ask Henry about her,” he said awkwardly.

“No, Miss Barlow,” suggested Hooper, “you tell me—what she looked like. You’ve got a good eye for details. No use asking him; he never sees a woman except in some sort of aurora, as though the gown she has on is as much a part of her as the hair, and the whole thing a glorious illusion—”

“Illusion is right,” said Hansen. “I don’t analyze flowers. The reason women wear long skirts and fol-de-rols and men don’t—”

“Now you go ’way back and sit down,” laughed Hooper. “This is our show. Miss Barlow—please tell me in every detail, exactly how she looked when she graduated. Yes, every little thing. Please?”

“Well,” laughed Sadie, “I’ll try.” With intricate detail, slowly as a gipsy telling a fortune, she described ?Cecilia”. Hooper, with open mouth, gazed at the wall and listened.

“But you have to hear her play the piano to get the real picture,” said Hansen awkwardly. “Eh Henry?”

Seeming not to hear, Hooper put his hand in his coat pocket and drew out a letter. Swinging on the piano stool, his elbow struck a jangly chord. “Just like me,” he grinned. “Discord, Hansen,” clasping the letter on his thin knee, “Miss Barlow perhaps won’t mind if I tell you something—that in any other company but hers would be confidential between us two. I’ve just got wind—”

“Oh I know. The Atkins story? What the deuce can we do about it?” said Hansen.

Hooper looked at him and at her, with a grim pucker of his lips as he smiled in his eyes.

“Nothing now. Nothing,” he said huskily. Then he gazed at Sadie as though he would see through her sparkling eyes into her brain.

“Hope the directors don’t expect you to defend Macklem, Henry?”

Putting a hand over his mouth, he said, “I’m out! My resignation—”

“No! No, you haven’t—sent it in? Is that it in your hand? Henry, you’re going to tear that up. You needn’t write the Macklem defence. I’ll do it. I’ll write it to-night!”

Hooper shook his head. “No, I’ve shot my bolt. You’ve got a long while yet to live with your conscience, and a few things to do with it. You’re a free nigger. Stay free. No, some things never can be said—direct. We all need mediums sometimes, Miss Barlow.” He put away the letter, and got up. His silence was intense. Sadie rose. She was bafflingly bewildered. Hansen had not a word to say. As often he did at such awkward moments, he sat down at the piano and began to play in a rambling way, just making up things.

“Rip off something lively,” said Hooper close to his ear. “Cake walk or coon song or—”

“No. Give you an old waltz, though.”

To his surprise he felt the other two begin to dance; now and then he saw the two arms up as they swung towards the window, at every turn quickening the tempo in spite of him, till he fumbled and grew dizzy and feared to stop, yet feared still more to go on. Shutting his eyes, he banged down two or three stupid chords and quit.

Henry’s eyes were gleaming like diamonds. Breathing heavily he took his hat from the piano.

“Good-bye,—Sadie,” he said hoarsely. Looking at Hansen as he held her hand, “Any boy that ever had you for a teacher, ought to ring the bell every time he wallops the mawl. Good-night!”

What on earth was there for Sadie to do—but just to break all society rules and kiss him like a mother?

“Olaf,” she said as the flicker of that rare smile faded like a spent aurora, “I shall never see him again. But— isn’t he bully?”

“Henry’s a hero,” he choked. “Sadie,” with hectic haste, “I must go. Must take him home—Henry!” he called down the corridor. “I’m coming. Wait! Sadie—listen. Your description of her was his last glimpse. He’ll never see her again; and he knew it. That dance was the last straw; he knew it would be. The ‘Lost Leader’. His last dance—no, don’t be sad; be proud. Coming Henry!”

“Well Olaf, I’ll bid you good-night. Please don’t bother about me. My hotel is just across the street. Take care of him. See you—to-morrow!”

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### TE DEUM.

On a Sunday afternoon a redcoat regiment and band marched past the Pettigue corner towards St. James, startling Hannah into fond recollections of garrison parades, silk hats and carriages. This time she scarcely noticed the redcoats. For two hours strangers to Hannah had been dropping in at 47 Cromar, into the big front room—which nobody rented now. As the redcoats dwindled, a carriage drove up. When a young lady in black silk got out Hannah opened the door, when her heart beat furiously and red spots burned into her cheeks. Nothing was said. The lady smiled warmly as if in greeting and passed into the front room. Hannah softly closed the tall door. For a moment she listened. Then as one in a sad but entrancing dream, of something too beautiful to last, she went upstairs. Soon Mr. Hansen came down, with his hat. As he passed along the landing Hannah whispered. He nodded and shook her hand. At the door of the front room he also paused for a moment, and went out.

St. James Cathedral was one of many places round the world that day where “a vaster Empire than has been” was celebrated in honour of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. At precisely the same moment, by calculations of astronomers, in various parts of the Empire on which the sun was always rising the *Te Deum* was to begin in the Established Church. Kipling’s *Recessional* would be sung at evening services to the spasms of de Koven’s irrelevant music. The band massed on the steps was a splotch of poppy red at the base of the tallest spire in America. Thousands packed the churchyard and the sidewalks. In Westminster Abbey at that very moment the French Premier of Canada, knighted, was to many a Canadian in London the most courtly and picturesque of all monarchs, princes, ambassadors, and dignitaries assembled from Europe and Asia.

On the outskirts of the St. James crowd stood Olaf Hansen, B.A. Next him as the opening hymn died and the chime sang in the steeple, a dear old lady in black satin, bonnet and lace, repeated the ritual about the Queen, the Prince of Wales and the royal family.

“Such a Sovereign!” she exclaimed, looking up at Hansen. “Sixty years of such blessings in statesmanship, literature, science and impregnable religion to the whole world. Think of it!”

“Yes, Madam,—George the Third was the only British monarch who equalled her in length of reign—and but for him this service might have been held also in New York, Boston, New Orleans, Chicago and San Francisco.”

“The tyrant!” she gasped, elevating her parasol. “We shall never forgive him!”

“Still the Empire seems vast enough?”

“Never! Sovereigns such as the Guelphs, and prelates like the Archbishops of Canterbury should rule the world—rid us of the sovereignty of Rome and of all despots whatsoever. You must pardon my emphasis,” she added splendidly. “I am the sister of a rural dean and I had the great, the memorable privilege of dancing with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales at our own little Chystal Palace here in eighteen-sixty.—We praise Thee O God!” suddenly she broke off as the band struck up the *Te Deum*.

At the close of this paean for Empire which he tried in vain to sing from the old lady’s prayer-book while she gazed at the cathedral door, Hansen put on his hat.

“Thank you, Madam,” he said. “We may never meet again. Have you heard the news?”

“S—surely, not Her Gracious Majesty—?”

“No madam. The Queen lives. But the body of Henry Hooper—is dead.”

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Philo Sullivan, editor and main proprietor of the *Daily Plaindealer*, looked like a twin brother of Deadwood Dick and he had terrorized both political bar-rooms with his editorial six-shooter. Since his publication of the Hooper ‘rebel’ articles Hansen had admired this inaugurator of shotgun journalism in Canada; and him he consulted after he had signed “Olaf Hansen, B.A.” to seventy-one unsuccessful applications for schools at \$325 to \$1,200 a year.

“Trouble is, all pedagogue factories work overtime,” said Philo, hunched under a sombrero hat in a gloomy sanctum still more darkened by clouds of smoke from a stogie. “The cradles don’t rock fast enough to catch up.”

“Any prospect of a reporter’s job on the *Plaindealer*? I’ve tried all the others.”

“Hansen, you’re not worth your salt as a reporter. And as you’re about equally valuable as an editor, your chances of newspaper success in Ontario are about as good as a snowball in Hades. I printed some of your Quebec stuff, because it had a kind of discursive luminosity; but you notice I gave it the blind staggers in an editorial. In any overgrown village like this an editor has to be either bigoted or psychic—and you’ll never be either. You’re like Hand’s fireworks trying to win a war.”

Hansen gave the desk a wrench that spilled the ink.

“Loving a country, Hansen, is a bad substitute for hating the opposite party or ripping the veneer off society. You are incapable of hatred, and a dose of paint passes with you for a pretty face. Newspapering is war. If you can’t find a row, start a dog fight. You’re a feature artist. Your only hope is to go across the border where a third-rate divorce is worth a page of printer’s ink—or hike to that new fools’ paradise, the Klondike.”

"I have a letter in my pocket from a Canadian M.P. known all over Michigan, practically guaranteeing me a job at two thousand a year—if I'm content to take it!" blurted the graduate.

Philo seemed to be absorbed in the clouds that rose from his stogie.

"Boy," he said, batting a path through the smoke, "an offer like that isn't worth shucks compared to what Henry Hooper tried to offer you, but you were such a boiled owl as never to know, or even to dream, what it was." He paused a moment.

"Hooper made over to you—spiritually—without testament or contract—his life interest in Dora Macklem. And you never knew it. And he never told me! No," as he fumbled with his stick to find the door, "I don't depend on words for all my language. But you're so broad-angled in your self-consciousness that you couldn't see the woods for looking at the trees."

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## CHAPTER XV.

### EAST AND WEST.

At the Hooper obsequies Hansen had managed to avoid Dora Macklem. Before leaving for the Manitoba harvest and on to Edmonton, en route to the Yukon, he met her casually at Hooper's grave. In the city of the dead social distinctions are sometimes sharper than those of living streets. But he impulsively held out his hand.

"Pardon me?" he said hastily, and stepped back, stung with a terror of confusion. "The flowers are beautiful" he added.

"Yes" she said. And she drew up her veil. The grave sharpens all perceptions. Thousands who in life had blazed with energy lay under these monuments. It seemed incredible that a woman like her could ever die, and be buried. Unaware of her common life, he had the luxury of beholding only her beauty.

"Thank you for all you did to help Henry" she said. "I might have written to you, but—"

"That would have been wrong" he said. "Henry promised long ago that he would never mention my name to you—though of course many people know yours. It was only from Mrs. Pettigue that I learned of your relation to Henry, and—" He twirled his hat while she looked into the flowers that still she held. He knew that she was smiling at his *gaucherie*; and never had he felt so horribly like an immigrant. Birds chuckled carelessly among the living trees. He wanted to tell why he had kept out of her way, to talk to her about the little Hebrew orchestra; about a hundred things that were as impossible as though they had been foreigners with unintelligible speech.

"You loved him" he went on bluntly. "So did I. Henry Hooper was so physically frail and so spiritually strong that he seemed to me more like a woman than most women that I ever knew. I did very little to show that I loved him, except to follow him as a leader and try to take care of him—when I'd have given half my life to make him un-needing of care." He scuffed the path with his boot.

"What more could anybody have done?" she asked, "I did less."

"But it isn't all done" he continued recklessly. "Somebody has to complete his life—somehow. Complete—his—life!" he repeated slowly. "That's what everybody seems to be doing—isn't it?"

He looked at her. For a moment she was not there. In place of her he saw a tall, muscular, ambitious, man-driving person with his own face, seated at Henry Hooper's desk writing Conservative editorials pleasing to the directors; then that woman in the big house welcoming him as a caller, a visitor, a guest, an intimate of the family, a member of the firm, taking Macklem's work when he became too feeble, directing a big business—later, living in the big house, owner of it. Success!

He rubbed his eyes; rubbed out the picture which Philo Sullivan had drawn with the hand of Henry Hooper.

"Henry would have been a great leader of men" he broke off suddenly. "I often dreamed of such a man as the Laurier of Ontario!"

In such a predicament, wildly guessing at what might be in her mind, what better could he do than to pour out his

admiration of Hooper, even though it made her tremble even more than himself? "I said so to Arthur Atkins as we rode in the pall-bearers' carriage" he went on. "I wanted to make sure from him that I was not worshipping an impossible hero. I told him Henry had been more of a captain to me than to anybody else I knew, because I wanted to feel prouder of him in his death than anybody else in the world could—except you."

She drew down her veil. "And what did he say?"

"He listened while I talked. Atkins is too much of a gentleman to wrangle for honours in a dead man's memory. He knew that I was blabbing, I told him so, begged his pardon, and said I hoped that some man in Henry's class at college would carry on his ideas—because a man had to have an Alma Mater and be a born Canadian to do that, and I had neither a college nor a true country. Arthur Atkins has both. He is a brilliant lawyer, a fine speaker, and—"

She put a hand to her skirt and turned away.

"You are angry" he said. "I don't blame you."

She gave him one quiet, mystical look.

"I am never angry at one who praises Henry Hooper."

He jammed both hands into his pockets and moved away. The whole miracle of marriage as it came before him at the grave struck him as something more stupendous than the Day of Judgment. Arthur Atkins was the man to marry her.

"You are—going back to the city?" she said, with a glance toward the carriage.

"No," he said hastily, "I am going up the valley."

Gravely smiling she bowed farewell. He went in the opposite direction. A simple decision. Just that ride down-town in the carriage might have changed the course of his whole life, as an imperceptible gradient separates the mouths of two rivers by thousands of miles. But he dare not take it. To put himself, even by a mere incident, in the way of carrying out the wish of Henry Hooper would have been so staggeringly wrong that he suddenly wanted to put half the world between him and the fulfilment of that wish. Dora Macklem and he belonged to far different worlds; as different as his world had always been from that of Sadie Barlow, his teacher. He would take Philo Sullivan's advice—"Hike to the Klondike."

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The prairies rolled their lakes of wheat and low poplars under oceans of blue. Beyond Winnipeg with its babel of half Europe, he harvested and travelled on; a thousand miles more of people-hungry prairies, on to the hills; to the Bow river creeping like a cold blue serpent out of the sky-pillaring Rockies that flung their mystic splendours down over the cow town soon to become the first city of Alberta. Frost bit the glorified riots of the prairie flowers and scuttled the poplar leaves. On he went, north to Edmonton, the City of New Hope. The coach was a bedlam of uprooted people; men driven and drawn from cities and villages and farms and flags and distant rivers and hills of boyhood, and women they loved and homes they hoped to rebuild with gold. The train seemed to have scooped up specimens of mankind from half the world. One little fur-post town on the North Saskatchewan was to hold them for a few weeks, then fling them out over the trails into the ultimate North. "Thank God the wuhst is ovah now!" said a sleepy passenger as he climbed into the four horse yellow bus. "We shall see gold in the mawnin'!". The bus swaggered down a low-forest trail to a cable scow that was soon drifting by the current towards a zigzag of bleary lights along the high north bank of the river. Off the bus at a ramshackle hotel whose bar was still alive, Hansen left his grip and went for a walk till daybreak; prowled among tents and tepees and shacks, dogs and ponies and corrals, wagons and barrels and improvised vehicles of all descriptions among the low poplars on the flats. At dawn he was vastly awake. At sunrise, exuberantly happy in the enigma of what benighted outfit he might join to hit the Athabasca trail that began the long, lone hike to the land of the midnight sun, he elbowed into the hotel for breakfast. In ten minutes he had joined himself to the party of an English lord who was in sad need of somebody with more hankering for trails than for gold.

The fur-post village, swiftly transformed into an *entrepôt* for outfitters, was teeming with people who seemed not to know when they would be back to count their gold, if ever they got away. Whisky, love of gold, money burning holes in pockets, pack-heavy cayuses, brawling huskie dogs, optimistic humanity all swirled together there into a sublime chaos of the unknowable. The plank sidewalks were midways of creation. Stores hung their alluring signs over the walks like trunks of hungry elephants at a circus. With no particular purpose except for a while to forget what had been, to jostle with the crowd and to see how tenderfoots with money became trailsmen before ever they saw a trail, he went into one

of the newest of the many stores that had everything a Klondiker might need this side of heaven. He pawed over coats, caps, dunnage bags, boots, boxes, ropes, harness—even more mystified than he had been in the Jericho store when first he hauled logs. A whipcrack of a voice cut through the babel of dialects and caught up fragments of each; a voice that seemed to be made for selling as little as possible for as much as could be got of real money spent for phantom gold. He looked up to see what kind of man this merchant might be.

“Well, I’ll be jimjammed!” he gasped. “Are you—here! Hullo!”

Involuntarily he reached over the counter to shake hands. The stout, hardfaced Outfitter gave him a stony glare.

“Good-morning—Mr. Peppercorn!” said Hansen and hurled himself out.

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# *BOOK FOUR*

## **ON THE TRAIL**

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### **CHAPTER I.**

#### *The Klondiker.*

In the winter of 1898-9 Dr. Strang, M.P., made a speech in Parliament defending the Government's administration of the Yukon.

"The Yukon begins," he said, "about three thousand miles by trail from where Ottawa leaves off. Canada is an empire of domains held together by an Act of Confederation, and by about as many people as there are in one of the Balkan States, all of which put together would be about the size of a postage stamp on the envelope of Canada. Siberia is our only parallel in geography, and Siberia has no parliaments. California is the Yukon's only parallel for gold, and the old Forty-Niners had a geographical paradise compared to the men who are now confronted with new mountains, strange canyons, unheard-of rivers, trails obscure even to the red men who were born there, a climate ranging from sixty below zero to equatorial heat, midnight suns and noonday midnights—"

For an hour Strang gave a picturesque lesson in national geography when most of the members opposite were in the restaurant. When he spoke later in a debate on patronage the restaurant was empty. The name Macklem-Hobbs was coldly entered in Hansard, but Strang's epithet "sanctified skunk" was withdrawn by order of the Speaker.

For two years Strang spent many an hour following in imagination the fortunes of the Klondikers. He heard nothing from Hansen who had gone in by the Liard, the westerly route. Hansen helped to build York boats at Athabasca Landing and track-line them up canyons of rivers. He was a free lance among outfits, changing from one to another as he went up. In a year's travel he reached Dawson where he saw—life. Here he was known as the "Wendigo" because he admitted frankly that he was not after gold, and when he fought he had the wild energy of a madman. In the painted hells of Dawson that winter men talked of paradises to open in the spring. When the rivers moved he quit Dawson. Nothing was heard of him for months, until near the time of the midnight sun he beat his way up the Mackenzie to Fort Norman where he met again Jean Dubuc with whom he had chopped pines in Quebec, and some Yellow-Knives Indians who had come half round Great Bear Lake in canoes to swap skins and dried meat for store goods from Edmonton. It is in the recollection of these red men that he spent part of a summer helping to spear caribou cows trekking back with their calves from the Arctic to the Barren Lands; and that with a fleet of trading canoes he travelled back to Fort Norman.

At this farthest north big trading post Hansen came out of the zone of gold-hunters into the trade routes of the fur-packers. By this time he had studied in a cursory way the crafts, habits and languages of the Arctic Locheux, the Yellow-Knives, Dog-Ribs, Swampies, Wood Crees, all zones of humanity, as he swung slowly down the steps of the north; scowling and York-boating up the rivers that years before he had gone down; beginning soon to feel the tyranny of common time, of clocks, of people with fixed habits—until with a train of fur-packers he made the Athabasca end of the long hike and freight-wagoned, finally tramped the black trail that seemed like a street, seeing ahead the smokes of the town called Edmonton.

A broncho-buster had just rounded up a pack of half wild horses from the foot-hills into a bush pasture north of the town, leading a spare horse back.

"Have a ride, pardner? Guess you can balance them gold-bags all right—you stony-busted bummer with whiskers! Oh begad! I remember you; sort o' sky pilot to that outfit of Lord Ave-one-more. Sure! Hansen. Yep, well my name's Bob Boyle. Ever bump into Dave Brady, trader up at Fort Resolution?"

"Lived with 'im. The big stiff says he's coming down here to get married. Getting civilized. S'pose that's what everybody does down here. Wow!" he yawned. "Sleepy."

Hansen let the broncho-man do most of the talking about the Klondike; then as they ambled into the town, "Say, this air feels smoky, dirty—you know," he said like a man in a dream to whom everything was out of focus. The air was as clear as mountain dew and the main street was merely dotted with people and wagons. "Yes," he yawned as he got off the horse at the corral, "this burg is sure crowded. Hullo! what kind of people are these, Bob?", as a troupe of sheepskinned Galicians in straw-packed boots came down from the immigrant shed.

"Sheepskins," said Bob. "The white hope of this country. They all buy bronchos, you bet!"

The Klondiker gazed hard at these strange immigrants, then coming by thousands in trains of colonist cars into Strathcona across the gorge.

"Bob," he said dreamily, "it feels like some queer new river sluiced into an old one. It's one old world of Europe meeting an old world here in the new."

"S'pose y'll be stayin' at the Frontier House?" said Bob. "That's where most o' the stony-busteds from the Klondike hang out."

"No,—some boarding-house, Bob. Know any?"

"Well, pardner, my wife's got a pyanna on the instalment plan. Mebbe she'll take you fer a star boarder; but she aint much on makin' pemmican. Wet y'r whistle?" making his habitual lurch towards one of the many hotels.

"No thanks, Bob. Don't drink. Smoking's my only visible vice. Learned that in the Yukon."

Such was the unceremonious inaugural of Hansen into a pensionage at the broncho-buster's tidy little frame house next the Salvation Army barracks, used week-days for a school. Gretchen Boyle, a tall, vivacious, childless woman of Dutch ancestry from Iowa, cheerfully piloted the Klondiker into a little back room overlooking the corral.

"Sorry I can't give you meals, Mr. Hansen, but there's the Criterion Cafe up street."

"Oh, that'll be O.K. Anything. Thanks."

Gretchen was sociable however. Twice that evening from the cheery clatter of cards and piano she called him to come down—but he declined; then as the almost forgotten odour of coffee penetrated his packing-case of a room, he bucked up his courage and went.

"By George, coffee smells queer!", blinking at a caucus of young folk some of whom had been riding Bob's best horses that afternoon and had stayed for supper. Gretchen told him the names, all of which in two minutes he forgot except one—Helen Thurston.

Helen was evidently a young Creeoid; coils of black hair, eyes small but Orientally furtive, dress vivid between pink and rose colour—and she wore beautifully beaded moccasins, at which he gazed so hard that she drew them under her skirt.

"You made those moccasins," he said abruptly; and she blushed. "Where did you learn?"

"At Fort Resolution," she said with a subtle blend of Scotch burr, French nasal and soft Cree tone.

"Oh yes—you were born there. I heard Dave Brady talk about Tom Thurston, friend of Donald A. Smith, now Lord Strathcona."

"Dave Brady is to marry my sister—soon."

He scarcely heard that, remembering that on his way down he had left with Brady an odd big copper knife; talking furiously about the Yellow-Knives who traded dried-caribou to the Coppermine Eskimos, who never hunted, for knives which the "huskies", as he called them, made from copper of which they had learned the art of tempering; and as he talked about this cycle of crude economics, he drew on an envelope which he had taken from the post-office that evening a rough picture of one of these copper knives.

"So you are a B.A.?" she said quickly.

"Er—yes, I used to be. Greek and Latin and things. How did you know that?"

"I read it on the envelope."

"You have quick eyes," he said in French. She said in Cree, "But only for things that interest me quickly."

“Now you two northern lights are getting much too chummy,” said Gretchen as she began to play *Hot Time* on the piano, leading into a cake walk when the Axminster rugs were taken up and the golden-oak chairs packed into the dining room; shortly after which, to Hansen’s enormous delight, Bob came rollicking home from one of his belated cards-for-drinks nocturnes at the hotels and implored them all to come in and sit down, because the evening had only just begun.

“Well,” ruminated Hansen as he rolled to bed in the early dawn, “this is going to be the deuce of a civilized life if I stay here! but that girl anyhow doesn’t care for cards and cake-walks, and if she wants to take lessons from me in poetry and Greek I guess there’s no harm done. Beats the deuce though about Dave Brady going to marry one of her sisters. Beggar never let on to me who the girl was. Be just like him to marry the wrong one.”

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## CHAPTER II.

### ORGANIZING THE VOTE.

Helen, housekeeping for her father, a burly, black-whiskered Scot who lived in a flat over the fur-store, suddenly saw the furpost village miraculously transformed; all in imagination. She began to compare herself with fashionable ladies on the street; to sheepskinned Galicians and sash-coated half-breeds. Her sisters lived with her mother in a common house among poplars. Thurston, somewhat dazzled by Helen, had found his French half-breed wife unsociable; curiously of late she had begun to talk about living in a chateau. Helen now realized a sudden town that but yesterday had been a lazy village; conscious of all its contrasts, which before talking to Hansen she had scarcely noticed; churches, schools, anthems, swallow-tail coats, melodramas, troupes of singers, politics, prayer-meetings, crops and immigration; across the iron bridge that had lately pierced itself across the river, the unending lines of immigrants concerning whom she read in the semi-weekly *Furposter* now with such interest—just because he had spoken of these things as meaning so much for the future.

Hansen never dreamed that he had awakened any new sensations in the girl. To him she was part of the collective phenomena; somewhat in a class with the sprawled heap of somnolent huskie dogs on the sidewalk at the old Frontier House. “Mush-on!” he growled pushing one with a boot. The heap rose in a snarl of upstanding fur and white teeth. “Bon chien!” he laughed, lifting one by the wool of his neck. “Now where the deuce did you come from?”

“You buy dose dogs from me?” said the hefty barkeep at the door.

“Hullo Jean! Singe my whiskers! Thought you’d gone back to old Quebec. Last time I saw you——”

“At Norman,” grinned Dubuc. “Oui. I am now Boniface for stony-busted bummers of de Frontier House brigade. Dey piked for gol’ by gar! and got nuttin’ but experience. Entre M’sieur—have a drink wit’ me for ol’ Fort Norman dry as a bone, eh? No? Den I drink for bot’. Have a cigar—keep your change. Ho boys!” bawling out to the “rotunda”, “here is our ol’ *marchon* friend Ole Hansen de Wendigo. Ole”, as the four stub-bearded customers came slouching in, “here are de Yukon quartette—shake boys!”

Hogan, Brant, Hopham and Townsend were all doing their best to pay for meals without over-working until the land gamble should replace gold as a bonanza. Before Dubuc’s “one on de house” drink was despatched, in came a Britisher with a slouch hat, dowdy moccasins and an Oxford accent; Ed Banigan, M.A., who boasted that the only gold he had fetched from the Yukon was in his teeth. And after they had all drunk, they sang with dismal barber-shop “close” harmony “On the Banks of the Wabash”.

Hansen recalled having heard the piece on an accordeon at Lac la Biche where half-breeds had talked about Laurier being one of the big men of Nat Turner, M.P., in the election coming on. Dubuc exhorted them one and all to attend Turner’s get-out-the-vote meeting in Thurston Hall that very evening.

“By gar, boys, Tom Thurston is bat ten to one dat Turner gats t’ree t’ousand majoritee. I bat ten to one dat Laurier gats t’ree million! Vive le roi Laurier!”

But Jean Dubuc was not at the meeting. When Hansen went in, the hall was half full of motley citizens; several lawyers—all seedy; doctors as needy; a furniture dealer whose whole stock was golden-oak in a shack over a mud-hole; a bach-keeping bank messenger who last year operated a gold-washing “grizzly” on the beach and now owned a farm where his

family dwelt; Banigan, M.A., who had cow-punched in the foot-hills and was now selling fish and living in a tepee; a clergyman with Broadway cowboy hat and tweed knickers, and a Scotch-Canadian preacher who bought bronchos for young missionaries and was himself a true trailsman and worker for God. Peppercorn was in the chair, predicting that within three years Edmonton would be thus and so on a main line to the Pacific. Tom Thurston twinkling over his silken whiskers rose to talk about York boats and Red River carts. The chairman crudely said that the meeting was not called to form an historical society but to get out the vote for Mr. Nat Turner—"who has just come in," he said, glancing at the door. "We'll hear from him."

Turner slouched magnificently to the platform; a lean, grizzly trailsman who in the old days had driven his store carts from Winnipeg to Edmonton and afterwards started the *Furposter*. He had cornucopic moustaches, fearless blue eyes and a shrill voice. His short speech was a concise marvel of concentrated vernacular, dynamic good English and hammering ideas. Delighted to hear such a vibrating address, Hansen rose and began to talk about the half-breeds up at Lac la Biche:

"The first people I found in the north," he said, "who knew anything about an election or the difference between a Tory and a Grit. They said they would all vote for Nat Turner, because a big fur trader in town here—I presume Mr. Thurston—told them Turner would see that the half-breeds got what was coming to them. I asked them what that was, and they said it was land from scrip to all half-breeds on account of the Rebellion when the Indians went on Reservations and got five dollars a year treaty money. That was a perfectly honest admission of what citizenship as expressed by a vote means to the northern half-breeds. I suppose that if the original first citizens of this country can be rubber-stamped for an election, the 'skeeskins', as the Galicians are called, and all the other immigrants can be rubber-stamped too—on the expectation of something coming to them; when no matter what government party we have, the most that can come to anybody in this part of the world is what he gets for hard, honest work."

"Call for organization!" snapped the chairman. "The man who has just spoken has no vote in this election and should therefore express no opinions at this stage of the game. What we want is a machine to win elections, not only now, but in the future when this country"—painting another lurid picture of the New Era.

Hansen left the hall.

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## CHAPTER III.

### A FASHIONABLE WEDDING.

Through the unsuspected influence of Helen Thurston whose father was a member of the School Board, and as much because Peppercorn, another trustee, opposed the motion, Hansen's application to become teacher of the immigrant classes in the Salvation Army barracks was accepted.

"A camera of negatives from which a new civilization is to be printed!" he said to Gretchen, pleased as a child over a toy that with the school salary he would be able to sidestep the doubtful expedient of becoming private tutor to Helen in literature and classics.

"Oh, but she wants you," chuckled Gretchen. "And you daren't refuse, because her father got you the school—against Peppercorn."

He looked at her in amazement. "I think," he said slowly, "I'll get Bob to give me a job busting bronchos. This town's too sophisticated for me."

She laughed; because she was seeing things of which her borean lodger did not even dream; things bigger far to her than immigrants, elections, or bronchos.

"Ask me—I think you're lucky to have—"

"Ridic—ulous rot! Mrs. Boyle—"

"Tra-la! Why shouldn't she have culture?"

“Why doesn’t she go to High School?”

“Because she is a—beautiful prize puzzle.”

Hansen tried to persuade Thurston out of the idea; but the fur-trader fondled his silken whiskers and asked if Hansen had ever seen Bob Boyle break a broncho.

The twice-a-week lesson with Helen began in the front room over the fur store, inconsistently decorated with musk-ox heads and caribou heads, lynx skins, bear rugs and golden-oak furniture, which to Hansen was less incongruous than the lessons in which he did his best to preserve pedagogic austerity. But he was amazed at the way she ferreted out the intricacies of Greek grammar.

“Oh,” she said quickly as she watched an ox-cart through the window, “did you not know that the grammar of Cree is quite as complicated as the Greek?”

“Oh, some missionary’s work, I daresay.”

“Yes, the one that I have is by a friend of my father’s, Rev. John Farquharson of Loon Lake. He has a Cree hymn-book too.”

Hansen admitted to Gretchen that his pupil was a phenomenon.

“But the whole thing is a clumsy amateur comedy,” he protested. “A big hulk like me caged up for an hour twice a week with a semi-occultic sort of a girl that sees right through a man without even looking, and doesn’t even titter at the absurdity of conjugating ‘amo, I love’, when I feel so much like a bull in a china shop that when I shove down my tie at the back because I feel it coming up my neck, the collar comes off at the button—and by heck, she wants to fix it for me—and does it! Aw, what are you giggling at? Oh well, thank heaven the election is coming.”

It was a relief to Hansen after school to hobnob with the half-breeds in Thurston’s fur room with its hangs of odoriferous pelts like groves of fur, and its weird festal music of old rhapsodic fiddles and accordeons, on one of which he himself played *chansons* he had learned in Quebec, and sang them in French. He scarcely knew why he did this, except that he could forecast a bigger drama than a rubber-stamp election when these prodigal gamblers with no value for time and no respect for money began to convert scrip into arable land from the Government. Thurston told him about this and about Peppercorn who, he said, was trading on scrip financed by an eastern syndicate headed by Hackett.

“Oh yes, I’ve met him,” recollected Hansen. “Railways and scrip lands are his present gamble. Dave Brady told me about him up north. Hackett will have other gambles when the scrip is done. He is a colossal promoter. The more the country expands the better for Hackett, no matter which party is in power. Half-breeds and politicians and railway-builders are all different-sized pawns to Hackett. He’ll pose as a nation-builder or something like that—when the thing he builds is his own princely fortune, prestige, title—heaven knows what. Tom”—he broke off suddenly—”when the Scrip Court sits in this town, you’ve got to beat Peppercorn backed by Hackett.”

Thurston spit skilfully out of his silken beard into a distant cuspidor as he listened. He admitted that he himself expected out of the scrip deal to educate his large family in the best schools of the East, to have them learn music and art, travel in Europe and perhaps retire to Victoria, B.C.; though he objected to building a chateau just because his wife wanted one.

“But yin o’ them marries to-morrow,” he added. “Ay, ’twill be in the English church—my wife’s church; somewhat—magnificent,” as he smoked his long pipe. “Ah weel! I must gang and see what the half-breeds are purrchasin’ wi’oot menny—forr the wedding.”

As Hansen went to the street a half-breed galloped away with a pink shade lamp on a cayuse to the big camp gathered from north of Lac la Biche to the wedding of Dave Brady, fur-trader. Here were carts, wagons, tepees and corrals, camp-fires and cayuses and a fat steer picketed in the frosting vetch for Thurston’s barbecue next day. Hansen described it to Gretchen Boyle who had just come from helping Helen with her bridesmaid dress, aghast at the news that the bridegroom had refused to wear a morning coat or to have a best man. At the Frontier House Hansen found Dave Brady—once a college rugby player, now thinking himself a dandy in leathern coat and corduroys.

“Oh begad! the girl’s sister braces me to have you fer a best man Ole—but I said ‘Fer the love o’ Mike, don’t!’ Dingdang license and weddin’ ring are enough flummydiddles. Gods o’ war! I feel like a funeral parson already.”

“Ushers in morning coats and silk hats, Dave!”

“Holy smoke no! Begad, I’ll hit the hike back to Resolution, single as one string on a fiddle if I have to face the jimjams

like that.”

“Yes, but women run weddings and towns.”

“Dubuc wants t’ gimme them huskie dogs fer a present,” said Dave, glancing over the heaps of fur on the sidewalk. “Nitsky!”

Election and wedding day, bright with the nip of late October; saskatoons and cranberries ripe; trails hard and black; the town swarmed with neck-scarved half-breeds platooning off to the booths to vote—then to the little English church where Hansen went early but found it full with a cordon of camp-smoked half-breeds on the sidewalk. Poor Dave was at last corraled. The service was on; organ and choir shuddering and chanting in holy grandeur. Then came a dead, ominous silence; a sudden rumpus at the church door, and out came the bridegroom in his leathern coat with a dazed grin.

“What’s the matter Dave? Flabbergasted?”

“Shot to bits, Ole! Say fer a tie-up that’s sure some holy show. Choir like resurrection angels and parson in white wings. How they ever put ’er through beats me. But she’s all hung up now—thanks to me. Holy smoke! first the license up the flue—left ’er in the hotel—” He clawed vaguely at his vest pockets. “Then the ding-busted ring. Parson pipes up and I says, ‘Sure, here she is’, and digs down into me vest pocket—begad! all I find is one o’ these here pewters yeh give a squaw fer a keepsake, and the gold piece aint there—eh?” as a paralyzing but critical look drifted into his eyes and he drew out an old jack-knife, “I’ll be hornswoggled, Ole, if here she aint hung on a blade all the time. Here, lemme back in there, folks. Show’s hung up in a frosty silence fer me an’ the ring.”

Brady had a stride like a young giant. The hullabaloo that went up among the Metis drowned the voice of the organ and choir, all except the whoop of Hansen who went downtown laughing till he cried.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### MUSIC HATH CHARMS.

At the first snow, prairie hens blundered into the warm town and roosted on the wires. North wind bit the chimneys and reddened the stoves that burned lignite burrowed from caves under the town. The short days came; silent, diamondine days that fetched back memories of the long sub-arctic night. Huskie dogs came down, bells, whipcracks and “Mush-on!” The old swanky feudalism did its best to live; but the new culture was slowly killing it. English folk from Old Country song-towns wanted oratorios, madrigals, glees, to cheer the long winter. Church choirs began to be rivals. Ed Banigan suggested to Hansen a minstrel show on behalf of a new reading-room in a shack; which because of an opportunity to do something musical without women, Hansen consented to organize with the Yukon quartette as a nucleus and Jean Dubuc as leading tenor. Jean offered to sing *En roulant ma boule* in burnt cork. Hansen agreed.

“Bit heavy on French and American sentimentals, Jean,” as he vamped at the piano. “Half this town are English—in seven dialects. Here’s an old Restoration table-thumper as fine as *En roulant*.” He banged off *A Health Unto His Majesty*. “Chorus on the fa-las, Jean. Banigan knows it. Good deal like the French *Vive le Roi*, but more the idea of the King being one of the boys; real English. I’ll sing that. Let Banigan do the solo on that lovely old *Mayfair* too—chorus humming pianissimo; fine as any plantation melody ever born. Burnt-cork gets it all over; rings in everybody. Bully!”

Thurston Hall was alive every evening with concerts, mounted police plays, shuddering road melodramas, secret society meetings, dances and lectures. Helen in the flat across the corridor wondered why Mr. Hansen who never went to dances was so jolly in helping with so many other things. So she remarked to Jean Dubuc who told her so many times that she was some relation to “printemps” and “la rose”, and of course wanted to marry her whenever he could stop being a barkeep and begin to make money.

“Ole Hansen,” said Jean. “Oh, he is always do somet’ing dat makes no money for Ole. But I swear by Ole Hansen—dat he never spiiks to me about you. No, he is a clam about de women. He reads books till all hours, so Bob Boyle tells me; buys all de heavy books in town; talks about newspaper he wants to start bimeby. Ha! Now he is helping Ed Banigan to promote one beeg concert wit’ Lajeunesse!”

“Who is Lajeunesse?” asked Helen, uncomfortably.

“Albani,” said Jean reverently. “De great French-Canadian prima donna. Oui. She is come here in de spring—soon. Ed, he is stony broke before he opens his fish-shop; so he takes long chance on a beeg programme, and Ole Hansen backs him; he is write a long article in de *Furposter* about Albani and de young violinist Highstone. By gar; seex tickets for me at five bones each. De whole town she go; all de claw-hammers and evening gowns—magnifique. Vive la reine Lajeunesse de Chambly!”

The oration narrowed down to a proposal that Jean should take the entire Thurston family of girls to the concert. At the Frontier House Banigan proposed to treat the Yukon quartette to one ticket each, but he felt uneasy about what the “social swells” might say about it and asked Hansen’s opinion. Hansen at once offered to rent a clawhammer suit for each of the trailsmen.

“In which case I’ll have to wear one myself, though. Hmh! Ed, that’s awkward.”

“Igad! I’ll split the price with you.”

The furore over getting five perfectly unconventional Klondikers into evening clothes before the concert kept Hansen and Banigan in roars of merriment at the hotel, while Gretchen Boyle at home got into her canary evening gown and Jean Dubuc prinked himself for his own contingent, muttering “Sacree!” at the disturbance. Brant’s coat was an inch short in the sleeves. Hogan’s bulge-fronted shirt was an inch too large at the neck and had to have a tuck put in, which galled him terribly. Townsend’s trousers were much too tight, and at the last moment it was discovered that Hopham’s shirt front was smudged, and the best that could be done was to rub chalk over it. They tried every conceivable permutation and combination of the four outfits before Banigan, himself as uncomfortable as Hansen, for whom all the garments in his kit were too small, had to leave for business behind stage.

“Oh well, boys, it’s the ensemble we want,” said Hansen surveying the quartette of victims. “But for heaven’s sake don’t anybody look in that glass—or we’ll all stay at home.”

“Yeh,” chimed Hogan, hopefully smoking his pipe over his white bulge, “if we go early we c’n take the back bench.”

“Say boys,” groaned Brant, “this kalsomine shirt front looks like a white rooster’s wish-bone!”

“Ed says he’ll glim the electric sparklers in the hall fer the programme,” said Townsend. “That’ll help.”

“Jiminy! my kingdom—for one drink!” croaked Hopham. “My tongue’s like a yard of sandpaper.”

Then each began to survey all the others and they all began to laugh so hard that Hansen piloted them as quickly as possible to the hall. There we leave them, to sensations such as none of them had ever known in the Arctic.

When Hansen went home Gretchen had already gathered a party of concert-goers including Helen Thurston, who in rose-coloured gown looked superbly like some great northern flower and was ready to hear Mr. Hansen talk about the music.

“Mr. Hansen!” screamed Gretchen as he came into the hall, “wasn’t it exquisitely—unspeakable?”

He leaned glumly on the newel post. “Unspeakable—and exquisite—torture,” he said and went up to his room, declining to come down for coffee. When Bob came home after the party had gone Hansen began to laugh loudly. Gretchen knocked at his door.

“Mr. Hansen! A nice time to be merry after you’ve driven poor Helen home in a funk.”

“Helen? Oh yes. Too bad. I’m sure she enjoyed it. So fond of music. Sorry.”

“But why didn’t you laugh when you came in?”

“Oh, ask me why the sun rises!”

“I declare—I think you’re just feminine!”

“Maybe so. But those Klondikers—!” He began to laugh again.

“Yes,” said Gretchen, still excited over the programme, “I thought if you didn’t like Albani, you’d be sure to—”

“Like the violinist? Oh yes. He’s a genius. Born that way. Clever young Jew.”

“And the pianist—wasn’t she wond—er—ful! Miss—what’s her name now; some Italian name?”

“Yes,” he said with an effort not to be gloomy again. “But her real name is Macklem. I met her once down east. Yes, this country gets smaller every day,” he said as he wound his watch. “I daresay that over in little Belgium where people are

as thick as flies in summer, one might keep out of somebody's way. I thought when I met a mountie up at Herschell Island who said his father knew mine in London, that was about the limit."

Gretchen heard not a word. She was wondering—about Miss Macklem.

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## CHAPTER V.

### A CREE FOLK-SONG.

Jean Dubuc sold hundreds of drinks to settle bets about when the ice would begin to move out in the river. Chinook winds between blizzards upset many calculations. Banigan's quartette on the Frontier House stoop listened for the honk of the high-up wild geese and watched Dubuc's huskies on the sidewalk burrowing for borean fleas.

"Igad! there goes the first 'grizzly'," said Banigan as he heard the skirl of a gold-washer from the beach. "Spring is here. Time to open my fish-shop. What are you pikers doing this summer?"

"Oh, same ol' thing Ed, on'y more uv it." The quartette were not on visiting terms with work. "Don't see how Ole Hansen works like he does."

"Yeh, wants t' coax me t' church; says she exists fer sump'n, same as a hotel," said Hogan. "No go. Glad Ole don't wanna 'bolish bars—yet awhile."

"Me fer free pews an' free bars," said Townsend. "Wonder if Ole's gonna marry that Thurston beauty; flung sich a fit about the pyannist at the cawncert."

"No, he's not after marriage, boys. Says it takes too much money, and he's too busy to make it. Girl goes to Jean Dubuc, my guess."

"Yeh. Fat heap you know 'bout it."

Poplar leaves leaped upon the bluffs. Rev. John Farquharson, burly and red-bearded, drove his two daughters in a buckboard from his Loon Lake Presbyterian mission to buy a scow-load of goods from Thurston and summer styles for the girls; helping to build his own scow down at the river, playing checkers with Hansen who asked him numerous economic questions and wanted to see the Mission.

"Oh ay," scumbling the under side of his beard. "'Tisna much to see."

Gretchen Boyle, busy with her wardrobe for Banff, was much concerned over Helen who told her with a pretty, pensive laugh about the beautiful church bells on Sunday morning.

"He says it reminds him of old Quebec," she said quickly as she lolled in a big chair. "Tells me to ask Jean Dubuc about that—and to tell him to cut out bar-tending and be sober. Gretchen, what do I care for Jean Dubuc, just because he is handsome and sings tenor?"

"You're a prize puzzle, Helen. So is Mr. Hansen."

"Yes? Well, I am going away with the Farquharsons on the scow to Loon Lake for the summer. Please do not tell him so. I am restless for a change."

Loon Lake was over a hundred miles east, about four miles back from the river.

At the School Board Peppercorn moved for the expulsion of Hansen from the staff—on the ground that he had taught the immigrants *O Canada* in preference to *The Maple Leaf*.

"Don't stand to reason," he argued, "that a B.A. should be teaching a primary class, or setting up opposition to our High School by tutoring on the side. If he intends to be a money-making respectable citizen he shouldn't be singing French songs with Jean Dubuc about Holy Rome either."

A letter from Boanerges Brown, missionary at Loon Lake, had something immediate to do with this interest in Hansen, especially the following very practical extract:

“Rev. John Farquharson thinks he has a mandate over the Crees because he has published a Cree hymn book and a Cree grammar. But I can talk Cree as fast as he can, and I’m going to make my mission as big as his; and if ever I get a store in opposition, you can count on my trade to offset what John does with Thurston. Moreover, the new railway up the valley will be sure to cut the edge of this Reservation and create enormous values for speculation. I am here to watch that. Moreover—I intend to marry Sadie B., because with a voice and a gift for teaching like hers she will be invaluable in my work.”

Such tenacity of Boanerges was admirable to Peppercorn who had helped to finance his former clerk through college.

Hansen closed his school for the summer, unaware that it would not be his to reopen. He wanted to ask Rev. Farquharson some questions about the mission.

“Where’s the Loon Lake scow?” he asked Thurston at the fur-room.

“Went at break of day,” said the trader glumly. “Ay, and Helen slippit awa’ wi’ it. I canna mak’ her oot. I’ve spent money on her private tuition and that’s a’ the thanks I get. The mair ye do the mair ye may. She disna love me like she used. I canna say why, but she disna; and it a’ began, Hansen, when ye began. Ye’ve teachit her strange ideas, and I dinna like it.”

“I’ve taught her nothing but what she wanted to know and only about half of that, and I’ll take no money for any of it,” retorted Hansen. “The thing was foolish from the start, and I said so.”

“Ay, but in y’re self-command ye should ha’ teachit her to control hersel’. She’s gawt upetty. Noo she’s awa’ among the Crees—her mither’s folk. There’s yin o’ them Cree dances at Loon Lake and I’m feared that in a fit o’ rebelliousness she’ll gang tae it in spite o’ John Farquharson, and I dinna want it.”

“Oh!” Hansen laughed to himself. “This is a fine mix. Well, Tom, as I’m nominally her teacher, and you blame me—”

“I didna blame ye. I merely intimidated.”

“I’ll get her back somehow, if that’s what you want; and I don’t care who thinks I’m a fool.”

A scow was leaving for Kanoka the next day. Hansen said nothing about his intended adventure to Gretchen, who was fortunately busy furbishing her wardrobe for Banff and could only imagine why he sang queer old songs one minute and was so glum the next. The Kanoka scow would land him half way to Loon Lake. He boarded it and drifted down, saying to himself as he looked back at the roofs on the heights that there was nothing like a town and a lot of women to make a man feel like a misfit, and nothing like a scow on the Saskatchewan to make the world seem what it ought to be. The crew played poker as the canvas-covered cargo floated among the archipelagoes and the divisible currents, over sand-bars and rapids, past scarpside villages and swimming moose and coyotes on the beach. Hansen took peculiar observation of the route, saying to himself as he poled astern to let one of the half-breeds snooze, that before he went back to Edmonton he would see the new railway about which everybody was talking.

At Kanoka village he bought a pinto cayuse from a half-breed, packed his dunnage and mosquito-bar and rode for a day through a Galician settlement, shouting “Gin dobray!” over a colony of mud-roof shacks, clay ovens, log stables, pole-fenced fields, Peppercorn wagons and Boyle bronchos, and peasant women with brown faces fiendishly grubbing poplars and gathering hay.

Not for years had Hansen toyed with a pitchfork. The temptation was irresistible. He turned his cayuse out to vetch and commandeered a fork. For one long day he furiously flung brome hay on to a wagon almost smothering two Galicians on the load. “Way we do it in Ontario,” he said. “Ontario!” they repeated.

“Ever hear of alfalfa?” he tried to impress them at dinner. “Al—fal—fa! Three crops in a year!” transposing into workable Low Russian.

“Yah. Three!” they laughed, eating black bread and bologna with big clasp knives, one of which Hansen bought and with a grin he galloped away.

“When will the new railway come for which we voted to elect Nat Turner?” asked the Galicians mile upon mile as though looking for an Advent.

Yes, he must see the railway.

But for the present, other business, which now seemed ridiculous. What would Banigan’s quartette think of him on a

quest to keep a beautiful Creeoid from taking part in a pagan dance after being baptized into the kirk? Still, as Thurston had said, he was her teacher. But what of that? The girl would have learned without him, and she was incorrigibly peculiar.

“But it is all this feminine business,” he reflected, as two evenings after he left the Galician colony he rode his pinto to a creek-side near the Presbyterian Mission of Loon Lake. He hoisted his cheesecloth mosquito bar by a ring in its canvas top to a bent sapling, spread his blankets and fried some bacon. The big mission house and school with a perky little church behind loomed like a castle on the hill; on a farther hill another little church. As he rode up the slope and a big westerly dome of a hill cut the red sun in half, a great bang of deerskin drums swept up the coulee, beating in four-square rhythm.

“Where’s the Cree dance, Mr. Farquharson?” he called to the missionary who was starting a mosquito smudge in the big yard.

“Ower yinder!” snapped Farquharson, whacking broadside at mosquitoes, reflecting that his evensong with his own Cree-translated hymns would be sparsely attended for a week.

“Is the young lady, Helen Thurston, here?”

“Ay. She came doon wi’ us. She’ll be at evensong. Wha’s she to you? And wha’ be you?”

“Oh nobody. Nothing at all.” Hansen rode away towards the drums. He picketed his pony on the outskirts of a large plateau quadrangled with cones of glimmering tepees, flickers of fires, ponies, carts, caucusing crowds of Crees; all heading up to a central and dimly illuminated tabernacle of poles, boughs and canvas. That tune—where had he heard it? In Athabasca; once far south in the foot-hills. Walking in across the campus he saw squaws in the firelight braying deer-meat for pemmican. Silently ogled by wandering Crees, he came to the big lodge and the source of all the tumult. To a burly Cree flap-door keeper he handed a half dollar and went in.

The scene was dimly Oriental in magnificence, barbaric in character and smell. He saw in a blur by the flare of a low fire a great concourse of squaws with papooses and pails of tea; in one corner a choir of deerskin drummers in old mission coats, ya-ahing nasally the tune which they beat out with the tomtoms; at intervals joined by the squaws in an abysmal, soul-stirring unison a weird octave higher:



[\[Listen\]](#)

This was the tune; a folk-song without words. This rite was the remnant of the great drama dance in which every summer before the tribal battles the red men made braves by torture while the others danced, and the tomtoms and the tune went incessantly on from one sunset until the sixth beyond. Such, in spite of missions, was the veneration of these pagans without a future, for their own past.

The dancers, in booths like misereres in a cathedral, bobbed heel and toe; in each painted mouth a whistle blown at the centre-pole decorated with skins, guns, votive offerings to the Manitou; in each hand a knife or a rattle; each pair of eyes glazedly, hypnotically fixed upon the pole at whose base a tiny sweetgrass fire sent up a spiral of fragrant smoke. Firelight flickered upon a fantastic medley of naked and vermilioned skins, buckskin vests, meticulously gorgeous webs of blinking beads, long flowing hair and glistening pigtailed.

This was what he saw and heard; but what—was it? When, where, under what state of barbaric culture did this folk music-drama emerge? Who had decreed it to begin and end at sunset, wherever possible in the moon of leaves? He had enough sense of music to note a curious resemblance to an Anglican chant in major and minor; the regular intervals of melody-silence—so many invariable bars of the drums; at fixed periods with a sudden accent from the drums, the squaws chiming in with such a hurricane of octaves, when the thing became a tempest of passion. He began to ya-ah the tune, unconscious that the whole performance was anything but a mysterious, cogent, ancestral rite of spring—as he too

gazed at the centre-pole with its shimmer of sweet-grass smoke. He felt his sense of personal volition slipping into the state of corporate consciousness that made it possible for those dancers to go without food or drink for six full days and nights.

The drums tunked louder, as the nasal drone of the singers on the wordless folk-song became more and more piercing. No wonder Rev. John kept his daughters out of this, thought Hansen, as he leaned forward peering into the faces of the dancers none of whom so much as saw him. Bang! came a swift *sforzando* of the tomtoms as he looked down into the faces of the squaws who blurted the nasal evocation of the reiterant melody as punctiliously as a Gregorian chant. Some long-haired councillor in a squatting crescent opposite the drums gave a shrill and solemn whoop. Hansen looked again and saw an almost white girl, gazing up at the pole, singing that wordless song. The light flickered in a breeze and he looked again; she was drowsily combing her black tresses that fell in opulent cascades about her naked shoulders.

That girl was Helen Thurston.

“Helen,” abruptly, “you’re coming out of here.”

“Nummaweya!” she said, shaking her head with an aboriginal laugh. “Nummaweya!”; again in Cree—“I do not know you.”

The thing became a throbbing sensation of the infinite: worship, drama, melody, nature—all merged in one, with no sense of time except the sun and the metrical four-beat unison of the tomtoms.

Hansen had gone beyond the sweet-grass fire which was unknown to him as the edge of a holy of holies. He did not observe that every eye not gazing at the centre-pole was fixed upon him as an intruder. But the moment that Helen spoke to him he made no effort to resist when hands and arms of incredible strength and speed levitated him out to the campus.

“All right, boys, but here’s the parson.” as Rev. John came with a storm of Cree and without price or protest went in, almost dragging Helen out—till she broke away from him and came gliding in her moccasins up to Hansen. Her long black hair was loose over a buckskin beaded vest. Her eyes were still glazed. The enchanting rhythm of the drums and the song still held her, as she looked close up at Hansen, both hands at her head, and said slowly in Cree, “Yes—one who is dead wills you to marry one—whom he loved”; and she wandered away. He followed. Rev. John caught his arm. “Hansen’s y’r name, I ken. But I dinna ken—”

“Not in love with her, if that’s what you mean,” said Hansen abruptly as he faced the missionary. “But she’s beautiful—far beyond your psalm tunes and your long prayers. She’s only hypnotized by the Dance. Boil it down to common cold language—she’s probably half a clairvoyant just now. You heard what she said? Well, she said it right. What’s more—in plain language—the other woman’s name is Macklem, and the dead man was Hooper—but they’re nobody to you, or to her either, when there’s that kind of music drama going on.”

He turned and went to his pony.

“Losh! sic a man!” mumbled John as he hurried to overtake Helen.

Hansen found his pony—in the care of a pale obtrusive person in black with an expansive smile.

“Boanerges Brown!” he exclaimed. “What cunning theology ever brought you here? Can’t I ever get away from Jericho, Ontario?”

“Hansen,” said the missionary calmly, “before that dance is done those tomtoms will beat one million, two hundred and nine thousand, six hundred times. Think of it!”

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## CHAPTER VI.

### LOVE AND ETHICS.

Hansen rode his pinto on down the valley, across to Prince Albert, down to the end of the steel on the new railway and back to Edmonton where he sold the cayuse for seven dollars, said nothing about his discharge from the school and quietly took a job as clerk for Thurston. Helen stayed at Loon Lake for a month and became further acquainted with Rev.

Brown whom she came across in a tepee far up the creek, getting folk-lore from a smoked old Cree woman.

“Hard to get it; she’s so deaf, nearly blind,” he said as they went away. Jane Thunder had never kept count of her children, had grandchildren innumerable, no memory of where or when half of them had been born, and no lucid memory for anything but what happened very long ago; rapturous reminiscences when her skinny old face became phosphorescent with emotion, of a certain very gay and handsome young Frenchman.

“So far as I can trace it clearly,” Brown told Helen, “his name was Laflamme, and he came up into this chain of trading posts about sixty years ago from Quebec; one of the very old families. Has she ever named Laflamme to you?”

“No. No, Jane is very—secretive.”

“And whatever she has in that beaded deerskin bag—” Rev. John came into the confab just then and there was no more. Brown was sorry when Helen left Loon Lake; she was a curious type of duality.

At five o’clock tea in the flat with Gretchen Boyle, Helen listened to rhapsodic recollections of Banff and Mr. Morley P. Hackett—“whom Mr. Hansen does not like,” said Helen. “Yes, he met Mr. Hackett down at Prince Albert.”

“But what was Mr. Hansen doing at Loon Lake?”

“At Loon Lake? I did not see him!”

“Why he told me—” “Oh yes I dreamed he was there,” laughed Helen. “I did not see him. I was at the Dance. He is a strange man; always going somewhere. He is clerk for my father now because he wants to get more familiar with the half-breeds before the Scrip Commission comes; but he says he could not sell diamonds at five cents each; always laughing at himself—but if anybody else laughs at him, he is angry. What do you think, Gretchen—Jean Dubuc told me this—Mr. Hansen came into the Frontier House yesterday and threatened to roll all the barrels of doped whisky down to the river—because, he said, if a half-breed is fool enough to gamble his balance of scrip on a big farm for the price of a jag, he ought at least to have government-guaranteed whisky. Jean told him to chase himself. The Wendigo shook him—he has such strength—with one hand. Jean is soft with drink. But I don’t care if he should be sober, or if the Wendigo should be drunk”—Helen ran a furious glissando over the piano keys—“if all they have to fight about is half-breed whisky!”

“Instead of—just one girl, Helen?”

Helen gave her a corrosive look. “Gretchen, you talk like a stupid, scheming married woman—to whom love is something to manipulate—instead of a glorious game, or the bursting of a rose!”

“Oh Helen dear—do simmer down!”

“Oh, I do not know what love is,” she answered quietly. “When I find out—perhaps you will not know me.”

“Hmh! I don’t know you now. You’re a worse mixture than Hansen.”

“Oh yes?” smiling. “Perhaps. I am a half-breed enough to think that money is a fool—and I call myself a half-breed but do not let any one else do so. I am Scot enough to think that money is a god. I am as fond of fine clothes as you are, no matter what they cost. And I like talking to men, if they are clever—”

“Well, wait till you meet Mr. Hackett!”

At the Edmonton House the next day Hackett, who had come a day ahead of the Scrip Commission, gave his minion Peppercorn a look that reminded the merchant of Bob Boyle sizing up a broncho. Thick shoulders poised over spindly legs, the natty young Napoleon of finance, already Bonapartean in aspect, was dynamically impressive.

“We must get fifty thousand acres out of this contingent, Peppercorn. All above that nets you fifteen.”

Peppercorn nervously balanced his cowboy hat.

“You seem nervous, Peppercorn. What’s up?”

“Too much Hansen!” exploded the agent. “He’s a walking diary of half-breeds. There’s a petticoat too.”

“Yes, you mentioned Helen Thurston in your letter. Does she endorse her father’s ideas?”

“Thinks he’s too Scotch after money.”

“She will be a good accomplice against Hansen.”

“But she’s dead in love with him!”

Hackett blew a smoke ring. “All the better. Women are most powerful when in love. This girl is vain; being a half-breed—weak. I must see her. Are the half-breeds here?”

“Hundreds! Big camp out on Rat Creek. Here from way up in Athabasca; east to Loon Lake; south to Red Deer.”

“You must get me an interview with Helen. Think,” snapping his fingers. “Name another woman!”

“Gretchen Boyle,” blurted Peppercorn.

“Ah! I know her. I’ll call and see her.”

“But Hansen boards at her house.”

“Very well then—in this hotel. Her husband must come with her.”

“Bob’s busy broncho-busting, but of course—”

“I’ll buy a broncho; make you a present of it.”

At the close of a brief but dazzling interview Gretchen, muffling her ecstasy, thought, “Poor Helen! What if he should fall in love with her? Do Hansen good,” she told Bob. “Jean Dubuc is too clumsy. Even if it’s only love for a day—and I guess most love is, perhaps.”

The promoter was but a few moments with Helen. He talked seductively of Europe, to which Helen expected to go with her father and sisters; of the Riviera which he had seen; of fashion, beauty, wealth, aristocracy—all hazed into practical poetry.

“Ah yes,” he wound up rapidly, “yes, but the Riviera is seen at its best on a honeymoon.”

“But I shall not be married—then.”

“Oh? Why not? Your lover, does he—?”

“You must not call him that. He has never—”

“Love does not always need words.”

He could see the delicate pigmentations of her skin suffuse with subtle colour. “How did you know of—him?” she said. “You are taking liberties with him.”

“Hoping that he may be as sensitive about you?”

“Oh! But he does not love me—yet.”

“Perhaps he regards you as a pupil.”

“That’s just it. He is too haughty.”

“When you should be the haughty one. Eh? Well, Mrs. Boyle, you are very kind, if not cruel, to let Miss Thurston lure me into—ah yes, I must be going. Good-bye!”

To be haughty with one so far her superior in knowledge as Hansen would have been more difficult if he had remained her teacher instead of becoming her father’s clerk. Helen was piqued now that he was indifferent, not only to her innate Scottish disdain of employees, but apparently also to much he had taught her of the dignity of Greek life. At times, thinking about what she might do to help diffuse a new culture on the Saskatchewan, he had told her about Greek ideals and technique of living. At the new library she had read translations of Greek works; on a public school mental experience and a somewhat pagan imagination, grafting university ideas. In a vague fashion he had taught this impressionistic pupil the differences between Hellenes and Barbaroi, pagan detail and Greek simplicity in decoration and dress; Stoics and Epicureans, the status of men and of women in Greek society. Instinctively, selfishly, extravagantly she absorbed the spirit of these things. Once, she remembered, he had said to her, “The strength of life is not in Stoicism or in Epicureanism, but in balancing one with the other; hedonism, the pursuit of pleasure is fatal, but the delights of nature are creative; self-control without self-suppression is everything.” The moment he had gone she had looked up a translation of Euripides’ *Medea* concerning women, ending with the passage, “They tell us we live a sheltered life at home while they go to the wars; but I would rather go into battle thrice than bear a child once.” The grim fatalism of this struck her with intense energy against what “he” had said about “hedonism”.

And now she had been sagaciously advised to be haughty with him. Why not?

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## CHAPTER VII.

### HALF-BREED PRODIGALS.

The Scrip Commission court in a big room over the fire-hall was a stratified sociological congress. On the first day two dusky trappers' wives in black shawls and moccasins squatted on the floor with their papooses, behind a Creeoid lady in a broadcloth dolman who thanked heaven she had a Galician domestic, because half-breed girls were becoming so shiftless. Dames who in the olden time had married white men came to claim scrip. Helen's mother, looking oddly aristocratic, made a cross next her name signed by the clerk. Two of her girls, students at High School, came later and went away each with a title to 240 acres of land to be located anywhere in the Territories. Wives of fishermen who had travelled on cayuses from Lac la Biche hobnobbed with smart young girls about town just learning to sing popular songs and to chew gum. One-room shacks on Lake Athabasca sent their moccasins, old shawls, mission coats, pig-tails, cheap beads, pewter rings, flamingo neck-kerchiefs, old clay pipes and robustious odours to mingle with drugstore perfumes and the latest styles from Peppercorn's Ltd.

Hansen had studied this jumbling kaleidoscopic drama of humanity from all angles. He knew the French, the Scotch, the English half-breeds and the varied temperaments of each; the illiterates who could only make their marks; the songs that they knew; the tales they told; the legends they treasured; the lies and subterfuges they invented. He knew so many things about half-breeds that he was in a shiver of fear as the sessions went along that he might suddenly be as one who knew nothing. His business was to buy land scrip from the half-breeds; in many cases, so much cash for the balance of a scrip already traded upon at the store by a power of attorney. For two days he bought scrip in a chuckle-eyed way, ignoring Peppercorn. Thurston's dollar was only a hundred cents; his prices of goods were fixed. Peppercorn sacrificed his goods to get scrip, offering coupons. At first Hansen kept away from scripmen known to be Peppercorn traders; but as his rival, driven by Hackett, cut in on Thurston clients he was forced to drive back. Thurston rubbed his hands at the first few daily reports, but later stroked his whiskers.

"Ye're bulling the market. I dinna like that."

The clerk eyed him narrowly. From scrip already bought he had computed Thurston as a millionaire. Thurston had furposted and dog-driven for years before he dreamed of becoming wealthy. To Hansen it was historic drama, that a man who had paid the penalty of marriage to a half-breed woman should reap his reward. He knew nothing of Hackett's interview with Helen, who had never discussed scrip with him except to smile when he expressed the hope that when she got her money for the lands she would do something to help the half-breeds who had lost it. Her stoical indifference to the drama angered him now. He was selling his own temperamental power over the half-breeds, making himself a lobbyist against unscrupulous traders like Peppercorn and Hackett, at a mere clerk's salary—all for the Thurstons, including the wife of his friend Dave Brady and the other girls. But Thurston's avarice seemed like a glacier; and Helen's indifference was as cold.

"Look Tom!" he said suddenly, "this is a sellers' market from now on. They've had a community jag or two and got rid of their early thirst; now they want more money. But there's one trump yet to play."

"Ay, and what's the big trump, Hansen?"

He leaned across the desk and watched the effect on the trader's shrewd face.

"Your daughter Helen. Her name will be called to-morrow. Let her come in a blaze of glory, appealing without a word to the imaginations of the half-breeds. That should start a Thurston market. How do you like it?"

Tom stroked his silken whiskers. "Fine! I'll tell her what ye've said. I couldna mak' her mysel'."

Hansen rose in silent anger. He had hoped for a protest. He did not know that the trader was yielding because he thought to please Hansen and wanted Helen to do likewise.

Precisely what Helen wore next morning when she appeared to claim her scrip, Hansen did not know. He saw the keen October sunlight glide with blazing intensity to her crimson cloak with which the grebe of her toque and the blue of a silk

skirt made a symphony of contrast against the sparkle of her brown-black coils of hair and the refined pallor of her face. Hackett was at a side wall, Bonapartesque with folded arms. He watched the half-breeds mutter their admiration. In haughty splendour she stood, feeling the power of herself over the half-breeds, over Hackett—and Hansen. To questions, she spoke curtly, with nice accent and a flashing smile. All Hansen's pity of her and his former contempt at the idea of exploiting her charms to create a Thurston wave in the market vanished in a recognition of absolute beauty. He forgot Hackett, Peppercorn and scrips. It seemed to him that Helen should sing some marvellous song. As she stepped down he felt like applauding. At the door he spoke to her in English; she answered brusquely in Cree and brushed by. He followed her down. A crowd of cayuse-men lounged on the fire-hall platform. He spoke to her again, in French.

And when Hackett stepped quickly to the front window he saw her laugh at Hansen as she spoke in Cree to the half-breeds. What she said he never knew, except in the look of torture on its victim's face as he went swiftly away from the Court, his hat jammed over his eyes—down to Thurston's store where he banged down his book and his roll of bills.

“Tom, I'm done. I don't care if those half-breeds at Rat Creek guzzle a million arable acres of rotgut, and dance the Devil's Trill, and ride the cayuses to blazes and back. We've beaten the game anyhow, and you can hand my wages to the hospital or the reading-room or to big John Farquharson at Loon Lake. I'm out!”

He stormed away to the Frontier House. The Yukon quartette rose when they saw him come.

“Say Ole,” philosophized Hogan, “when a guy is as flush as you be—he gen'lly buys the drinks fer the crowd even if he stays dry himself.”

Hansen laughed and sat on the stoop. “Where are the other two huskie dogs, Jean?”

“By gar! dose half-breeds stole dem. Well, I gass you mak' Tom Thurston one beeg millionaire, eh?”

“Hackett's a bigger one, Jean. He knows where to make his half-breeds locate the land. If it wasn't for the fight over that I'd buy the rest of those dogs and hike to Fort Chipeweyan.”

“So—I gass you don't write one poem about—dose grand half-breeds for de *Furposter* den?”

“Shut up! I've got other work to do.”

Then he leaned on the bar and as he gazed at the heap of huskie dogs and the ribbon of the cold blue river in the gorge, and the long sweeps of the brown October ranges, he said, “Boys, all the millions made by Hackett and the rest, and all the paystreaks in the Yukon, and all the debauchery of the half-breeds—are nothing to what this country and this town are to become if men and women give their love of beauty and their sense of the square deal a fighting chance. It's the same thing. A crooked deal is ugly. All true ethics is based upon ideas of beauty. Art isn't one thing, and life another; they're both the same. A raw deal in business breaks the design of life, just as much as if you take a hammer and bung up a beautiful statue. This young city was meant to be beautiful like a woman.” Then he shook hands and went. Heaven knew where he would go.

“Oh, he'll hit the trail to Dave Brady's at Resolution,” mumbled Hogan, contriving a cigarette. “But I thought sure he'd marry the girl before he hit another hike. Sure!”

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### RAILWAY AND BURROS.

It was a parliamentary debate over patronage that sent Dora Macklem on her musical tour of the West when the Yukon quartette heard her play. A son-in-law might have saved the Macklem business from “reorganization” and “Stoneleigh” the big house from other owners. Arthur Atkins, corporation counsel, was still single; not yet in parliament. Counsel for Macklem, he had done his part—all but marriage to Dora—to keep the business full steam ahead. Worry—especially over Dora's obstinacy in the matter of marrying Atkins—ended Macklem's worries and ambitions. After the funeral Mrs. Macklem moved into a nice flat. Dora might still have married Atkins who became a railway counsel with particular interest in western roads; a talented, tenacious man of personal integrity, very little sentiment and no humour; and when Dora decided to go West and take a church organ in Edmonton, he thought it over seriously.

“You may see me there some day,” he said with a smile intended to be humorous. “Of course you have your music—and some money. Your mother may decide to follow you. The new transcontinentals are already depopulating parts of the East. The Saskatchewan valley is the great lodestone. Yes, I must see that country soon.”

With a feeling of emancipation, Dora Macklem moved to Edmonton, over the vast checkerboard known as Canada. Like thousands of others she was in the maelstrom of the railways; that cycle of colossal adventures which for a decade and a half eclipsed even the romance of the Hudson’s Bay Company for sensational eldorados, and whose great objective was the unexploited valley of the Saskatchewan and its tributaries. Even Quebec villages felt the nationalizing arousal of this miracle. Not merely one great through line from Winnipeg to the Pacific via Edmonton, but another—to be built by an old historic company in league with the Government, which was Laurier. All very obvious to Louis Marechal, avocat, who was now the fervent parliamentary apostle of Nationalism and the conventional husband of Heloise who seldom listened to Louis in the House, but always to Laurier, and often to Dr. Strang.

“Quebec is not all there is of the French-Canadian in Canada,” she told him. “Think of the little Quebecs, carried by the railways into the West and the North! Ah Louis, I am afraid you are too much a Quebec Nationalist to be a good Canadian politician.”

None of these problems was familiar to a pack of Mexican burros which had escaped the bone trails of the Klondike and for years after the exodus roamed among the poplar bluffs on the outskirts of Edmonton. One summer night when the sketchy big town hung like a hammock between the lustre of sunset and the flush of dawn, these donkeys wandered in to the main street, then nearly a mile of lighted stores, down to the only shack in the line that seemed to be making any noise. The sign on the shack was *The Square Deal*. In its one huddled room a tall man was writing furiously at a low desk, above which were a hand-press and cases of type. Presently he went sticking type and “made up” a little page which to-morrow he would crank off on the press.

Through the window the editor saw the burros spoofing over one another’s shoulders as he wrote. He got up and went out.

“Just written an editorial,” he said, “to recommend that the present town council resign and let you professional asses take their seats.”

The chief burro bared his teeth. The editor had known red men in the Yukon who held dialogues with muskoxen. He fetched a chair to the sidewalk and lighted his pipe.

“Because you donkeys are experts on transportation,” he went on “and half the other people in this town are experts only on the fortunes they expect to make on town lot values created by a railway that is still a hundred miles down the valley. Yes, I’ve been all over the line. I said that such a railway is a sacred thing because it creates homes and causes towns to grow—naturally—and makes wealth for everybody to enjoy according to his labour in producing it. That’s what I said, donkeys; but of course the people who read it said it was bunk.”

One of the burros candidly yawned.

“Hee-haw!” grinned the editor. “Don’t mind me. Everybody yawns when he reads *The Square Deal*—but they read it. *The Square Deal* is a rag. It is not financed upon its earnings because it has none. Nobody wants to buy a paper that says it’s an economic miracle for one transcontinental to strike up this valley but an economic tragedy to have two, building mushroom towns out of lumber-piles, to fill them with people who endorse all the lies sent out by Boards of Trade about population,—half of them squatters that want to make money without work.”

One of the burros squealed and kicked.

“Kick him again,” grinned the editor. “There are always two sides to a donkey, same as to a question.”

A coyote set up a dismal howling on the prairie. Some bibulous card players from the Club went noisily home on the other side of the street past a plate glass window blazoned with Thos. Thurston, Dealer in Furs, and the next, Thomas Thurston, General Goods. They paused to gaze at the furs in one and the gowns on wax models in the other.

A daybreak train coughed across the gorge startling the burros who snorted up the main street. The editor chased them for exercise, back through lanes of new little houses, tents, tepees, shacks, wagons, sleeping horses. As dawn struck a slow and glorious light on the half roofs of a hectic new town, he went back to his office. His boots scrunched some type. “The deuce!” he said, picking up an “E”. “Type costs money.” He went to his cases. The trays were gone. *The Square Deal* was suddenly typeless. Somebody had dumped the type—not down the bank for fear the patient editor

might pick up his “fonts” if it took him a week—but into the river.

Whereupon with a slow grin and a smothered “Damn!” he went to his desk and wrote slowly a letter to one Sadie Barlow, care of Dr. Jas. Strang, in Detroit, saying that it was a poor reward to the type for telling the truth to be dumped into a river.

“Seems like an age since I saw you,” he went on. “Klondike since—then here. Nothing to tell—because nothing done that spells money. If I had spent a couple of hundred five years ago on a fifty-foot lot I could have begun some chain of fortune. But this town is full of people whose money-making keeps them from any more real experience. Some are friends of mine. Jean Dubuc, bartender, now promoter; Bob Boyle, broncho-buster, now real estater, with his wife yearning to give teas for debutantes; Ed Banigan, M.A., quit selling fish and is now angling for suckers, and even the Klondike quartette who used to think me a plutocrat now buy their own drinks and sing the new song ‘Get Rich P. D. Q.’ There are enough claw-hammer coats and evening gowns in this town to outfit a vice-regal ball. Peppercorn has an automobile and a house on Riverside Heights big enough for a small lunatic asylum.”

He paused here, as though in doubt as to whether what he had already said would not be dull, and if so whether more news of that kind about himself might not be worse, but he went on:

“So I had to start something; called it *The Square Deal*. A fur trader helped me finance it as a small daily against grafters—political or otherwise—humbugs and upstarts. But it turned out that his daughter—who has just come back from ladies’ college—persuaded him into it. The old boy and I split over the railway-land-location gamble in which Hackett was first fiddle. The S.D. cut out Thurston and became a precarious weekly rag devoted to plain truth—and it’s a caution how a little of that hurts a lot of people. It said that people coming West need not expect Eldorado except on labour; that in spite of weather gambles, this West will yet set a world pace for wheat, if the farmers are not forced to pay peak prices to eastern capital for machinery, money and transportation—and if the Government would pass a law making it impossible for speculators to hold lands idle along the high-cost railways, driving settlers back from the roads to create increment in values for the hog-lands along the very railway that brought them in. Just plain economic truth, without malice; something too about the Hackett tribe—men who value a government or a party only for what it puts into their pockets, or on to their wives’ backs or for ‘Sir’ and ‘Lady’ as door-knobs to their names. I sent a raft of S. D.’s with these articles to Ottawa; wrote to Laurier and Strang asking to have them distributed among the M.P.’s. Strang wrote back that I was idealistically O.K. but that if I were an M.P. my camera would be refocussed. And I guess that’s no dream.

“Well Sadie, now you’re horrified. But you come West and see what happens to your mental camera. Good-bye.

“P.S.—Forget to tell you that Miss Dora Macklem, the ‘Cecilia’ you admired so much at Convocation—Hooper’s fiancée then—has come to town recently; some upset to the clothing business; teaching music here. When are *you* coming West?”

Reading it all over, he concluded that for all the personal interest in her which it contained, it might as well have been written to a wax model. He had not seen her since 1897. He wondered why he could be so indifferent.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### A LONG MEMORY.

One day at the close of the 1904 session of the third Laurier parliament, Dr. Jas. Strang, M.P., in his Windsor office was busy house-cleaning the pockets of his cavernous black cutaway. He found seven uncashed checks, a number of memos about new books, notes on speeches, eleven unpaid bills, seventeen opened letters and one—unopened. Aurora glimmered over his prodigious face as he telephoned Sadie Barlow in Detroit, who that evening came over.

“Sadie girl,” he said, “here’s a letter addressed to you from Edmonton, postmarked July, 1903, and it’s now June, 1904. It has been providentially in my coat pocket ever since.”

“You old villain!” she said snatching the letter. “That same old coat that you haven’t even brushed!”

“At least five years, child. But read the letter.”

“Well,” after she had done, and he had finished reading an article on Marconi, “I saw you frown and smile and get scornful—now you’re sadly serious.”

“Whyever doesn’t he get married?” she said.

“Getting experience before he marries it, child. We are both doing it. I’m getting grey on parliamentary speeches and long hours; even you have a thread or two of silver—otherwise as sparkling as when I first heard you sing *Florence Nightingale* in Jericho. Hmh-hmh,” yawning till she wished he would go to a dentist, “saved some money; ready to begin all over again—which in many a case means a wedding.”

She laughed and rattled the letter at him. “Oh, he does mention a girl here in the postscript.”

“Women being an after-thought to him, yes. Hmh! Let me guess—that her name is Dora Macklem?”

“How did you surmise that?”

He tapped his teeth with a pencil and looked through her at something invisible beyond.

“I once called her father a ‘sanctified skunk’ in parliament over a sweatshop item in the patronage list. Yes, the shiny pots were blacking the old kettles then. I apologized to the Premier, who is always a perfect gentleman in debate even when he takes the hide off an opponent—because some of the rest of us do the rough talking for the party. The girl wrote me indignantly. I sent her an apology. Hansen wrote me quite abusively from Edmonton, something about fools rushing in where angels fear to tread and so on; part of a general letter about things as he sees them in the West. No doubt he told you about his paper. He sent me a raft of copies. I’ve used his information in speeches about the West. I predicted that such a man should become Minister of the Interior some day—because he is an immigrant who knows the inside of the country. Laurier admits that Hansen is often right and would be glad to have him contest a seat in the first election after the new Provinces are inaugurated. I hope to see Hansen on that occasion. So, my child, your old Jericho pupil has not done so badly—even though he has never got married, or made any money.”

“He’d never be elected,” she said, twisting the letter. “He’s too much of a moral egoist, as he was in Jericho. Oh well! Doctor,” she broke off, “tell me how to buy western lands. I wrote to Briggs, but he sells only farms.”

“Hmh! Yes he’s in one of Hackett’s syndicates selling farms to Americans who will become good Liberals because they expect to buy most everything but transportation from the country they were born in. I’d have flayed Hackett in the House long ago if it hadn’t been for that. Every good party must have voters. But—what did Rev. Boanerges Brown say, when you wrote to him, child?”

She tapped nervously with a boot. “He says that in a country so vast it’s impossible to know all the bad lands; that to the best of his ability he has advised clients of Peppercorn in good buys. Bo could have been rich by now if he hadn’t been so devoted to Cree missions.”

“Why apologize so enthusiastically, child?”

“Perhaps because he’s enthusiastic about me.”

“Well, if I were Brown, I’d invite you out there to see the land for yourself.”

“Just what I intend to do this summer.”

“Oh? Hmh!” he yawned. “Well, it’s a great country. You’ll like it. Daresay Brown will make his mark. The church needs outposters who become directors. But I never thought you—cared for Brown! Sadie, child,” as he walked to a window, “marriage is a strange, misdirected game.”

“Is that why you stay single, Doctor?”

“No child, the looking-glass long ago saved me from the comedy of a refusal of an offer of marriage to you. Years ago,” he went on rapidly, “you wanted to mould Hansen’s character as a prelude to marrying him—and you never really knew it—now don’t get dramatic—there’s more yet. That girl, Dora—

“Oh, he’s never going to marry her?”

“Hush! Who said he was? But I have an elephant’s memory. Long ago when you came back from seeing Hansen graduate,

you told me about his friendship with a consumptive named Hooper who died before he could marry her—wait now—and when Hansen wrote me so indignantly about the girl’s father and my speech, I happened to meet in Ottawa a weird, half-psychic journalist named Philo Sullivan who casually mentioned Hansen and Macklem because of my speech—and the cat was out of the bag, when neither of us said a direct word about it. But,”—yawning again—”she doesn’t know that Hooper willed Hansen to marry her, child.”

“But will he?” she asked after a silence.

He held up both hands. “Child, who knows?”

“Well,” as she rose to go, “he’s in sad need of marrying somebody—and making some money.”

“Marriage and money,” he repeated. “Hmh-hmh! As old as the hills, and as a rule not half so interesting.”

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE SQUARE DEAL.

*The Square Deal* gave the people railway news—because the editor worshipped the railway. Every week or so Hansen straddled a burro and rode down to the end of the steel that crawled a mile a day in good weather up the valley and took nearly five years to tie Edmonton to Winnipeg. He described every detail of construction; steam shovel, graders, picks: flat-cars of ties, rails, fishplates, spikes and ballast; tents, tarpaper shacks and navvies—and the track-laying machine that made possible a mile a day. From old *Furposters* he reprinted articles on the cayuse—written by a saddle-bags preacher—Red River carts, York boats, old steamers. He described settlers with half the languages of Europe who saw village after village, exactly ten miles apart, pushed up from piles of lumber and kegs of nails and hearts of hope beating high with the impetus of sheer novelty in creation; old races suddenly becoming citizens of a new world of energy and work. But in all his burro-journeys up and down the valley he kept away from Loon Lake and Bo Brown; and whenever Farquharson came to town for his scow cargoes, he said nothing to him. Rev. John could have told him that he had a new teacher at his Cree school, whose name was Sadie Barlow; but he knew nothing of Hansen’s acquaintance with her, and said nothing.

The furpost city was itself bursting with news. The card of Thos. Thurston, Dealer in Furs, was a mere item among columns about lawyers, hair-dressers, milliners, carters, gravel-haulers, things for sale, mistresses wanting maids and men wanting stenographers, and all reading the daily blaze of real estate bargains that blueprinted the new city north for miles, east and west and even south across the gorge to Strathcona by a coming high-level bridge.

At the new hotel where Dora Macklem set up her studio before taking the piano department in the College, a Ruthenian maid one year out of sheepskins tried to sell her a corner lot. The streets were a swirl of afternoon fashion. Galicians who knew the latest slang and the song about *Bill Bailey* had begun to regard with amazement the advent of new “sheepskins”. St. Simon’s, where Dora played the vocalion which had once been toppled from a cable ferry to the bottom of the Saskatchewan, was a new little church of poor folk dreaming of wealth. She soon had a puny orchestra in the making, a three-part chorus and several pupils from the congregation. A letter to her mother told of young Galician pianists, a Ukrainian choir and theatre—in an old kirk—for one of whose plays she was adapting folk-songs from a first-hand collection of national airs; of Jean Dubuc wanting to emulate Caruso, and of Helen Thurston—also her pupil—whom Jean wanted to take to Paris on a honeymoon; of happy, hopeful little homes she had visited among the poplars, wonderful vegetable gardens and astounding poppies—and then she suddenly spoke of Hansen whom she had met at the hotel.

That meeting was Hansen’s own brusque welcome of her to a town, needing, as he bluntly said, people like her. She was rather amused at his collective idea. He made no allusion to her family affairs, except to mention a rumour that Atkins might be coming as corporation expert into a legal firm there. He took for granted that she was teaching music. He was as unromantic as sandpaper; even while he observed in her face the exquisite contour of the “Cecilia” to whom he had written the ode.

She spoke of *The Square Deal*. “A mere rag,” he said. “Hasn’t got a social column or a music department, or I’d have

said something about your arrival; but even that my opposition, *Sunday Morning*, backed by the Boost crowd, would have criticized.”

“But I have not seen a copy yet,” she said.

“No,” he laughed. “Suspended publication for a while; lack of funds to buy paper and ink—but I often skip a week or two when I’m on the trail. Oh, just a one-man sheet, something like the *Market Gleaner* used to be down in Plainsville —”

Suddenly he broke off into a malediction on the “land shark gang” who had dragged into their net poor old James Hagarty selling his fine home to buy subdivisions that for a decade would be nothing but cow pastures; Sarah Shane whose meagre savings had gone into a Loon Lake muskeg—which had also swallowed seven hundred dollars that Hiram Flater had in a bank to buy a player-piano.

“These are a few of the facts I’m after,” he said with a cold laugh. “These people all wrote to me when it was too late. All I can do now is to expose the gang, but that doesn’t make them shell out or put them behind the bars—and they’ll try to put me on the rocks when the facts come out. Poor old Flater thought that muskeg was a bunch of town lots close to a railway; and when he had a thrifty suspicion, he got a testimonial from a missionary at Loon Lake that all Peppercorn syndicate stuff was reliable—and of course he bit. Boanerges Brown was meant by nature to be an honest business man; ambition made him a dishonest preacher.”

Seeing her change colour, he began to talk about the glorious future of the coming new Capital; of what the workers in art, with technical mastery, imagination and simple human ideas could do in helping to make a city beautiful if others would keep it honest.

“Your music broadens out into life,” he said tumultuously. “What are folk-songs but intensive racial life? If there’s a purely Canadian town anywhere, broader than any in Quebec, this is it up here on the edge of Athabasca. It has almost as many languages as Winnipeg, which has at least thirty. In a few weeks the Premier of Canada and the Governor-General will be here to inaugurate this town as a new Capital; down to Regina to begin another. They’ll speak to thousands—”

“Oh, I’m sure it will be inspiring.”

He looked at her as sceptically, as years before real old-timers had gazed at him when he blabbed about the grand country.

“I like your enthusiasm,” he said jerkily. “Hope you never lose it. But don’t try to make it grow on—things you left behind in the East. Oh, pardon my preachments. I’ve been sermonizing ever since I came in here. I don’t do it to many people. You seem to—oh well, please play Chopin or something bigger and then—then you won’t need to make me feel as though I’m a failure when I don’t need to be—all on account of money.”

“I haven’t said a word about money, or failure.”

“Oh no. No, but I see you’re bored. Never mind the Chopin. Good-afternoon.”

Through the window she saw him laughing like a boy in an ardent dialogue of signs and symbols with a group of new immigrants to whom he tried to say something about life in a new world that the Premier of Canada at the Inauguration might not say.

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The Inauguration came with less historic pomp than Dora had imagined. With parades, old-timers, singing children, music, games, mounted-police drills, speeches and vast crowds, the new town woke up on September 1, 1905, to find itself, not only a city but a Capital; an outburst of fashion, patriotism and oratory; ladies with flat enormous hats surmounted with paper gardens almost eclipsing the cowboy hats of the scarlet-coated police; Governor-General, Premier and other silk-hatted parliamentarians up by way of Calgary; bankers and railway-builders driving in from the end of steel near Fort Saskatchewan; awninged speeches down at the fair grounds in the flats, where the Premier, his “white plume” visible from the heights, spoke to what he called “a vast sea of upturned faces” about old races becoming new citizens and citizens becoming electors.

Helen Thurston in tight grey suit and enormous picture hat asked Miss Macklem at the studio about those fine ladies and gentlemen from the East. “You will be at the State Ball, Miss Macklem? Yes?”

“State ball,” repeated Dora. “Sounds wonderful. Perhaps. A friend of mine has just come to town—to live. I may go with him.”

The friend was Arthur Atkins whom Hansen had casually met among the visitors a while before Heloise Marechal, who had come up in a coach behind the parliamentarians, without Louis, called at the shack of *The Square Deal*. Except for a few tight lines in her face she was as bewitching as ever, bantering him about “such a classic little shebang for a newspaper.”

“Well, I daresay *Le Figaro* started in a garret.”

“Oh yes. It was good of you to send me the papers. Shall I tell you how I like it? Well, you are too serious—Anglo-Saxon—American; not French enough; no sparkle, no bon-mots, no satires, no bouquet—not even a touch of la boheme. Your scandals are too—prosaic. You see?”

“That not only French; it’s feminine.”

“Oh, the women are bothering you?”

“Women are precariously inevitable,” he said.

“Did you know that Dr. Strang, your old mentor, is here—with the Premier?”

“He is arranging an interview with Laurier for me.”

“Oh, why did you not ask me for that?”

“But what are you—doing here, Madame?”

“Oh, I am going to lecture down the valley for the Catholic Extension Society.”

“I understand. Little Quebecs on the prairies?”

She inquired about a place called Loon Lake.

“The Oblates have a mission there. Also—there is an old Cree woman there called—”

“Jane Thunder? Yes she’s easily ninety. Why?”

“She thinks she is some relation by marriage to the Laflamms. Oui. Ah! Yes, it was in the paper which you sent to me that I read—what some missionary named Brown said about that. So interesting—is it not? Now I must go and find my friend Madam Nat Turner. Au revoir! See you—again?”

Hansen’s interview with the Premier at the hotel was just before dinner. He noted the immaculate morning coat, the black cravat, the old-fashioned gaiter boots—all just as he had seen them the day he had talked to plain Mr. Laurier in Montreal.

“I remember you,” said the Premier, recounting some of the very things of which they had talked.

“But all that I said then is foolish now, sir. Things have changed. You have enormous power—”

“Only through other men, Hansen; men like yourself and your friend Dr. Strang, to spread true Liberalism for the good of the people.”

“I understand you,” said Hansen, profoundly impressed with the leader’s genial intensity, his blend of aristocratic bearing and democratizing ways. “Canada is a series of—” He was unable to finish. Laurier tactfully asked him optimistic questions about the West; told him just enough of Ottawa to make him feel, as Strang had already done, that in the eyes of the chief Capital, as soon it would be in the new ones on the prairies, Canada was a cyclorama of varied and contradictory life, and that if he himself should live to see an Ontarioized West join hands with an enlightened, forward Quebec—like Wolfe he would die happy.

“For after all, Hansen, it is chiefly Ontario that laid the foundations of social and political life here on these prairies; Ontario, with its mixture of peoples such as made England able to comprehend the world with Empire; men like yourself—ah! I have seen your paper. Make it broad, Hansen; Liberal, inclusive. Be practical. That is English. When we get into one *ensemble* on these prairies the conglomerate peoples of Europe and of the United States with the leaven of composite practical Ontario and intensely idealistic Quebec—what a nation we shall begin to have for Canada!”

“Every Canadian should speak both French and English, Sir Wilfrid,” was all Hansen could think of saying. He had

come to tell the Premier what he thought was the truth about the West. The wizard had shifted his focus. The things that had burned within him when he came were as cold as ashes. Other fires were rising. He rose to go.

“I agree with you,” said the Premier. “Ah! after all, perhaps I am a Hansen man.”

The smile of him was like the last grand flush of a glorious sunset. “Well, Sir Wilfrid,” said Hansen, as he opened the door to a delegation, chief among whom were Arthur Atkins, K.C., and Z. Peppercorn, Liberal organizer, “it’s no wonder you keep on riding to victory and that all men love you—because you are all things to most men and always mean what you say—even when you don’t choose to say quite all that you mean.”

“How else could any man, not an archangel, be Premier of Canada, Hansen? There is so much good in all people—it is good to be alive, to see such a land, to hear the voices of children, to watch the growth of ideas. Good luck to *The Square Deal*, Hansen! Make it Liberal.”

“To the English a white hope of the Empire,” went on Hansen as he walked away. “To Quebec a Canadian; to the Scotch Grits a Prince Charlie; to the Americans a disciple of Lincoln democracy; to the polyglots—everything! Instead of arguing for votes you genially bamboozle the voters into thinking that the millennium can be reached by two transcontinentals and a Quebec bridge. You’re as autocratic as Wolsey and as kindly simple as a beautiful child. You are surrounded by national expansionists who use governments as tools in corporation business; yet in your individual public character you are as virtuous as Sir Galahad, and in private life almost as poor as I am. That’s genius! And that’s what I wanted to tell you, but—”

When he looked up on the sidewalk a very high red automobile had stopped at the curb. Big Jean Dubuc was at the wheel. A crowd gathered to gape at the miracle.

“By gar! Ole, you look solemn after talk wit’ Laurier. I bat you mak dat *Square Deal* one Grit papere now—eh?”

“Jean—the way I feel now, I’d sell it for what you call the price of one horse’s neck!”

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## CHAPTER XI.

### TRAINS AND TRAILS.

For days at the studio Helen talked to Miss Macklem about the State ball—where she had seen her teacher dance with so many fine gentlemen from the East, and with Mr. Atkins. Helen had left the ball after one dance with Mr. Hackett and another with Jean Dubuc.

“So Jean is raging at me,” she said one morning. “But I don’t care. I do not learn Chopin—for him perhaps.”

She sat down and played a *Prelude*; her sinuous fingers scarcely rising from the keys and her opalescent eyes gleaming with recreative fire at her teacher who worked at scoring folk-songs for a fantasia.

“Tell me—what is harmony from melody?” she said, leaning over the baby grand; and she laughed with ecstasy at the conventional explanation. “No!” she said as softly as a tomtom gently struck. “That is your way. I think the melody is a man; the harmony—are his wife and children. Ha-ha-ha?”

“Dear me! Such an idea. Helen—you are not—?”

“To be married? I don’t know. Not for money, though—mine or his. For myself! Let me see—your fantasia?” She took the manuscript and played over some of the folk-songs. “Ah! There is one you have not put down—the Cree.”

“Oh, I want that. Do you know it?”

“Know it!” she repeated with a liquid stare. “I—should—say! Listen? But please to imagine tomtoms—so?” softly striking a bass key. In a soft creepy nasal, like some distant pipe of Pan, she sang, the wordless song, from which at the Dance Hansen had tried to extricate her. Dora swiftly jotted down the notes.

“Oh yes, I see. Pentatonic scale. Let me try it. Tomtoms in the minor. Listen, Helen?”



[\[Listen\]](#)

She played it as a minor melody to the drums in the bass. Helen sang it again; this time to full harmony of a modern sort with tantalizing skips in the rhythm; and each time it was played the orchestration changed as Dora went on imagining this or that choir of instruments doing it.

When she turned Helen was fantastically dancing it heel-and-toe, with a glassy look at nothing.

“Capital!” said Dora. “Splendid!” thinking it a mere bit of local colour.

But when Helen stopped she turned her glazed look upon her teacher in an envelopment of mystic silence. Then she said, in a far-away echoing voice, “Perhaps—I understand? Melody is a man. Harmony is a woman. You—you will be a harmony to some one here, perhaps. Some one! A man who is dead—wanted it so. Some man—I have never seen!”

To relieve the tension Dora played a mazurka. When she looked up Helen had gone.

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The first train from Winnipeg to Edmonton was a fact in the form of a furore. It was two days on the road. The approach! hope heading out of the hills—hour by hour, its progress recorded by bulletins, as the advance of an army. The holiday! streets packed, bronchos, plain horses, cayuses—ridden out to meet the train in the hills; bar-rooms full of choric responses; bets paid in booze. The arrival! bar-rooms empty, streets full; station mobbed; a whistle, a throb—then more jokes, yarns, choruses; Tom Thurston telling a group about the days when the whole town had listened for the honk of the Red River carts from Winnipeg and each trader had a “permit” case of whisky because the Territories were bone-dry.

“Nothing like that now, Tom,” hawhawed an auctioneer. “By George, here she comes!”

And amid a rousal of cheers the “special” with all railway magnates on board came thundering in; and at length the master builder stepped out into a storm of cheers, into the high car of Peppercorn, who led the procession back to the hotel, with Jean Dubuc’s big red car next, and all other cars, cabs, buses, conveyances whatsoever, in a caravan of which with its trails of hectic pedestrians, the most historic and poetic feature was an old Red River cart hauled by a team of oxen and surmounted by the Yukon quartette and Ed Banigan.

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Arthur Atkins coolly proposed to himself to become at least Attorney-General of Alberta. He did not care for people, except as audiences and electors; different from Marechal in Quebec who loved a habitant cottage best of all, except an audience of habitants. Atkins endured the breezy ways of the West in the hope that some day pomp and circumstance would drive them out. Cold but intellectually emotional, he regarded a community as an expanded corporation. He was already chief counsel for Hackett down the valley, and for Peppercorn, Liberal organizer, who, when the contract was signed, said, “Look Arthur—” “But not ‘Artie’ if you please—yet,” interrupted the counsel. “If you’ll put that Laurier morning coat into the moth-balls and learn to smile when you make a speech, you can be Premier of Alberta, and your wife—when you get one—can be Lady Atkins in the smartest society town of solid business in Canada.”

With eleven banks and several four-storey buildings, the city was already “subdivided” far beyond Riverside Heights and the residences of Peppercorn, Dubuc, Boyle and several other citizens who were lately hard up—with Thurston’s big house on a crag. There were half as many architects as lawyers; some of them designing miniature ballrooms, music rooms, solariums and terraced gardens down to the river. Peppercorn sold Oriental rugs by the hundred and had a corps of dressmakers with a chief *costumière* from Paris. *The Furpostor*, its rival *The Albertan*, and the week-end *Sunday*

*Morning* had each a social column devoted to the West End. The Yukon quartette had disintegrated into three real estate firms of which one was Hogan and Brant. Banigan, M.A., had realized his dream of luxurious bachelor quarters and a trip back to London, casually commissioned by Peppercorn to buy him two good oil paintings by “any old master in any old gallery” he liked. Gretchen Boyle gave teas for debutantes in her solarium. Jean Dubuc, with no visible profession except that of selling real estate, still hoped to drive out of a state of celibacy on “the water-wagon”; much mystified over Helen who had lately taken to companionship with her mother.

St. Simon’s congregation built a new church of collegiate Gothic design with an organ on which Dora Macklem gave recitals. Dora had not plunged into a social programme which was rather more precipitate than anything she had known in the staid East. She was slowly evolving her own interpretation of the West as a wall upon whose crude projections she might help to trace some patterns of classic beauty. Her musicales were attended by all the *élite* and she had begun to make even the great composers affectionately known among people of humbler means. Yet she was unsatisfied.

“Why so?” asked Atkins who frequently called at her studio on a winter evening. “Surely one dissatisfied Solon is enough.”

“Hansen?” she smiled. “Perhaps so. Many people adapt what he in some way creates. *The Square Deal* should be a wonderful paper. It’s so thoroughly Canadian.”

“Peppercorn calls it the ‘Dare Squeal’.” Atkins picked up a copy from the table, glanced over its four little pages pockmarked with “wrong fonts” of type and put it down. “A mere rag!” he said. “Hasn’t even got readable type; scarcely an available asset except Hansen—yet it’s known all over this part of the country—by people who never read it.”

“I sometimes think he has a silent partner,” said Dora reflectively.

“Oh yes—Henry Hooper,” as he walked circumspectly to the other end of the room.

The north wind, driving with heavy snow, thudded down the fireplace and shot sparks into the studio. One thud, heavier and more distinct than the rest, seemed to vibrate the building.

“Terrific storm!” she said. Taking the little paper she began to read. “Arthur—here’s a passage which may not be beautiful as an example of classic English, but I could almost believe that the hand of Henry Hooper had written it.” She read aloud:

“It is no business of *The Square Deal* how people spend their own money. But when some of them spend other people’s money they are due for a public accounting of how they got it. Thousands of dollars have been spent by Peppercorn—many thousands more by Hackett—that were taken by fraud from people such as James Hagarty, Sarah Shane, Hiram Flater. Peppercorn as I knew him in Jericho was mainly a good storekeeper, a capable trustee, inaugurator of good roads and public utilities. He was a builder in Ontario. He is a plain grafter here. If there’s one thing the Yukon taught more than another it was the square deal. On these prairies under the old unwritten law, a man who looted a cache could be legally shot. Peppercorn looted a money cache of Hiram Flater and even dragooned a preacher of the gospel to help him do it. The looter of that cache, and of scores of others, rolls round in an automobile, shakes hands as a political organizer with the Premier of Canada, has endowed a chair in a college, and has paid for a set of chimes in a church organ to be played whenever he occupies his pew. The race for wealth without much work leaves more derelicts in its trail than all the bones that marked the trails of the Yukon. Progress does not create poverty, except in evolving unjailed criminals of avarice who work as hard as Peppercorn does, and people who no longer believe in an honest day’s work for as much money as the work is worth. *The Square Deal* does not believe in ‘common’ wealth, but in ‘common’ honesty. If a man has the genius to simplify the creation of wealth he has a right to spend his own money for all the luxuries he likes. Beautiful homes are a credit to any city if they are built upon the square deal. Thousands of people here live in homes of honest beauty who in the East might still have been in shacktowns. The foundation of a city like this is more of a miracle than the building of a Taj Mahal temple. The first steel skeleton of a wall here will be a music—”

She looked up. “Excuse me Arthur? I almost forgot you were here. That’s rude.”

The talk turned to other days; to a sweatshop that both of them had known; the old argument—that was never used again. They quarrelled, stupidly on his part—because she called him a coward who should have had spunk enough to publish his article if it was true instead of leaving it to a less honourable pen.

“Two other men did exactly the same,” he contended. “Henry Hooper, and—Olaf Hansen. If I am a coward—so are two

of whom you might call your heroes.”

“Yes, Henry Hooper was a hero,” she said quietly. “The other man—I don’t profess to understand. No man can be a hero without suffering!”

Some one knocked at the door. Helen Thurston, her red blanket coat, tuque and moccasins all crusted with snow, stood in the door-way; would not come in, because she was so hot.

“Miss Macklem,” she said quickly, “there is one piece of news that *The Square Deal* will not print. The editor—”

“Not hurt?” exclaimed Atkins, gravely concerned.

She laughed a little. “No,” recovering her breath, “he is not so easily hurt. He started to drive Jean Dubuc’s huskies this afternoon to Big Lake forty miles—to make sure about a half-breed girl—who is in trouble—from some wealthy citizen.” The two easterners exchanged glances. “But when he was seven miles out the lead dog was exhausted. He carried him to the shelter of a bluff and there he is now—lying beside the dog to save him from freezing till the snow buries them.”

“My girl, how did you know this?”

“I followed him on foot, sir. Oui.”

Helen did not add that she had fought her way back to the same bluff with a four-point blanket which in the dark she had flung quickly over the man—and as quickly had vanished.

“But that is not all the news that *The Square Deal* will not print, Mr. Atkins. No—while he was away dynamite blew up his press. There is—”

“That’s the thud we heard, Dora!”

“No more *Square Deal*—just now. No? I came only to tell you. Good-night!”

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A mild chinook blew into the printer shack one day as Hansen tinkered away at his dismantled press, idly singing, “Kemo-kimo—katchee kimee-o!” The warm wind suddenly became a shadow—of scarlet blanket coat, black hair, orange-coloured moccasins.

“Bonjour Helen!” he whistled. “You have no troubles or propaganda to ventilate. Sorry I can’t ask you to have a chair—it was blown up. Oh say—here’s that blanket. Thanks! Saved that huskie’s life. Oh, when I woke up I knew—” He coughed to hide his confusion.

She looked intently at the rebuilding press, cases of type, a thrifty wad of paper, a can of ink.

“I like to smell the ink,” she said. “Is that what makes a newspaper smell so much like—money? Oh, I am sorry, Mr. Hansen, to say that; *The Square Deal* has nothing to do with money, but how do you make what you think—into type?”

“Most of the time I don’t. When I do, I just pick out the type for a sentence—No, I don’t bother writing it sometimes. I like to think with type.”

“Ah! You should have a typewriter, a stenographer, a machine for type, a big press—a wonderful paper!”

He rubbed ink from his hands. “Helen, you’re trying to bamboozle me. I’m only a rag man. Publishing takes money.”

She nodded eagerly. “Take my money, Mr. Hansen. Then you can—get back for other people the money they lost.”

He seized her hand. “Sorry, Helen. It can’t be done.”

She drew back. “Then I will go back to my mother—who dreams of living in a chateau. She will not go to Europe. Perhaps I will stay with her.”

She went: a glide of scarlet, black and orange, out to the main street.

“The glorious privilege of being independent!” he muttered. “That girl makes her own moccasins, too.”

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## CHAPTER XII.

### PROGRESS AND AMBITION.

Atkins was nominated by Peppercorn and a group of older Liberals as a candidate for the new Legislature. His speech of acceptance was published in the *Furposter*. Dora read it and flushed with pride. With great perspicacity Atkins had included in his speech all the chief tenets of changing Liberalism and many of the ideas ventilated by Hansen; Conservative sentiment with Liberalizing ideas. Splendid! After all, there was more to conserve than to tear down. The new races whose folk songs Dora studied were old races alive with traditions. Atkins had sagaciously built his speech on that thesis; the East becoming the West.

She felt a sudden desire to mount up with wings like an eagle. "Great speech, Arthur!" she telephoned. "Wonderful! That's what this country needs—constructive statesmanship built on imag—hullo! what's that? Not so great as a Laurier speech—well, Arthur of course not; but—" Heaven knew what he might say next to spoil the effect; he was so maladroit in conversation, so clever on the platform. She rang off. "Oh well, well—" She played the piano. The world was bigger than she had ever known it—in Hooper's day everything had been so youthful. "My dear Mr. Hansen," she began to write, almost before the last overtone had died from the piano. "I do wish you would come to my studio to-morrow evening—" She crossed off the 'do' as too impulsive and began again. Yes, after all, Hansen also was worth saving.

Feeling sure that he would come she put on a very conservative, semi-décolleté evening gown. Perhaps she realized that she was still beautiful. A wood fire snapped pleasantly. It was early spring. A robin or two had come among the whisky-jacks in the spruces across the river gorge. She had not heard them. The young city was already folding her in. It seemed ages since she had talked to her parents about the democracy of great composers. To her now, all great music was conservative.

Hansen came in roughish workaday clothes—the best he had; not so well dressed as she had first seen him along Cromar St. His hair was a trifle curly, his collar negligé; moving with the buoyancy of a trail-beater, he sat a bit heavily in a chair that he said was much too easy and seemed to creak; glancing rapidly at the composer portraits, articles of furniture and of *vertu*, little Persian rugs, elegant piano and shade lamp, the percolator and the little tea-table, the lights and shades and lambent flicker of a most artistic studio of which this splendid woman was herself the finest picture.

"Roses and Chopin!" he cogitated. "Yes, in a play of twenty years ago, just the woman that a *gauche* gazabo like me would go through hoops of fire to win, and then—glad you're working your music into practical experience with people," he said aloud. "This ultra modern stuff, though—"

"Don't you care for—Debussy?" she asked.

"Can't say so. No, he makes me think of water rippling with oil on it—who's that French impressionist painter—oh yes, Sidaner; much like him. Think I'd like old Bach, he's so four-square and bats you in the face like a north wind. Perhaps a little Chopin?" he suggested as she moved to the piano. "Banigan says it makes him smell daffodils. Can't say that he does—me. It's the poetic virility of Chopin, his songs of the piano, his tears and triumphs so well worth while, that grip." He knew he was on thin ice. He realized the instant, tyrannical power of music as compared to that of other arts. The Chopin she played made old Cromar St. rise and dance like a skeleton clothed with aurora. She played with passion born of the past. He could see her side face in a half light, the Cecilia he had adored in the clumsy, beatific ode; rapturously, religiously intent, with perfectly dignified control of the body; a *Nocturne*, a *Prelude*, the uplifting, cavalry-charging *Polonaise in A flat*.

"Those are three that Henry Hooper liked best," he said instantly the moment she had finished. "Of course I don't know their names and it doesn't matter; but they weave a sort of gold thread into life—oh, you know they pick things up and make them mean something that belongs to the everlasting, the infinite skies, the hills, men, women, children marching over them—"

He felt himself going, whither he knew not, to stop he knew not when. He had talked to Hooper that way many a time. Music had opened great doors, given him a sense of power—to think, to write, to go out and tell foreigners that here was a woman who by the power of using music could do greater things for them than all the speeches of politicians, or anything they might learn to read in his own rag of a paper. He said something like that; with overpowering honesty, in absolute love of what such a woman might do. They talked about solemn churches in the East; the advent of Paderewski; horse-shows and garrison parades; festivals of Handel's *Messiah*; the Pettigues and Cromar Street and her sensations

leaving it, and—

“I shall never outgrow Chopin,” she said confusedly changing the subject. “He is as picturesque as your own Grieg and has more—”

“Mine,” he exclaimed. “Why, I’ve never even seen Norway—except the Norways of Canada. Grieg would think me a lumberjack—at least I hope so. I am a Canadian—ah! am I, though? The idiotic census says third generation or nothing; a Tory idea that would rule out most of us outside Quebec. And as for the West—” He was over the hurdles and away into a Polonaise of his own.

“That’s why we have a census only once every ten years, because the Tories of both parties who make censuses and laws don’t want anything but votes and a lot of labels on anatomical specimens, instead of a real stock-taking of all our resources every year, to see why in spite of unparalleled immigration we are losing thousands of our best worker citizens every month to the high-waged United States—and to square the account we take American newspapers, magazines, popular songs, baseball, slang, skyscrapers—we teach red-coated cadets here to drill with wooden guns, because down East a garrison parade—”

“Dear me, you’ve spilled your coffee.”

“Good heavens!” He sponged his trousers. “The rug’s worse though—one of Peppercorn’s isn’t it? Yes, I think your idea of harmonizing races in a new country with music is fine; but the only music that goes at Ottawa is a four-hand sonata composed of an Orange Walk against a procession of St. Jean Baptiste, and for unresolved discord that has Debussy beaten a mile—”

She began to laugh so hard that she half hid her face with a handkerchief.

“Don’t,” he implored. “You look like a veiled lady of the Orient.” Which made her laugh aloud. “Good heavens! I’ve been saying things as ridiculous as that to the Yukon quartette for years, and they never crack a smile. But a new civilization is a sort of comedy, isn’t it? Oh, even Atkins will admit it yet. Clever speech of his; has the Laurier gift of making contrary ideas clap their hands and sing jubilates—leaving the misereres to the opposite party. Lovely coffee! Oh yes, he’ll win in a walk over a mere Tory candidate. That’s why the young Turk Liberals want to put up an Independent Liberal, so as to have a free fight—”

“Oh? Arthur has not spoken of that. Who?”

“Another comedy. Banigan sprung it; wants to nominate me. Now what under the sky-blue chance would an outlaw like me have against a combination of Arthur Atkins, orator, the Peppercorn machine and Ottawa?”

“Splendid!” she exclaimed. “Do take it?”

He rose and looked down at her in astonishment. “Look,” he said soberly, “so many people here try to bamboozle me—don’t you begin. I’ve even been offered job printing and a bunch of new type by a big firm—because they think a few invoices would muzzle *The Square Deal*—because they can’t buy a rag that isn’t worth a copper if I quit, and can’t buy the editor because he hasn’t got savvy enough to set a price. Now *you’re* after me!”

“Yes!” She rose and faced him earnestly. “I asked you here—because I wanted to spend what money I have—on the man that first kept an attack upon my father out of print because of me; enough to make your paper a real power—and to help you get into it music, art, poetry—don’t you see, you can’t go on being just a muckraker, as you are called—”

“As Arthur Atkins calls me, you mean?”

“Yes. He did say it; but not against you. No, my friend, he would be glad to help you—”

“Glad—to help—me? Good Santa Cecilia!” He laughed. “The Peppercorn machine can’t help me.”

“But Arthur is not the machine!”

“My dear Miss Macklem, the machine is just like society—put to get everybody. It’s the old East trying to chloroform the West. This town has lost its old freedom. Women here who used to be happy over their own washtubs are now croaking about ‘the pace that kills’, and fagged nerves, and hair so dry that they have to get it shampoo’d and Marcel-waved, and can’t wait for summer to come to go off to the hot springs at Banff—all that bunk! Excuse me—I don’t mean you. You’re too sensible. But even Henry Hooper might have caved in to a combination of political machine and organized society. Thanks awfully for a splendid evening—even if I have been a perfect Rube. Good-bye!” His handshake drove a ring into her fingers.

The rumour spread that Hansen would take the nomination. It came to a climax at the Frontier House where the Yukon quartette and Banigan, assembled to celebrate the anniversary of their return to civilization, solemnly drank to his health and his success.

“If you don’t take it, Hansen,” said Banigan, “you’ll be on the junk-heap. Peppercorn says he’s out to tack the hide of the *Dare Squeal* to its own shack.”

“*The Square Deal* won’t have a hide left,” said Hansen. “I’ll have to sell the shack to pay my deposit as a candidate.”

“Put ’er there,” roared Hogan over a standup collar. “I been shiverin’ in me boots, boys, that Ole ud ’bolish either civilization er the bar, and dingbusted if I c’d see how he’d do one ’thout the other. Nuther lil drink, boys?”

“Take a tip from the genooine rail-birds, Ole,” said Brant impressively tweaking Hansen’s lapel, “this here game’v tackin’ skunk hides to the fence is too tedious.”

“Aint enough fences to go round,” said Townsend.

In the midst of the exhortations Jean Dubuc drove his new model car in front of the bleary remnant of huskie dogs that still boarded at the Frontier House. Jean was enormously excited.

“Seex Scotch and sodas,” he bawled at the barkeep. “Boys, de water wagon is go on—wit’ Ole Hansen, but wit’ out Jean Dubuc. I am fall off. De reason? Ah! Dere is none. Only—a woman. When I say las’ night, ‘By gar! Helen Thurston if you marry Jean Dubuc dere will be t’ree races in one family, Scotch, French and Cree, she say, ‘No, Jean Dubuc, money mus’ not marry money—an’ dat is de las’ word. ‘By gar’, I say to her—‘Gif Hansen de money and marry me, on de water-wagon?’ She say, ‘I do not marry a man to reform his morals, but for love, which you do not comprende. She lau—gh!’” woodpeckering the bar with his heavy fist. “Lau-ugh—ha-ha-ha—Ha! Ole Hansen, if it was any man smaller dan you, I would tie heem in a diamon’ hitch. To you I say—Success! But mon Dieu! bury dat t’ing you call a paper and be—de Independent Liberal candidate for de Legislature! Drink boys—drink!”

At the end of which solemnizing rite of silence, Jean struck up a verse of *O Canada*, to which Hansen sang the chorus—a duet in French; followed by the entire party singing lustily, “Hail! hail! the gang’s all here.”

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE PRISONER.

Hansen accepted the nomination. His speech made him feel like a fool as he delivered it. He had been stampeded into accepting. The “boys” were openly disappointed. The *Furpost* printed the speech verbatim, and the editor pointed out what a “horrible hash” it was. Peppercorn was delighted. Hansen was humiliated. But he realized the grip of public opinion and got out a special issue of his paper in which he printed the speech he had intended to make. And when he read this, Peppercorn was not so sure about Atkins “winning in a walk.”

Late one night about the time the ice began to move, Hansen was running some extras of his paper which he intended to distribute by hand like dodgers, when three unvirtuous-looking faces appeared at his windows.

“Come in if you want to see me,” he said gruffly. They came in and began to laugh. Each picked up a copy of the paper with a dumb and devastating volley of corrosive laughter. “What’s the big joke?” And they laughed again. He went at them roughly to quit acting like drunken idiots or be thrown out. “Guess this aint no noospaper office boys,” said one more glib than the others. “This here’s only a dive where a guy prints dodgers.”

The editor hurled them out. In front of the shack they made a bluff at self defense. They expected him to handle them roughly—for he had lost his temper—and he did. They worried him like three wolves and he went at them like a mad bear. They used insulting language about his not being able to back up the charges he had made in his paper. The result was that he tossed each of them over his head, broke one man’s collarbone, put another’s arm out of joint, and gave the third a rather disorganized head.

Next morning in a downpour of rain he was arrested on a charge of assault and battery, calmly walked to the police station and received a sentence of one month—as he refused any offers to pay a fine—in the common jail, which in those

days was Fort Saskatchewan. And Peppercorn, when he paid his three henchmen secretly in their east side boarding house, paid them double what he had agreed, because Hansen had done such a thoroughly good job.

“Guess a month behind the bars’ll put a crimp in his election programme, but we’ll have to keep this out o’ the papers,” he said offhandedly to Atkins who could do nothing more than express his regret at such an event. Dora, mightily indignant, wanted an investigation. Atkins confessed himself helpless; there was no necessary stigma to being in jail for such an offence. Peppercorn at once wrote to Rev. Bo Brown at Loon Lake,—much worried that for days he got no reply. Helen Thurston betrayed not the slightest emotional interest in the matter, except to tell her mother who, since she had come to live in the new grand house, had begun to buy splendid gowns and to look extremely handsome—much thanks to Helen’s suggestions. Mrs. Thurston had not gone to Europe with the rest of the family and she was sometimes rather haughty over what she had missed, with sudden gusts of romantic impatience when she scornfully criticized the new house because it was not a bit like a chateau as she had wanted it to be, and the roof was already leaking.

“I’ll sell the house,” she said in reply to Helen’s remarks about Hansen being in jail. “It is in my name. I’ll die in a chateau—or else in a tepee,” she laughed.

“Funny,” said Helen oddly. “You sometimes remind me of old Jane Thunder down at Loon Lake. She chatters in what little French she knows about a chateau—and she lives in a shack in the winter. Well mother, since you’re not interested in Mr. Hansen being in jail, I am. I’m going to Loon Lake. Good-bye.”

In any of his campaign speeches through black mud and heavy rain Atkins made no allusion to Hansen, his real opponent by nomination. Helen read one of the speeches on a train to Loon Lake where she found Rev. John—his daughters both east at ladies’ college—in distraction over the rain and the sudden behaviour of his Cree teacher, Miss Barlow, who in all the two years she had been at the mission school had never shown quite such a contrary lot of emotions.

“Ach!” he said to Helen, glad to see her, “I thoct she was dane wi’ her daftness when she discovered a wee bit wrang wi’ Brown’s dealins ower Peppercorn. She tellit him then she’d no marry him if he was lined wi’ morality and encased wi’ repentance—but she didna mean it just word for word—I kened a’ that. But she moppit the flure wi’ his repentant heed, made a complete conquest—sae dear tae a wummon—and the marritch was a’ dated for this day week—and noo she’s in a kettle o’ fesh ower that disturber Hansen that’s in the common jail. Ah weel, I’m glad ye’ve got shut o’ him, Helen. But—but why dinna ye betray some emotion?”

“Please go on, John,” she said quietly. “What has Mr. Hansen to do with Miss Barlow?”

“Do wi’ him? Och! yin o’ her pupils in Ontario—lang ago. Ay, Brown kenn’d him there. Poor Brown’s daft wi’ the business. She says she’ll no marry him till Hansen’s released; she’ll gang tae Edmonton hersel’ if he winna—see the Lieutenant-Governor—or gang clean tae Ottawa tae see Laurier—till Brown’s that daft wi’ it all he disna ken that he’s not green. Ach! I’ve washit my hands o’ the whole mess time and again. But losh! the wummon’s sic a godsend tae me at the school and I’m sae glad she’ll be marryin’ Brown and stayin’ at Loon Lake; and she loes him madly noo that she’s conquered him awa’ frae Peppercorn, and he’s convinced her that in a’ his success as a missionary she has him like putty under her thumb—and Brown says that if she marries him noo he’ll gang tae Edmonton wi’ her the next day about Hansen; but if she disna, he canna hae the courage tae face Peppercorn. Ach! what can a sane man mak oot o’ sic a mental mess? Helen—dae summat. Ay! by dang, here’s anither swishin’ rain; the reever’s in a flood and my scow ready tae come doon frae Thurston’s, and I’m clane oot o’ tobacco and a’—”

Helen left him to solace himself in his revised Cree hymnbook while she went to find the other people. She came back in an hour to say,

“Well John she called me a meddler at first; said I was a snooping spy or worse. Poor dear! She promises to marry Mr. Brown as soon as ever she can and would do it in five minutes—if word could be got to Mr. Hansen.”

“Ay? What word does she want?”

“Why, announcement of her marriage; says she doesn’t care a button for all the rest of the world not knowing but—”

“But wha’s tae deeleever the message?”

“Helen Thurston. She’s going on the afternoon train to Fort Saskatchewan, on to Edmonton.”

He bit the tips of his red whiskers and gazed at her hard. “Helen, y’re a verra odd specimen. Ye’re a stoic frae bein’ a Cree on y’r mither’s side, a fatalist frae bein’ a mixture o’ the Cree wi’ the predestinating Scottish, and y’re sometimes a bit French—and y’re a meestic on top o’ it a’. But if ye’re a’ that—why dae ye bother about this mess?”

“Oh because I’m a silly woman, I guess; moved by the spirit—like a Quaker maybe.”

He kissed her and hummed a hymn.

The letter which Helen had from Miss Barlow was in a cheap, badly gummed envelope that began to open before she came to a village twenty miles from Fort Saskatchewan where the train stopped—and did not start again. She finished opening the envelope, whose contents she longed wildly to read, but did not.

“Bad washout,” said the brakeman. “Guess you folks’ll have to bunk up at the village for a while.”

The rain came in long ropes across the hills. Helen tucked her letter safe, bought a cayuse from a half-breed and galloped away, wading through swollen creeks, till at dark she got to Fort Saskatchewan. She rode to the post-office in a thunderstorm, wrote a swift note which she slipped into the envelope, gummed it with mucilage, stamped it special delivery, asked the clerk—whom she knew—to postmark it and give it back; quite against the law as she knew—but away she went in the rain to the jail where she asked to see the Inspector of Mounted Police, an old friend of her father, and requested as a favour to herself to have the letter delivered at once. “Special delivery, you see, Major; the stamp is on,” she smiled. “Yes, I hope you have Mr. Hansen in the strong room; he is a powerful man.”

Helen knew the room, heavily barred, from which a “wendigo” half-breed had escaped to the hills by tunneling. In such a storm no one could see her, as she fumbled along the wall. Soaked with water from the eaves, she no longer cared for clothes or wet, as she swiftly pulled a heap of stones from what had once been a man-hole under the wall. Wet as a drowned woman, she mounted her cayuse and clattered away twenty miles to the city whose lights were smothered in rain. The river was bloating. A warm wind swept down from the Rockies. She had never seen the Saskatchewan rise so quickly; from a cloud-burst in the mountains, somebody had said. At the big house on the crag, with just a few words to her mother in bed and a mere greeting to her sister Alice Brady down from Resolution, she changed her clothes to a Cree outfit, slipped on an oilskin and went out to the cliff.

Some bibulous party was still glowing at Jean Dubuc’s house. The river crawling and back-swirling at the base of the cliff, above its high-water mark of a generation, was the only sound; a sullen sweep of superhuman energy. Whence came that mighty river? Out of the Rockies, some said; from a glacier perhaps. Half her life Helen had seen this Big-Swift-Running, Kechesaskatchewan, in all its marvellous tempers and tumults, its autumn blues, its winter ice-ways for the dog-teams, its summer floods: never like this. In that flood her life could soon be as little and blind as one of those dots of logs like huge beetles on the broad shining sea that swept down to the end of all things, wherever that was. The big river, the big lake, another river—then the salt sea—so he had told her. Idly, as a pagan sometimes, when her education told her better, she had fancied such a river pouring itself out over the edge of the earth into infinity; which would be a dreadful drop for any drowned person. Helen could swim; but she did not care for the logs that bumped and thudded so; much more comfortable and sublime to lie on her back and float away down, sinking gradually to sleep. She had rather just go out to the Power that would take her, leaving behind what she could not have—the love that for years had made her wear such strange masks among all the music and gowns and flowers and dances and chatter.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### BIG-SWIFT-RUNNING.

Hansen had settled down to take his confinement stoically. All he asked for was a pad of paper; he had a pencil—and his trail knife. The police had not searched him; he knew them all. He frankly told a guard inside the palisades that he supposed his nomination was void, even though he would be out before the election; anyhow the electors would not vote for a jail-bird.

“And you jolly well intend that I shan’t break out,” he laughed when he saw the room from which a demented half-breed had escaped. A heavy plank floor had been laid since. “Anyhow it’s raining too hard to live out of doors.”

The special letter was a complete break in the monotony of writing. The prisoner made such a noise when he opened it that a guard went.

“Oh nothing, Verne. Just having a little exercise”—hiding the letter in his hip pocket. “Maybe it was thunder you heard.

Blinking bad storm!” He smiled as another white flash came and the hills shook.

“Don’t pull the house down,” said the guard.

“I know—the last man who did that in this room—got shot in Athabasca,” said Hansen queerly. “That’s no fun.” He was glad when the guard turned the key, and he could read Helen’s cleverly-conveyed note, which he had just found when the guard came.

“John Lightning, half-breed, got out of that room by a tunnel. They never filled it in except with stones outside. If you can reach the city before dawn you’ll find John’s scow—unloaded because of flood. Bad washout on track; sloughs, creeks, muskegs, rivers.

P.S. Those men whom you beat up were paid by Peppercorn to get you into jail so as to stop your election—and to get her married to Brown before you can get out. Are you going to let her—marry Brown—without being there? Nummaweya!”

“Numma—weya!” he repeated. “Nummaweya!” Then, as the comedy struck him again and again—that those thugs were not poor devils for pity but hirelings of Peppercorn—he laughed like one in epileptic hysteria. “Two women to get me out. Then I’m going!” That postscript! What—all did she mean, except that he was a fool not to have even known that Sadie was at Loon Lake? Had Helen known? The window-bars were double wrought-iron grouted deep into heavy stone. He bent one of them. No, the floor would be easier. “Hope the storm hangs!” as he knelt with a candle. “Hmh! Pine; two inches; long wire nails; shrunk.” He took out his trail-knife which he always kept on edge. He found a joint and blew out the candle. The knife was soon hot. Splinters and shavings. A finger hole; then two fingers; a hand—both hands blistered from whittling. Another flash and he braced himself for thunder that came like the end of a world. Between flashes he drew up on the plank. At the next crash he gave a lunge. The plank yielded a little and sprung back. Another avalanche of thunder, and it began to come—cracking, bending, splintering, as the long nails drew from the sleepers. With a final scrunch of his teeth, shutting his eyes, in the midst of a thunderbolt he thrust one foot in the shallow tunnel and shouldered up the plank from end to end. Slipping himself down edgewise into the tunnel, he crawled under the sleepers to the wall, groping for the stones at the exit.

“Good!” he chuckled as he felt rain on his hand. “The stones are gone.”

He crawled out into the glorious rain and ran to the river, along the bank trail, up to the long bridge. It was now nearly eleven. It would take four hours counting ties to reach the city. He groped till he found an old handcar side-tracked at the bridge and heaved it to the rails. And as the thing began its skirling rhythmic song on the steel, he laughed—at the comedy of it all.

Helen slept on a porch overhanging the river. She woke at the first creep of dawn in a misting rain. The river was everything—the day, the sky, the world, and the measure of time. Scribbling a note for Alice to read to her mother, taking a bite of breakfast she went to the crag and gazed down the moving flood. One figure moved far down the edge like an enormous heron. He—had escaped!

Without waiting for thoughts she hurried to the silent, genteel street, on into the town—to the bank above the docks. The man was busy at the scow whose moor-lines were as tight as fiddlestrings. Yonder somebody’s shack was drifting out below the bridge; others had gone in the night. People from the lower flats had moved to the heights. The mills were flooded and the booms were all burst. The ferry cable was under water—snapped; and the ferry was gone.

“She’s at least ten miles current, or twelve,” he said to himself as he cogged the sweep-sockets with copper wire. “If I land at all, I’ll be at Loon Lake by dark.”

It was so easy just to cut the rope. Once that was done, his work for twelve hours would be a run between the bow and the stern sweep, with maybe a drive into the tops of low poplars too slight to carry his weight, many of them crushed under water, or a rambunk into the point of an island, wrecking the scow. Hansen had calculated all the contingencies.

“You’re a darn good scow!” he said aloud. “They built you well, and you’ll hit more water in one hour—anyhow five minutes—than any scow that ever went down this river.”

Some bird of dawn whistled—or called. He startled and turned.

“Mr. Hansen—I will go with you?”

“Oh no,” he laughed. “You’ve done enough already. I’ll wake up in a minute. No—” but she was already aboard. “Now

this is clean crazy. You don't want to commit suicide?" He found himself talking as though she were a Cree woman.

"Yes, yes—that will be easy—if you do."

"Yes, but I don't intend to. This scow has to go through. Anyhow—oh great Scott, you can't swing a sweep?"

"I have done so many a time on these scows. I know the river better than you do. I am your—pilot? Please cut the rope—captain?"

He looked at her. "Sesaepe, if you intended to go down the river without a craft, you never meant to do it in a civilized skirt. You've got Indian things under that. There's no society editor going on this scow." He turned to inspect the aft sweep socket. "You'll take the bow sweep, Sis." She nodded. As she set herself to the sweep he noted the muscles of her arms, the long curve of her back, the set of her shoulders. "You're a brick," he muttered. "And an enigma. Ready, Sis?" Swiftly he cut the ropes.

The sky drama of that day changed every few minutes. The clouds were as restless as the river. The scow shot away in a spindrift. A mile among the logs in mid-stream a fog swept down the canyon of the river. The wind cracked a whip and the sun squinted, then glared cynically upon two people and a scow miles down the labyrinth of islands, elbows, cut-banks and ice-ledges and divergent channels sometimes four abreast. The scow broadside caught more water than the logs and passed them. At times the man rushed from the stern sweep and doubled with the woman on the bow. He had three times her strength; and she had the strength of ecstasy, of fatalism, of knowing that whatever might happen, his purpose was right—if anything could be right. He spoke to her. She said nothing. She understood; and with stoical, grim energy she worked the long, croaking metre of the sweep, when an island behind seemed next to the one before; when to broadside the scow larboard one minute, starboard the next, meant to forget heaven and the river and the shifting skies, and remember only breath and muscle and heat, and thank God for the wind. He barked his orders. She obeyed. To her he became not merely the captain of the scow, but the lord of a great ship on a river of Fate.

Hour by hour scarp-side villages and farmhouses raced past, unseen. Half-swamped islands shot past the scow and she shut her eyes, doing nothing but obey his word; he knew; her knowledge, her purpose, her life was nothing; his was all. Wherever the smash might come or the landing be made, it was his work, and she was his helper. In the agony of endurance she was happy.

The sand-bars were all far below; rapids all combed out into one, hundreds of miles long; a conflict of many rivers fighting to re-occupy the old prehistoric canyon; logs, brush, treetops, roofs of houses, wreck of some old steamer—as idle as and trivial as dead flies. Two head-on drives into islands racked the scow; heaven knew if she would ship a hold of water before some landing which might be miles from Loon Lake. "My fault!" she said, more with a smile than a voice. At a cut-bank elbow, in spite of the sweeps the scow rampaged into a jam that was heaping up at the north bank. Helen's sweep shot from its socket, snapping the copper wire, and as the logs came crashing into the scow he decked his own sweep and went overboard for the other. She would have gone with him, but he ordered her back, and she re-twisted the double wire. With cyclonic energy they used the sweeps to shove a path through the jam that came like ice-floes round the cut-bank. The scow began to move.

"She's still flood-proof, Sesaepe," he smiled. "Here's an open run of a few miles. Thank heaven!"

Amid long acres of sun-swept, scurrying débrisage he called her to rest; made a couch of her cast-off clothes and his; but she stood to her sweep and smiled, when her clothes clung to her skin and his were drenched with sweat. The time of day was a mere blur of the clouds.

"Starboard!" he shouted as an island came racing ahead; and her long sweep chimed with his; and they looked ahead to catch the gleam of some roof that might be a shack on the Loon Lake crag.

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Towards the end of the evening red-coated Sergeant Hall of Loon Lake drove his two-horse buckboard across the sloughs, wishing he had a bottle of Irish whisky for such a mess of water. When he got to the landing he forgot whisky.

"For the love of St. Michael—what's this?" Crees gabbled like blackbirds as they carried up from below an unconscious woman whom they knew by her Cree name Sesaepe. Following came a sweat-drenched tall man with a bundle of clothes and the dazed grin of a prize-fighter. There was little to say, except for the Sergeant to crack an order to a young Cree to ride like Billy-be-damned to the Oblates Mission and get a half-pint of whisky for John Farquharson.

He told Hansen to sit on the slats of the buckboard. They put the woman into his arms. The Sergeant mounted the seat and drove slowly over the hills, crashing through the edges of poplar bluffs to keep out of the sloughs.

. . . . When Sesaepe awoke, she smelled whisky. She was abed in Farquharson's store—crowded with hunters and their women whom big John ordered out with a volley of Cree, as he turned up the lamp.

“Is he—somewhere here? What happened—the scow?” she asked.

“He's a' richt,” said big John tenderly stroking her head. “What o' yersel? Whisht, noo!”

Helen sat up. A nurse brought her some gruel.

“John,” she said as he sat by the bed, “will the wedding be to-morrow?”

“I dinna ken that. If the sun shines, maybe.”

She touched the blisters on her hands while big John made wry, tender grimaces and got her some Cree herb liniment.

“But the wedding can't be, John. He came to stop it; to marry her. He never would have dared that voyage! I could tell from his eyes. I know—the dead man willed first his marriage to the woman he loved; then the other came and he thought it was fate that he should marry her!”

“Whsht!” John recollected her words to Hansen after the Dance. Her cheeks were flushed; her eyes glistened. With fatigue and whisky she seemed half delirious. He told her briefly what he had seen happen.

“Losh, but it was a scene wi' the three o' them when he met the twa. She gaspit tae see him, leaped upon his neck and he—kissit her I ken, but that disna matter; for he ca'd himself a jail-breaker, but so help him Jupiter, he wad hae the whole truth and naething else, in default o' which he forbade the wedding. Ay,” as he lighted his pipe, thanking heaven for Hansen's tobacco pouch, “and he got it frae her. It took him best of an hour t' crack a smile; and then he grinnit. Noo, Helen,” as he glimmed the lamp, “slip awa' t' sleep.”

Hansen met him in the hall. “How is—Sesaepe?” John told him—discreetly; enough to keep Hansen awake till dawn.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### LOVE ON HORSEBACK.

When Helen awoke the crudely-coloured fabrics on the store shelves blinked in the joy of the risen sun. Not for months had big John tolled the mission bell so long and so merrily. It seemed to clang to the whole world. Stiff from her strange voyage on the scow, Helen could scarcely raise her arms to brush her long hair. On the floor above, a scamper of moccasins. A Cree hymn sounded through the hallway in a chorus to a drony little organ; “God moves in a mysterious way,” translated by Rev. John to fit an old kirk tune. A woman's piquant voice sang above the jubilant jabber of little Crees; big John with a blithering bang; and after he had found the drift of so many syllables Cree to one of English, Hansen began to dingdong it too. First up at the mission, he heard from the nurse that Helen was still asleep.

During breakfast John slipped away leaving Miss Barlow and Hansen to mind the young Crees. He came back with the look of one sent from the dead.

“She's slippit awa'!” he whispered to Hansen who rose at once and followed him out. “Ay, and her beed is still warm!”—and here in the big yard was a caucus of Crees on ponies, and them he questioned as fast as a blackbird squeaks.

“Nummaweya, Oogamou!” the horsemen said.

“Sesaepe!” he bawled to the echo. “Sesaepe!” He looked towards the river. “Ah weel, she's maybe gallivantin' ower the hills. Whisht Hansen!”

“Here lend me that buckskin!” Hansen grabbed a lariat from a long-haired Cree, swung to the pony and galloped.

“Wehtigo!” shouted the Crees. “Wahayo!” Whips and moccasins, they shot after him—the crazy man, whom soon they followed as a leader, because he turned in the saddle and shot lightnings at them, shouting “Saskatch! Saskatch! Ispahan

Sesaepe!”

“And he is fooled this time,” said the horseless hunter, as the juvenile Crees mobbed out from breakfast with Miss Barlow; and here came Rev. Brown piking hotfoot from his mission church, and the redcoat Sergeant on his broncho, with the lame telegraph operator; presently other cayuses, all into the big mission yard as the news of the chase spread over the hills. “We know where she is, but how should he?” repeated Tom Thunder, who had swapped three fat steers for that buckskin, and heaven knew if the “Wendigo” would not fetch him back a blown corpse.

“Tae the reever!” shouted Rev. John, not knowing what else to say; and the pack took chase. “Ay, they’re a’ wendigos the noo! Sic a man!”

From the flap of a smoke-curling tepee Helen saw the cayuses scamper down the coulees and up again to the crests towards the river, scaring the cattle on the hills, beating up prairie hens, while all the mission dogs barked in a wondering chorus. She held tight the flap and smiled, watching one pack of riders meet the other and swing back again, by another trail, in among the shacks and the tepees. She dropped the flap; heard the hoofs thunder past and slacken to a walk as the leader’s big voice bellowed, “Sesaepe! Sesaepe!” among the tepees.

“Who calls—Sesaepe?” murmured a dry old shard in the blankets. “Who’s that?” speaking in Cree.

“Let him call, Jane,” said Helen. “Let him ride! Let him seek whom he is after—fearing to find her!”

“The bull moose calls so when ’tis time in the moon of first leaves,” muttered old Jane. “Some tea, Sesaepe! Tea!”

Helen squatted by the fire and brewed some tea. With much effort the skinny old nonagenarian rose on one elbow to drink without teeth, her one solacing beverage.

“It was so in the olden days—when *he* came into this valley,” went on Jane as her bony talons clutched at her deerskin beaded bag as though to open it. “Nummaweya!” she gasped as Helen moved to open the bag. “No—not yet!”

Helen quickly rummaged among Tom Thunder’s kit to find a pair of fringed blanket trousers. Slipping off her buckskin skirt and petticoats, she put them on, went to the flap and waved a white handkerchief. A young Cree came galloping away from the pack that swung into a coulee.

“Let me have your pony, Ponoka—and your hat. Rub some ochre—paint or something—a little dirt won’t matter—on my face. My hands, see, are as brown as yours”—swiftly pigtailing her hair while he grinned obediently. “Stay with Jane.”

She mounted the pony and galloped away to the pack, now halted in a coulee with the Wendigo facing them on his buckskin.

“Do any of you men know—where Sesaepe is?” he demanded. “Some of you may be fooling. You all look like a blur of masks to me.”

“Nummaweya, Oogamou!” they solemnly lied.

“Here’s one coming—do you know?” twitching his buckskin across to the newcomer who instantly turned her pony in among the pack and shook her head. “Nummaweya!” came the chorus.

“Ride till we find her! Search every tepee!”

“Sesaepe is not here,” said Ponoka as Hansen came into Thunder’s tepee. He was unheard as for a moment the “Wendigo” bent over the dry old thing in the blankets. “She won’t live long,” he murmured. He picked up a buckskin skirt. “What’s this? Feels familiar—can’t see it. Hers?”

“Nummaweya, Oogamou,” murmured Ponoka.

He went out. The pack had gathered again, like hounds in a hunt. He ordered them into twos and gave them directions to beat up every hill and coulee in all directions. “Who’s this slouchy one? You come with me,” he said to Helen, who saw a queer glare in his eyes. “You’re a half-breed, I guess. Wahayo!” waving both arms over the prairie; and he galloped away, with the whole incorrigible pack once more at his heels; rode like a whirlwind to the river and along the gorge, through miring sloughs and splashing creeks, over the edges of poplar bluffs—and pulled up.

Gazing for a moment at the breadth of the bloated river, “Are you all wendigos?” he said in a low, biting voice. “No, not you,” to the young “half-breed”. “You do what I tell you. The others don’t. None of you care about Sesaepe?” he shouted. “Whether she’s down that flood—or heaven knows where? No, she’s not yours. She’s mine!”

“Sesaepel!” came a jagged murmur. “How-how!”

Over the puffing cayuses came a soft voice from the pack—was it a boy’s?

“Where Sesaepe is not. Kechesaskatchewan knows.” It sounded like a song. “Perhaps the Oogamou Farquharson knows?”

“Back to the Mission!” called Hansen. “Wahayo!”

In a helterskelter of hats, manes and trolloping hoofs the pack galloped back to the Mission hill. Rev. John and the Sergeant met them in the yard.

“Weel—?” “Well nothing,” glowered Hansen, off his pony. “Send these copperskins home—as much use in a hunt as a pack of dead dogs. Thank heaven, I’m not a Cree missionary. I wonder you’re not crazy—crazy! Ha!” He grinned at them all like a madman. “Go and find Sesaepe!” he shouted. “Sesaepe!” till the echoes banged from hill to coulee. “Sesaepe!” startling all the little Crees in the schoolroom where Sadie was vainly trying to teach. “Go home! Saskatch!”

Helen dismounted. “Wahayo!” she said gently to the Crees. “Tom Thunder—take Ponoka’s pony to him. He is at your tepee.”

All Hansen heard was a murmur as the Crees and the cayuses broke into a fan of dotted lines over the hill. Suddenly Rev. John broke into an uproarious chuckle; so did the missionary Brown; so did the young Crees let out of school, and Sadie Barlow at the door. Hansen rubbed his eyes as Helen stood in front of him for a moment and vanished like a flick of light.

He looked at the door where she had gone, as one stands in adoration of a spot where a gorgeous evening has died. A robin on a gable; hoofs on the trails. Then he began to laugh; and he called himself names.

. . . . On receipt of a wire from Fort Saskatchewan, Hansen was arrested by Sergeant Hall on a charge of jail-breaking. As Loon Lake was not head-quartered from the Fort but from Battleford below, the Sergeant, invested with his traditional jurisdiction of both constable and magistrate, sentenced him to three weeks in barracks, where Hansen sent out campaign literature to “the boys” at Edmonton, played poker and sang with the constables; permission for which the Sergeant, liking his prisoner, freely granted. Once a constable made a jest about the wild ride after Sesaepe. “All right, Sam,” laughed Hansen as he played an accordeon, “but stop right there!” remembering confusedly things he had told Helen about self-control—and self-sacrifice. He wanted to tell Sadie, his old teacher, what a wonderful character Helen was. Love was a strange matter. His first impression of Sadie at Loon Lake had been disappointing; she seemed rather less fine, more practical than she used to be. But look what her mothering sort of love had already done to Brown! He wanted to talk to Helen about what to do with her money, beyond what they would need to invest in the paper to make it at least as worth while as what Atkins would do with law. Whether he or Atkins won the election, he would build up a paper to go far beyond any dreams of Dora Macklem. What of her? She was already starting a small conservatory, with young Highstone as teacher of violin; a character transformation accomplished by the power of one universalizing art. She had good reason to be proud of him, and of many other young foreigners whom she had started in music. Besides—she would merge her own success into the more public success of Atkins. The two of them, with Mrs. Macklem happy under their roof, would perhaps regard with tolerance the marriage of Helen and himself; their efforts to make her money effective in building up a paper that would help at least a little to conserve true Canadianism in one small part of the country. Perhaps Helen also would want a chateau. Well, she could have one—if not too big; with enough extra rooms when needed, in time to come. But not a dollar of her money should be squandered, except on travel.

“By dad! but you’re the chirpy prisoner!” said the Sergeant. “Maybe when ye read this letter ye’ll dance the Highland fling.”

“Thanks, Sergeant.” The letter was from Helen:

“Dear Olaf:

My father is back from Europe. He has spent a fortune on the girls, two of whom have received offers of marriage from penniless counts, and he is sick of trying to pay tips as lavishly as the Americans. Mother determines to sell the house and build a Louis XIV. chateau. As a result of your campaign against the land-location gamble father finds himself much less wealthy than he expected to be. Peppercorn has cut into his business. I told him that he could keep my dowry—that I had you instead. He hugged me like a bear. So, it’s marriage, without much money, after all.”

“Sergeant,” chuckled Hansen suddenly, “I think we’ll make it a bungalow. Sorry I can’t join the force; but a lady wants me.” . . . .

“Weel” said Rev. John to Brown a few days later, “yon Hansen’s oot o’ the pen to-morra. Losh, he’s already sent word by courier to a’ the Crees frae here to blazes that the Thirst Dance this year is t’ begin on Dominion Day at sundown—which day there will be twa weddings.”

Brown confessed that for years he had been afraid of Hansen marrying Sadie Barlow.

John gave him a crizzly smile. “Since ye came here, had ye nae fear—o’ a man about the size o’ mysel’?”

“With two daughters at a ladies’ college? Oh, no, John.”

Lighting his pipe upside down—”Weel, it micht hae been mair o’ a paradox gin I’d marryit Helen—or auld Jane Thunder.”

“Poor old mummy!” said Brown. “She had her romance with a white man long ago.”

“Wha was that man—ye’re sae well informed?”

“Some French voyageur of noble descent in the old North-West Fur Company, when the French gave the Scotch a run for the red man’s beaverskins up this valley. Laflamme was his name. I got that from the Oblates here. They got it from Heloise Marechal, nee Laflamme—by the way she’s due back here any day now.”

“Ay,” smoked John, “ye’re a pairfect museum for historical and somewhat irrelevant information.”

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### TWO WEDDINGS.

Pagan simplicity in spirit and complexity in details characterized all the preparations for the wedding of Hansen and Helen. Her travelling trousseau would be simple; her bridal robe was being contrived with luxurious care by squaws in Jane Thunder’s tepee where casual gleams of beauty from the fabrics helped to illumine the old shard’s fading vision. Hansen lived in a tepee along the creek. To the toll of the Mission bell Sadie taught her little Crees right up to the end, happy in a jumbled, uplifting world. After marriage, for a while at least, she would still be a teacher. At Hansen’s suggestion the two missionaries had applied for an amalgamation of the two churches and schools.

“But that’s a’ the church union I’ll countenance, Hansen,” said John who in his “ain wee kirk” had a chapel organ played by Sadie. “Ay, the kirk is as idiomatic as Westminster Abbey or St. Peter’s.”

“Right, John. There are kirks even in Montreal, where a Methodist or a Baptist parson would be as congenial as John Knox in one of Mary Stuart’s ballrooms. But the prairie church exists for the prairie people. These Crees don’t know predestination from salvation by grace and you can’t teach them. They know only God and nature.”

“Oh ay, but naebody weel informit swears by Calvin, except—” He fozzled his whiskers, not feeling quite sure that he should discard Calvin.

At first Hansen went with the Crees to gather the spruce and poplar poles and boughs for the great Dance tabernacle, solemnly ported on trains of ponies to the campus. But he soon found that he was not wanted, and went to his tepee.

“What do you think, John—the old chief insists that I shall wear a Prince Albert coat and carry a silk hat, as the acme of statesmanship in clothes. But a wedding is not a funeral. Let the bride wear the glory.” He launched into a rhapsody about the complex races that would attend the weddings. He swiftly realized that he was talking like an amateur ethnologist. John’s pride was in being himself a simple Selkirk Scot.

“I hae mickle regard for the French, Hansen; especially them that parade their aristoc—racy! There’s a lot o’ rot writ about auld families in Quebec. That Laflamme wummon has poor Brown daft wi’ it. Yin o’ may best moose-hunters is François Laflamme. ’Tis an auld name—like Farquharson.”

“Yes,” said Hansen soberly, “I’m glad Helen’s mother is a plain French peasant type of half-breed—though I’ve seen

her but once and only for a moment. I'd hate to think she was a mere relique of a decadent old family that made bleeding peasants a prelude to a bloody Revolution."

Then he whistled *Revive us Again*.

When the day of the Dance came the fat cattle gleamed like huge flowers on the hills, and the plateau beyond the Mission broke into a camp of smoke-brown tepees. Hansen had arranged that the two weddings should take place on an open stage near the big tabernacle of the Dance; the ceremonies to be finished before the tomtoms should strike up at sundown.

"Well Ole," said Dave Brady from Resolution, "it may not be a double hangin', but believe me, the marriage noose is a heap harder t' dodge than the hangman's knot—and it's jist as effective."

Dave had come down with the Boyles, the Yukonners, Dubuc, the Thurstons and Ed Banigan, M.A., who conveyed personal greetings from Dora Macklem and Atkins. Before the ceremony Hansen distributed oodles of tobacco which he had wired Banigan to bring, along with cash prizes for horse races that occupied most of the afternoon in slambang helterskelters over the main trail and back. He and Brown organized a Jericho cycle of sports, chief among which was a series of wrestling bouts in which he himself challenged any two Crees, half-breeds or combinations, and slung them two at a time beam over end with chuckling glee. But he encountered one magnificent young French half-breed, a nephew of Tom Thunder, who was such a fusion of ox strength and wildcat agility that it took Hansen ten minutes to put him under.

"My Christian name is François Laflamme," admitted the hunter. "Oh?" smiled Hansen. "Good!"

Jean Dubuc sang *En roulant ma boule* with the Yukon quartette in the chorus. Crowds began to come.

The picture was magnificent enough to have been painted by a Sorolla; the two newly-married couples on either side of Rev. John on a dais in front of the big lodge of poles, green boughs and canvas; the town contingent in front of the dais; a concourse of squatted squaws in all colours among the prairie flowers with their papooses; and behind them a great broken wheel of decorated cayuses surmounted by Cree and half-breed hunters in buckskin, beads and feathers.

Sadie was in conventional white and Brown in clerical black. Just what Helen wore nobody was quite able to describe; a spangling iridescence in which pagan craft of voluptuous detail in colour, fabric and lustre was blended with Grecian fluency of line. She was as beautiful as a sunset; when the tall man beside her was as plain a trailsman as ever delighted the soul of Dave Brady. Tom Thurston, wearing his European togs, was glad to have done with his part of the ceremony and to get back to the girls and Mrs. Thurston who had been in Jane Thunder's tepee to see the finery in such cynical contrast to the dry old Cree woman in the blankets, and there she had met a Frenchwoman to whom she talked about *chateaux*.

The Frenchwoman was Heloise Marechal who had come for the wedding but had found something far more urgent. Now she was sitting by withered old Jane whose spark of life, so bafflingly feeble for weeks, was almost extinct.

"Jane," she said earnestly in French, "when the voyageurs first came up the river in the York boats—what did the gallant captain look like?"

Narrow slits of eyes opened in the wrinkly leathern face which in youth had been beautiful. Skinny talons of fingers clutched at her beaded deerskin bag—and stopped. Heloise opened the bag. From a rubble of trinkets as miscellaneous as the contents of a boy's pocket, she drew forth a gold locket and snapped it open. The face she saw in the faded little daguerrotype was the face that perhaps the spirit of Jane Thunder was seeing—away from her body. Nobody could ever know when she was quite dead. Perhaps she would scarcely die till after the weddings. . . .

When Heloise came to the Dance campus Hansen had just stepped down for a moment from the wedding dais. Amid a grand silence he stood for a moment gazing at some bones. Heloise had heard of Hansen's awkward speech at the nomination and was curious to hear him now. In Quebec she had heard her own husband's flamboyant Nationalist orations to habitants, and on the prairies some of Atkins' passionately Imperialistic and Liberalizing speeches translated over the heads of the polyglot electors of Alberta—when both of them seemed to be trying to rival Laurier in mere eloquence. The blunt words of Hansen fell like bars of big crude music over the most heterogeneous crowd she had ever seen—for the Dance wedding had swept into itself also a motley assemblage of Galicians, Mennonites, Doukhobors, Russians, Scandinavians, French. He said nothing when he began, about Mrs. Brown, whose health he was to propose. He stepped on the stage with a large white bone which he held up.

"Moostoos!" he shouted; and in a few Cree words he sketched a picture of the days when the prairies were a black

sea of rolling buffaloes. "I see yonder old John Kanaskasis who with bow and arrow shot twenty in a day. I see half-breeds whose skill, strength and courage was as great as his; young men who were babies when the last moostoos went; youths who never saw a buffalo, and babies to whom their mothers sing songs and tell legends about Moostoos, as under the midnight sun I have heard the Yellow-Knives sing and talk of the muskox.

"Sing me the songs of a people and I care not who make its laws' said somebody. All of us here were cradled in songs"—here he broke into English. "The ancient Hebrews in Babylon asked, 'O Lord, how can we sing thy songs so holy, far from fatherland?' My friend Jean Dubuc sang to us a while ago 'En roulant ma boule' and 'A la claire fontaine'—songs of old Quebec whose greatest citizen is Wilfrid Laurier. In this crowd a thousand songs of old Europe could be sung which we all could understand. But back in old Ontario, which to Europe is an infant, we had songs and dances as fine as those of Scandinavia that I learned of my mother. And it was in an Ontario saw-mill village that I first heard the lady whose health I am to propose, sing Scotch and Irish and English and old American songs. She could go into any land on earth and teach its children by the power of song, as long ago she taught *Kemo-Kimo* to little negroes. May the rest of her life be one grand song"—this in French. "May we all across the great divides of Canada—the Restigouche, the Ottawa, Algoma, the Rockies, the water-shed of the Athabasca and the Mackenzie—learn and practice her art of discovering the best that is in the conglomerate we call Ourselves. What country so vast has so few people? What people so few has so many tongues—as many as those of the United States which has twelve times our population? With as many dialects of English alone as we have languages of the red man, we have as root languages in people and parliament the speech of the British cottager and of the French peasant, of London and of Paris. Thanks to the great Northwest Fur Company, traders on these British prairies now speak French as well as Cree as a common language." Again in English—"Thanks also to a belief that King William of Orange was a devil in his day and another that the Pope of Rome has always a cloven hoof, some of our French M.P.'s refuse to speak English, and not one-tenth of our British-Canadian M.P.'s expect ever to speak French.

"When, in a bilingual Parliament we have bilingual M.P.'s who understand as much as they can of the life that lies behind each language, we shall begin to evolve a nation as thoroughly Canadian as the people to the south are American. Perhaps such a nation will refuse to give its sons and daughters by the million to the United States in exchange for buying their goods, newspapers, magazines, music, popular songs, moving pictures, slang and even national sport. This continent is one—with two nations; one as yet only a baby. That baby nation has to grow up. But so long as each race in the country thinks its own ideas and customs and language greater than those of its great country of adoption, so long as most of Canada thinks itself only a vast juvenile imitation of the United States, we shall never be anything but a national kindergarten, unworthy of those two great national leaders, John A. Macdonald and Wilfrid Laurier; still more unworthy to remember the great French, English and Scotch men who first tracked our mighty rivers and built railways through the mountains."

Waving the buffalo bone as he saw the Crees begin to shift toward the Dance lodge, he shouted, "Moostoos! The buffaloes are gone; the plough, the wheat, the big red house to hold it and the train to carry it away, are come instead. We are the farmers. The Geche-Oogamou, King Edward, over the great sea says to all races in the land of the red man's buffaloes, 'Govern yourselves. But be as Canadian as the people of Capetown are African; of Melbourne, Australian; of Calcutta, Indian. Anglo-Saxons, British and French long ago made Great Britain which created the Empire. Let British and French, united in Canada, make another British Empire of many races in America, under that flag of freedom to all men, abroad as great as the liberty which Britishers enjoy at home!'

"It was a great American, Emerson, who said, 'If hereafter the war of races, often predicted, should menace the English civilization, those sea-kings may take once again to their floating castles and find a new home and a second millennium of power in their colonies'. If any American should ask what colony or what dominion ever could make such a home and such a millennium, let us all be a united echo of a late Governor-General who prophesied 'Canada'."

He turned and kissed—Mrs. Brown.

Sunset and a swift bang of deerskin drums cut short the applause. The crowd crumpled into scurrying creeks of people and ponies. The lame telegraph operator who had been short-handing the speech came to Hansen for a translation of what he had said in Cree.

"That speech will be in four languages within two days," said Banigan. "Going to elect you."

“Good heavens! it’s not a political speech!”

“Never mind. Brown’s got a translation.”

“Ole Hansen,” said Dubuc, “as de husband of Helen wit’ four races in one to be beeg familiee, I congratulate you. But don’ look so mad. A candidate, like a bridegroom, has to be managed. You are bot’.”

The great folk-song of the prairies rose over the drums as the evening slanted into dusk and fires gleamed on the campus. None of them knew whether the ears of old Jane Thunder heard those drums. She had so often seemed to be dead. It was dark when the city contingent drove away in a caravan of carts at a dollar each to the station; and an hour later when Rev. John drove one married couple away, and when a small company—Helen, Heloise, the two elder Thurstons and Hansen—rode to the tepee of Jane Thunder. Great François Laflamme was there. He pulled into a little flaming heap the blinking embers of a low fire that flickered weirdly over the group.

Heloise and François, the moose-hunter, talked earnestly together in French gazing at the motionless shard in the blankets.

“Elle est morte!” said François gutturally.

Hansen stooped over the body and picked up the deerskin bag.

“Folks,” he said mystically in French, “this bag should have been clutched in *rigor mortis*. Not for years, Brown told me—and Tom Thunder knows it too—had she ever loosened it. Who opened this bag?”

“I did,” said Heloise. “I have just told François—my distant cousin here. I took from it this locket—see?” She stooped in the firelight by the embers, snapping open the locket, which she held in the flicker, when all heads but that of Thos. Thurston bent to look at the faded miniature daguerrotype. “The picture of my grandfather—and of yours François—Jacques Laflamme, voyageur.”

Helen, with a cloak over her wedding dress, slowly, mysteriously, took the locket which she showed to her mother, talking swiftly in French while Hansen said, “Then you two from almost opposite poles of civilization are both related to her that was old Jane? Helen—what are you saying?”

She rose beside her stately mother, while Tom Thurston stroked his silken whiskers in bewilderment.

“That picture of Jacques Laflamme, voyageur capitaine, the grandfather of Madame Marechal, was in the locket given by him to my mother’s mother—who was there,” pointing to the blankets.

“Folks,” said Hansen with a queer smile, “love is a strange matter. Mrs. Thurston, you came honestly by your love for a chateau. Thanks to Jacques Laflamme, I am married to a direct descendant of an old aristocrat whose head tumbled in the French Revolution. Helen, we must bury your grandmother before we go down the river. You had better stay at the Mission. Come?” He led the way to the ponies.

“So M’sieu Peer Gynt Hansen,” said Heloise to him as he helped her to mount, “there was a reason bigger than we ever suspected why you and I should have become friends in Montreal. Your wife is my cousin.”

He made no answer as they rode slowly back to the Mission. Gravely he helped Rev. John assign rooms to the various guests.

“Good-night Helen!” he said and kissed her.

Heloise stood in the hallway fanning mosquitoes while Rev. John fired a smudge at the door.

“M’sieu Hansen, and where will be your dormer?”

“In my tepee until we go down the river. We have had romance enough for one day. John Farquharson,” as the missionary faced him with a flambeau, “I think that Mrs. Brown who is now on a train, would for one evening have been happier—along with us—if she could have stayed to help us all sing that good old camp-meeting hymn from Jericho, Ontario. ‘There are angels hovering round. Madame Marechal could sing that, even though she does believe in the Pope—because,” he added, directly to her, “you are the only kind of Nationalist big enough for this country; you believe in more races than one. Tell Louis so.”

“But you must let me kiss my new cousin by marriage? . . . You see, Louis prefers to kiss crowds with his words—which the crowds forget the day after.”

For three days to the constant beat of the far-away drums, Hansen was busy fitting up the Farquharson scow for a journey. The Crees made ready the corpse of old Jane for sepulture; a simple solemn cortege on a handmade bier decked only with bluebells; on her chest the gold locket. To the thud of the dance drums Hansen and Helen watched them scaffold the corpse in the crotches of two cotton-wood trees down by a creek, her dry mask of a face upturned to the infinite blue.

That day from the railway post office Rev. John brought weekly newspapers recording in four languages the speech of Hansen; and the lame telegraph operator ran with a hippety-hop to the Mission with a wire that Olaf Hansen, Trailsman, had been elected to the Legislature by a substantial majority over both the other candidates. Hansen was down at the scow when a Cree courier galloped with the message.

“Oh! Hmm!” glancing at the message. “There was an election wasn’t there? Yes, it may be better to elect a man that gets done with his going to jail before he’s elected.”

The Indian grinned as he rode along the scow. “Geche!” he said. The craft looked big to him; up-built amidships into a small smoke-brown tepee, the sweep-sockets fore and aft built into a Viking prow and a sort of French-Indian bark-canoe stern, in camouflage of primary colours. “Wahayo Oogamou!” . . . .

The river was low. The islands thrust up like great green galleys in the blue. The dance drums throbbed from night into the morning and on into the day and the early evening, as Oogamou Hansen and Ispahan Sesaepe rode along the mission hill. A long cavalcade of Crees divided itself into two for a front and rear escort with big John behind like a shepherd. At the landing Hansen distributed tobacco. Sesaepe entered the tepee amidships. A smoke came curling up. Lines of gift-bearers trailed down the bank. On a platform behind the tepee the Oogamou laid the blankets, beaded vests, a feathered chapeau, bows and arrows, bags of pemmican and the accordeon from big François.

“Ay, ye’ve enough to keep house frae here tae Ballyhoo,” said John as he joyfully inspected cargo and craft. Then he went up the bank, mounted his pony among the hunters and the squaws.

When a low breeze brought a tremendous bang of the drums over the hills, Hansen undid the ropes. Himself at the stern, Sesaepe in her buckskins at the bow sweep, the craft glided out. The Crees formed their ponies into a huge broken wheel to watch it take the river—their own beloved Big-Swift-Running. Had there been a hill to the clouds they would have gone up. At her bow sweep fluttered Sesaepe; at the stern a wave from the Oogamou as the sweeps rose and dipped like vast wings—round a sheer island, into a channel.

“Wahayo! Tandetook mistikwa wahayo?” came the chorus, wondering how far they might go.

“I can just see them yonder,” said Hansen in the echo of a wooded gorge where a moose swam.

She smiled. A palpitating bang of the distant drums; one more far-off cadence of the great folk-tune as the squaws chimed in. The sun set. Suddenly there was silence on the hills. The drums were finished. The song was gone. The Dance was done. As the Crees turned their ponies, from the forest islands came a woman’s voice—to an accordeon; some gondolier melody—a barcarolle. It was Mendelssohn’s *On Wings of Song*.

“Inshore Sesaepe. I guess that shack yonder is old Fort Pitt.” Hansen put down the accordeon.

The scow drifted noiselessly in. A coyote scudded grey across the rise. One old log hut. They moored the scow and went ashore. For a while they stood in silence; he took off his slouch hat.

“Twenty-one years ago, Helen, there was a great little drama here—the siege of Fort Pitt; the escape of the police on a scow in the drift ice with the son of a great English novelist in command; the captivity of the traders and the missionaries. It was the heroism of Tom Thunder, your mother’s half-brother, that kept Big Bear’s band from massacring John Farquharson, his wife and babies—in that trek to the north.”

“Yes, but tell me—where we are going, Olaf?”

“Going? Heavens! What does it matter?”

“Because—I am not history. I am your wife; and you are a member of the Alberta Legislature.”

He gathered her into a kiss such as she had never dreamed was in the world.

“By Jove, so I am! Well—no grafters on the new Parliament buildings if I can help it, and no more millennial railways.”

“I suppose no more sand-bars and islands in the Saskatchewan either, Olaf?”

“Oh! Because you’re an amateur fatalist, you think there’ll be grafters on the golden pavements of the New Jerusalem. Well, anyhow Helen, when you dance with the Lieutenant-Governor at the new Parliament inaugural—”

“You will be one of the flowers in the wall-paper—thinking about three better women you might have married?”

“I was going to say, that if anybody forgets that your mother is a full half-breed living in a chateau, I’ll remind him. We’ll follow the Big-Swift-Running to the Grand Rapids,” he said as they went aboard for supper. “Shoot the rapids. Build another scow—on down the lake to the Red River, up to Winnipeg and—”

“Oh then it will be a train, yes?”

“The stuffy, clattering, smoky, yarn-spinning, fortune-hunting train—yes. Into the Rockies and out to the Coast. I’ll have you talk Cree to a Jap girl to see if you’re a ’steenth cousin somehow. Just think—I’ve been in Canada twenty years and never got through the Rockies!”

While Sesaepe in the tepee fried fish, he poled the scow to mid-stream to escape mosquitoes.

“What will you do for anchor, Captain?”

He tied a rope round a bag of flour and dropped it overboard. “Flour’s waterproof. These bags of pemmican—we’ll never eat it; pity to waste it for anchors. I’ll give it to some half-breed.”

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Early in the morning the scow moved with its trail of blue smoke down among the islands.

“Helen,” he said, as he smoked at his sweep, “why are most of the forests on the north bank?”

“Oh! You expect me to wonder. I suppose the spruce needs the sun.”

He poised his sweep and she did the same. “Not real forests,” he said. “No, we had those in Ontario. We killed the forests to get the fields,” he said vaguely, gazing at the long plateaus of the south bank with the poplar-bluffed hills beyond. “Here the fields were made from the beginning. One could almost think any of those bluffs was a house and barn. The prairie farmer has his troubles, but he doesn’t have to get down in the mud and roll up the logs, and plough round the stumps.”

He talked about the first field he had helped Hiram Flater log up from the burnt-over jumpiles.

“When we get back from Vancouver, we’ll go down and see all that’s left of old Jericho and that field: probably has wheat in it this year, sowed with clover to plough down for beans the next. What are you laughing at?”

“Oh, you are all at once so practical. Perhaps you will settle down to make money like my father did? Perhaps those people in Jericho won’t think so very much of you unless you convince them that you are making money?”

“Largely a matter of style,” he said. “I suppose it would please Tom Thunder and the chiefs if we should wear those Indian togs they gave us, but I’m afraid we’ll have to cache those in Winnipeg and buy some real clothes. Perhaps you won’t like that?”

“But if you are going back to Jericho as a member of the Alberta Legislature—”

“Cuts no ice,” he said. “They’ll never know it from anything I tell them.”

“They will know it from me, then. To have beaten Atkins and the machine is worth any wife’s while to talk about, and worth your while to live up to, Olaf; and your clothes are going to be very important. Yes, we shall buy two trunks in Winnipeg and your friend Hiram Flater will have to take both of them from the Jericho station—but I daresay you will be so interested in that field and playing that little organ we are going to buy—”

“I’ll pay Hiram the price of a player-piano for that. We’ll put it in the bungalow.”

“But not always—a bungalow, Olaf? No, we do not need to envy the Atkins’ when they are married into some big house; but we are going to live down the days when you slept in a printshop.”

“Why live down? They were no disgrace.”

“Oh yes, I know. My father used to repeat the lines of Burns. ‘Is there for honest poverty’—which I thought beautiful

when we were poor. But wealth should be honest as well as poverty; and we should make our own money.”

He changed the subject. “I hear rapids ahead.” She was perhaps a bit too definite. The sun was hot. She left her sweep and went to the tepee.

“We can’t be far from Lloydminster, that English colony. I’d like to land there.”

“Not in our constituency are they, Olaf?”

“Every Englishman should be,” he replied; or was it the croak of his sweep? He seemed to be talking about the need of English in Canada, of Britain in the world; the fallacy of Canadians without knowledge of their own country trying to be Imperialists first—since true Imperialism was not a centralizing idea but a sentiment built of intense nationalisms in league and covenant; the danger that while Canada was absorbing old races her most powerful nationalizing impulse might come from the world’s second democracy instead of from the first, which was Britain—

She made no answer. He looked into the tepee. She was asleep. Silently he flung out the bag of flour to anchor and lighted his pipe. The rapids were just ahead, and he would need the swing of her sweep.

THE END.

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TRANSCRIBER NOTES:

A link to a midi file is included for the music which appears on pages 279 and 314.

Obvious punctuation errors have been corrected and missing punctuation has been added.

Archaic words and mis-spelled words have been retained, including inconsistent hyphenation, with the exception of those listed below.

Page 119: Barlaw => Barlow (When she called, "Supper, Miss Barlow?")

Page 129: peculiarities => peculiarities (the varied metre expressing the peculiarities of each writer)

Page 313: ecstasy => ecstasy (and she laughed with ecstasy at the conventional explanation.)

[The end of *Hansen – A Novel of Canadianization* by Augustus Bridle ]