

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Revd. Egerton Ryerson Young

Table of Contents

<u>Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods</u>	1
Revd. Egerton Ryerson Young.....	1
<u>A HAUNCH OF VENISON</u>	1
<u>CHAPTER ONE. A GIFT OF VENISON</u>	2
<u>CHAPTER TWO. JONAS THE INDIAN</u>	6
<u>CHAPTER THREE. OLD DAVE DODGE</u>	11
<u>CHAPTER FOUR. THE BACKWOODS TRIAL</u>	16
<u>CHUBB</u>	21
<u>CHAPTER ONE. THE COW SHALL FEED WITH THE BEAR</u>	21
<u>CHAPTER TWO. THE BEAR-TRAP</u>	22
<u>CHAPTER THREE. BACK TO NATURE</u>	24
<u>CHAPTER FOUR. THE COW AND THE BEAR</u>	27
<u>CHAPTER FIVE. CHUBB'S HOME</u>	28
<u>CHAPTER SIX. NO TELL</u>	30
<u>CHAPTER SEVEN. NEW QUARTERS</u>	32
<u>CHAPTER EIGHT. MORE PROPHECY</u>	34
<u>CHAPTER NINE. PURCHASING THE RED COW</u>	37
<u>CHAPTER TEN. JENNIE'S ERRAND</u>	40
<u>CHAPTER ELEVEN. THE SEARCH FOR JENNIE</u>	42
<u>CHAPTER TWELVE. JONAS FINDS THE RED COW</u>	43
<u>CHAPTER THIRTEEN. JENNIE AND CHUBB</u>	44
<u>CHAPTER FOURTEEN. THE COMING OF THE FATHER</u>	46
<u>CHAPTER FIFTEEN. THE YOUNG PREACHER SHOT</u>	49
<u>CHAPTER SIXTEEN. THE PREACHER AND THE FATHER</u>	51
<u>CHAPTER SEVENTEEN. GOOD-BYE, MY BOY; I LOVE YOU!</u>	53
<u>CHAPTER EIGHTEEN. THE NEW DAY</u>	55
<u>CHAPTER NINETEEN. THE FATHER AGAIN</u>	58
<u>DAVE DODGE</u>	60
<u>CHAPTER ONE. THE BURNING OF DUCK LAKE HOTEL</u>	60
<u>CHAPTER TWO. TO THE RESCUE</u>	63
<u>CHAPTER THREE. THE GALL OF BITTERNESS</u>	67
<u>CHAPTER FOUR. THE NEW SUIT</u>	70

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Revd. Egerton Ryerson Young

This page copyright © 2003 Blackmask Online.

<http://www.blackmask.com>

- A HAUNCH OF VENISON

- CHAPTER ONE. A GIFT OF VENISON.
- CHAPTER TWO. JONAS THE INDIAN.
- CHAPTER THREE. OLD DAVE DODGE.
- CHAPTER FOUR. THE BACKWOODS TRIAL.

- CHUBB

- CHAPTER ONE. THE COW SHALL FEED WITH THE BEAR.
- CHAPTER TWO. THE BEAR-TRAP.
- CHAPTER THREE. BACK TO NATURE.
- CHAPTER FOUR. THE COW AND THE BEAR.
- CHAPTER FIVE. CHUBB'S HOME.
- CHAPTER SIX. NO TELL.
- CHAPTER SEVEN. NEW QUARTERS.
- CHAPTER EIGHT. MORE PROPHECY.
- CHAPTER NINE. PURCHASING THE RED COW.
- CHAPTER TEN. JENNIE'S ERRAND.
- CHAPTER ELEVEN. THE SEARCH FOR JENNIE.
- CHAPTER TWELVE. JONAS FINDS THE RED COW.
- CHAPTER THIRTEEN. JENNIE AND CHUBB.
- CHAPTER FOURTEEN. THE COMING OF THE FATHER.
- CHAPTER FIFTEEN. THE YOUNG PREACHER SHOT.
- CHAPTER SIXTEEN. THE PREACHER AND THE FATHER.
- CHAPTER SEVENTEEN. GOOD-BYE, MY BOY; I LOVE YOU!
- CHAPTER EIGHTEEN. THE NEW DAY.
- CHAPTER NINETEEN. THE FATHER AGAIN.

- DAVE DODGE

- CHAPTER ONE. THE BURNING OF DUCK LAKE HOTEL.
- CHAPTER TWO. TO THE RESCUE.
- CHAPTER THREE. THE GALL OF BITTERNESS.
- CHAPTER FOUR. THE NEW SUIT.

Etext from Athelstane.co.uk

A HAUNCH OF VENISON

CHAPTER ONE. A GIFT OF VENISON.

The latest arrival in the Duck Lake district of Northern Ontario was the newly appointed game-warden, Mr John Holden Fitzgerald, and here by his vigorous application to business, eagerness in calling in the power of the law, and his haste in procuring evidence, he nearly made the innocent suffer with the guilty.

The noble game, the moose deer, were in danger of extinction in the beautiful lake and forest regions of the province of Ontario, such was the persistency and success of the hunters in these parts. To prevent such a calamity, the Provincial Government passed stringent laws that for a number of years no moose deer were to be shot under any consideration, and any person found killing one would be subject to a fine ranging from \$20 for the first offence to \$50 or imprisonment for others. The game and guns of the poacher were to be confiscated. To enforce their law the Government appointed a number of game-wardens, and sent them to different points where killing had been reported.

The beautiful country around Duck Lake was one of these regions which had fallen into ill-repute, and to it Game-Warden Fitzgerald was sent. He entered upon his duties with the zeal of a new appointee, but his pleasure in his appointment was increased by the presence of his cousin, Mr Horace Fitzgerald, with his wife and little children, who had taken a cottage on Duck Lake, and were extending their stay into the autumn.

When the Game-Warden reached Duck Lake, he made his way over to his cousin's home, but was disappointed in finding him away. He, however, accepted the cordial invitation of Mrs Fitzgerald to step in and rest, as Mr Horace might return home at any moment.

You are extending your stay considerably. Don't you find it lonely? asked the Game-warden.

Oh, a little, sometimes, replied Mrs Fitzgerald; but the autumn scenery is so beautiful. I believe it is the best part of the year in this charming lake region. Horace is perfectly delighted with it.

Where has Horace gone to?

I don't know exactly. He has a few friends whom he is fond of visiting. One is an Indian, Jonas Bear, who is the best canoeist and fisherman around here. There are two or three settlers he likes to visit, to hear their tales of early struggles when they first came into this country. There is also an interesting school-teacher not far away; but his latest discovery or acquisition is a young preacher who came in here a few months ago.

That is indeed a new turn for Horace. It sounds like conversion to hear of him fraternising with a preacher, laughed the Warden.

Well, he is a decidedly interesting fellow, replied Mrs Fitzgerald. He is not like the ordinary ministers, full of preach and little else. Mr Hewitt, for that is his name, believes in doing something for his people. He is very independent, however, and some of his women parishioners think he is a little too independent and not a little conceited, especially over his own cooking and laundrying; and Mrs Fitzgerald laughed a merry laugh.

A jolly 'Vicar of Bray' in the woods, suggested the Warden, with an attempt to be merry also.

Oh no! Not that. He's too shy, too single-minded, too earnest for that. When he came, he could not find a suitable home, as the few settlers who have houses of any size have their extra rooms filled with tourists or hunters, and Mr Hewitt would not live in the common room of the smaller householders. Failing in his attempt to get himself a home, Mr Hewitt searched around and found a discarded log cabin at the other end of the lake. For this he negotiated, and secured it for the consideration of \$15 a year. He patched up the logs, filled in the chinks,

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

and sent to his distant home for a few things to make it habitable. Some hemp matting acts as a carpet, and an ancient stove serves for heating and cooking purposes. He says he can make the best johnny-cake around here; and Mrs Fitzgerald went off into another merry laugh.

And this the women deny? put in the Warden.

Of course they do, said Mrs Fitzgerald. They say, 'Such conceit!' But Mrs Miller pities his laundrying attempts the most. She says, 'Why, it's yellow as my Leghorn rooster's legs!' And as she pictured the contemptuous look of the sturdy backwoodsman's wife, the happy little woman went into peals of laughter.

Is it the preacher's johnny-cake that takes Horace over there? asked the Warden.

Oh, don't you get sarcastic about our preacher. We won't stand that around here. He may be independent and all that, but he is good and nice and kind. He is happily innocent of the ways of the world you know only too well, but he has read a good deal; he is fond of music, and is jolly good company. Horace likes to visit him, and he is always welcome here.

Mr Horace Fitzgerald had gone that day to the Parsonage, as they had humorously styled Mr Hewitt's cabin-home; but when he reached the place he found it empty. The night before a farmer by the name of Farley had come on horseback and told Mr Hewitt that his hired man had been taken suddenly ill, and they thought that he was dying. The missionary quickly ran out, saddled his horse, and told his informant to lead the way over the rocky road as fast as he dare.

When they arrived, Mr Hewitt saw that the poor fellow was suffering from a severe attack of inflammation. To merely speak soothing words to the man, while he was in such agony, seemed to the practical minister sheer mockery and folly. It was time for action, and he had bags of salt heated and then applied to the suffering man. He also used hot water in abundance, and then he gave the man a gentle massage. This heroic treatment was repeated throughout the night. By morning the young man was much relieved, and hopes were entertained for his recovery. Mr Hewitt then read and prayed with the sufferer, and carefully nursed him all that day.

When Horace Fitzgerald found no one in the Parsonage, he went in, sat down and rested awhile. He looked into some of Mr Hewitt's books, played a little on his guitar, and then picked up an old rifle which the young preacher had brought with him. This rifle had once belonged to Mr Hewitt's father, and thinking that he might have some use for it, he brought it with a box of cartridges to his backwoods home. But up to the present time he had not used it.

Horace Fitzgerald was quite a hunter, and so was much interested in the weapon. While handling it he determined to try it, and after picking a few cartridges out of the box he started off into the woods. He had not walked more than a quarter of a mile from the house, when, to his delight, he saw a large moose spring up from his resting-place, about two hundred yards away. He raised the rifle and fired. The startled brute gave one leap into the air, and dropped dead.

Horace hurried back to Mr Hewitt's cabin, replaced the gun, and secured his carving knife and axe. Returning to the deer, he cleaned it and skinned it. He cut off a good haunch and carried it back to the Parsonage with the knife and axe. He deposited the meat on the table, stuck the knife in a beam, and left the axe outside the door. Looking around, he found a large piece of canvas. Out of this he made a kind of a bag, and placed in it as much venison as he wanted to carry home. The rest he hung up in the trees, making what the Indians call a cache.

When Horace Fitzgerald reached his home, highly delighted with his success, his wife told him that his cousin the Warden had arrived, that he had waited for him all the morning, and that he had now gone on to the Duck Lake Hotel. Then, suddenly recollecting the Warden's business, and the boasts he had made to her that he would put a

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

stop to all moose-poaching in that part, she said, with some solicitude

But what will the Warden say about this moose you have shot? He doesn't approve of such things.

Oh, he, replied the triumphant hunter, jocularly. Give him a steak to eat. I'll guarantee he'll say that it is prime.

Although he had said this bravely, he was struck with a conviction that he had done wrong, and felt that even relationship with the Warden would not shield him from the law's demands when his act became known.

But what will you tell the Warden? persisted his wife.

Tell him all, and also that his moose must not come and tempt people when they are out hunting for their humble fellows, said Mr Fitzgerald, rather more shortly than courtesy allows.

With provoking imitation of a monitor at school, Mrs Fitzgerald said, with a merry twinkle

Now you'll catch it. See if you don't.

* * * * *

It was late the next day when Mr Hewitt, after his pastoral visit, started on his long ride home. The day was very raw. A drizzly rain was falling. So when he reached his home he was tired, hungry, and cold.

The sight of the splendid haunch of meat on the table made his heart dance.

Somebody has been very kind, said he.

The horse was quickly stabled and fed, and then the missionary returned to examine his treasure. He soon had a fire roaring in his stove, and a savoury steak sizzling in the flames.

After he had heartily enjoyed his simple meal, he threw himself on his lounge, and was soon lost in a much-needed refreshing slumber. But the young preacher had been asleep only a short time when he was awakened with a start, and found a stranger in his room.

It was the new Game-Warden.

Ah, ha, young man, said the Warden, I have caught you this time. Almost in the act, red-handed anyway. Before you sleep, after your successful chase, you should have covered your tracks better.

Mr Hewitt sprang up and rubbed his eyes in a most bewildered way. Things seemed so strange to him, he thought he must be dreaming. What could the Game-Warden mean? Caught red-handed cover up tracks?

After a moment of staggering silence, the young missionary said

Sir, I've no tracks to cover up.

What impudence! said the Warden, growing stern. He had hoped that the young man would have confessed, and that he would not have given him any more trouble than was absolutely necessary.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Can't I see with my eyes what a fine piece of venison you have on the table? Within half a mile of this place a moose was killed; part of it is now hanging in the trees, and there are blood tracks all the way to your house. I'll guarantee that your rifle is hardly cold, and your axe and knife are yet bloody.

Mr Hewitt was, if possible, more stupefied than ever at these words. When the Warden referred to his gun, he replied

I have never fired my rifle since I came here.

The Game-Warden walked over to the place where the rifle stood. He took it up in his hands, opened the barrel and held it up to the sunlight.

Come here, and look at this, he said.

The young man walked stupidly over. The universe seemed falling around him. He walked as one in a dream.

He looked. Sure enough, there were unmistakable signs of fresh powder and other marks of recent firing.

I cannot account for this, said he, meekly.

Bring me your hunting-knife and axe, demanded the Warden.

Mr Hewitt went outside and found his axe. Though he was a decidedly muscular young man, yet the sight of that axe made him as weak as a kitten.

There, sir, said the Warden, as he stood in the doorway, there is the blood of the moose you have killed and cut up. Now, out with your hunting-knife, and be quick about it.

I have no hunting-knife, was the reply.

Well, get the knife you used to cut up the moose, whether it is a hunting-knife or not, said the Warden. He had his eyes about him far more than had the poor missionary, and in his moving around he found the knife where it had been left the day before, sticking in the beam, near the door.

Oh, here it is. Ha! ha! All smeared with blood! Now, young man, I'll make you sweat for this. Lying as well as poaching. Pretty work for a young preacher looking for Orders in a ministry; I confiscate your gun and knife. I shall take this piece of meat with me; and when I summon you before a justice it will be well for you to appear and confess your guilt.

With this he took the meat, rifle, and knife, and left the young preacher's home.

A more distracted young man could hardly have been found than Mr Hewitt at that moment. Bright, almost unusually buoyant, even when many serious things seemed to impede his way, he appeared to rejoice in things that tested physical endurance; but here was an altogether new condition of affairs, a testing of the spirit. What a tangle the whole world seemed to be in!

Perhaps, if Mr Hewitt had not been so worn out after his self-sacrificing endeavours for the sick man he would have been less distracted. But what a complication of evidence! Proved guilty to his face! What could he do?

CHAPTER TWO. JONAS THE INDIAN.

Mr Hewitt want any fish to-day?

Hello, Jonas, old boy, come in, said the young missionary, recognising the voice of his Indian friend, and glad to be relieved from his distracting thoughts.

Jonas had quick ears, and he detected a false note in the usually merry voice, and he said

Is Mister Hewitt sick to-day?

No, not sick, Jonas, but ruined. All my work here is to be utterly ruined. I must have been dreaming, or something or other. I came home about an hour ago from tending to Farley's hired man, and found a piece of meat on the table, then lay down to get a nap, when in popped the new Game-Warden, and said that I had shot a moose. My rifle and axe, neither of which I had touched for days, showed signs of recent use. I am to be fined, or confined in jail, for poaching.

Jonas' face grew solemn, and for a moment he was deep in thought; then he asked

Killed moose! Where?

The Warden said it was killed within half a mile of this house, and that there are blood-marks all the way.

We go see, said Jonas, as he immediately turned, went out, and began examining the ground.

With unerring skill he found the marks that had attracted the attention of the Game-Warden. These the young men followed up, and at length came to the remains of the moose.

Good fine moose that, said Jonas, with evident pleasure. But who kill him?

Ah, that's the question, responded the missionary.

Jonas surveyed the ground carefully, and in a few minutes brightened, as he glanced at some marks in the ground, near the spot where the deer fell, and then looked at Mr Hewitt's feet.

Long feet, the man who kill deer; you square, him long.

How do you know, Jonas?

Here, see. He try lift deer. Ground soft with blood. Feet go deep; make big mark.

That was a point for Jonas; and when it was explained to Mr Hewitt he was for a moment amazed, for it brought to mind the generous feet possessed by his friend, and he said, almost without thinking

I wonder if those are Fitzgerald's tracks!

Jonas had thought the same, but had not wished to express himself first. He, however, had added another discovery by the time Mr Hewitt had recovered from his surprise, and had made his last remark.

Mister Fitzgerald, perhaps, for sure. Here, look. Heavy marks; man with heavy load; on trail to Mr Fitzgerald his

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

house. Me go see; he have moose.

At this decision he was off, and the young missionary went with him.

Jonas kept his eyes on the path, and pointed out many little indications which his companion would never have noticed, which more and more convinced him that he was on the right trail. These convictions only added to the missionary's dismay. Horace Fitzgerald was his friend; and he did not wish to bring him into trouble; and yet why should he have used his gun, and axe, and knife; he had plenty of his own? Was the piece of meat a ruse to divert the blame from himself, and place it upon the innocent preacher?

I am glad to see you, young man.

Mr Hewitt and Jonas started up from examining the ground, and were faced by the Game-Warden.

By this happy meeting you have saved me a long journey to your house. Here is your summons, the Justice of the Peace will be at `Duck Lake Hotel' to-morrow. I want you to be promptly on hand at ten o'clock. This matter of moose-poaching must be immediately attended to, and you had better make your story pretty plain, or I'll have you up for perjury as well as poaching.

After thus addressing, and distressing, the preacher, and giving a contemptuous look at his Indian companion, he turned and stalked away on the path that led to the lake. Mr Hewitt and Jonas hurried on, to see if they could find any trace of Horace Fitzgerald. Mr Hewitt was sure his friend could help him, even if he knew nothing of the killing of the moose, for he himself was entirely ignorant of all court proceedings.

To his dismay, however, when he reached Mr Fitzgerald's home, he found that his friend was away, and was not expected to be back until to-morrow. He did not know what to do. He did not wish to falsely accuse Mr Fitzgerald, or even to leave the least shadow of suspicion, and yet he most urgently needed the presence of his friend.

Will you not leave a message for him? asked the maid.

Yes; tell Mr Fitzgerald that I am in some difficulty, and I have to meet a Justice of the Peace at the `Duck Lake Hotel' to-morrow morning at ten o'clock. I should like to have him there with me. Please do not fail to tell him.

If he is home in time I shall.

Mister Fitzgerald away far? asked Jonas.

He went to Sandy Bay, Jonas, was the reply.

Mr Hewitt and Jonas bade the maid good day, and turned rather sadly for home. After they had walked a mile or so through the woods, and were upon a brow of a hill, Jonas suddenly stopped and said

Why that?

Mr Hewitt was instantly aroused, and looking in the direction indicated by Jonas he saw a little flock of sheep in a clearing, near the woods on the other side. They were all huddled together in a bunch, and were racing around in a funny whirlpool sort of a fashion.

Why that? asked Jonas again.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

What do you think is the matter with the sheep? said Mr Hewitt.

Don't know; see soon. Bear, p'r'aps, said the Indian.

Those are John Miller's sheep, and we must save them, said Mr Hewitt; and he ran down the hill to the clearing. As he came to the edge of the forest the sheep saw him, and at the sight of a man they seemed to find their wits. Then they all turned and ran as hard as they could across the field towards their barn.

From behind some underbush, where he seemed to be half-hiding and half-mesmerising the silly sheep, up sprang a big black bear. He ran for the nearest point of the woods, and as far as Mr Hewitt was concerned was gone. The young preacher was delighted at his rescue, and would have gone to his parishioners with the news of the bear, but when he turned he could not see any sign of Jonas. Where he was he knew not, and so Mr Hewitt hastily retraced his steps to the top of the hill. But Jonas was not there. Mr Hewitt then thought that Jonas had wandered on towards the Parsonage, near which lay his canoe, so he hurried along the path. As he stood upon a knoll near his little home, a most extraordinary scene presented itself to him. There was Jonas rushing through the forest, and the bear after him. Jonas did not act like a frightened man running for his life, for he dodged here and there, and seemed to know exactly what he was doing. Mr Hewitt was about to run to the rescue, when he saw Jonas double on the bear and then back up against the tree. Bruin's blood seemed to be thoroughly roused, and he rose on his haunches to attack his antagonist. Mr Hewitt's heart almost stood still. He thought it was all over with poor Jonas. He himself was helpless. He had no weapon, and even his gun was not now in his home. He could only pick up a club and hurry to the rescue. He saw the bear close with Jonas. Suddenly the bear's paws went spasmodically up, and Jonas shouted

Like that! and wrenched a bloody hunting-knife out of the bear's ribs, as that denizen of the woods fell to the ground. Another convulsive shudder and the bear was dead. Jonas' knife had found its heart.

Whatever are you doing? said Mr Hewitt, as he ran breathlessly up to Jonas.

Gettin' bear-roast for venison you lost, said Jonas. In spite of his fright Mr Hewitt had to smile at this sally, and wonder at Jonas' skill and coolness.

But why did you run so? persisted the preacher.

Make him carry his own roast here, said Jonas, with provoking imperturbability.

How did you get him to do that? He ran into the woods when I shouted. Where did you catch him, or rather, where did he take after you?

Jonas' knife was into the bear, and while he was cleaning, skinning, and quartering the bear, by snatches Mr Hewitt received the following information. Jonas saw the bear before Mr Hewitt did, and he knew that he would run to a dense spruce grove to hide. He also knew that if he hurried he could intercept bruin's flight, and perhaps secure some good bear-meat to replace the venison roast which Game-Warden Fitzgerald had confiscated. Jonas thought that it would be far easier for the bear to carry his body to the neighbourhood of the Parsonage than for the two young men to do so, and hence he determined that he would make bruin be his own express waggon. When the bear was caught trying to kill sheep, he slunk off like a dog caught egg-stealing. Jonas overtook him in his flight, and by interfering with him and annoying him, he aroused the fighting nature of the animal. Then he started for the Parsonage, and the bear, like a small dog chasing a retreating traveller, followed Jonas. When Jonas was satisfied that the bear had done his duty, he ran around a tree, to make the beast more angry. Then, placing his back against it, he waited for it to come and hug him. When the bear's breath was in his face he gave him the hunting-knife in the heart.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Having finished his story, his work of cleaning and cutting up the bear was also nearly done. He then handed Mr Hewitt a splendid roast, and said

Long run make hunger.

Mr Hewitt took the hint and the meat that Jonas offered him, and hurrying over to the Parsonage, prepared a good supper of the bear-steaks which bruin had carried through the woods.

Jonas finished his work on the bear and brought it in instalments to the Parsonage, where he left it for the time being.

While eating the supper Jonas said to his companion

What like that meat the Warden took?

Like that? pointing to the piece of meat from which the steaks had been cut.

Yes, replied Mr Hewitt, like it for all the world. Only this meat is lighter, having more fat in it.

Ugh, said Jonas.

After the meal the men again talked over the case and the best way to meet the Justice. After discussing the different phases of the matter, they both came to the conclusion that their best hope lay in having Mr Horace Fitzgerald with them. At this Jonas jumped up and said

Me go get him myself, p'r'aps, for sure.

But I want you there to tell about the tracks, replied the preacher.

Jonas will be there, see? was his reply as he took down his paddle. As he was leaving he picked up the piece of meat which was lying on the table, saying as he did so

Jonas may be hungry before seeing Mr Fitzgerald.

Then he quietly and quickly went out.

Jonas did not go directly to Sandy Bay for Mr Fitzgerald. He first paid a visit to the "Duck Lake Hotel", as he considered that he had some dealings with the man who had looked so contemptuously at an Indian in the woods. Jonas had no difficulty in finding the room which the Game-Warden occupied, and then, under the cloak of night, when that representative of the law was enjoying a sound Muskoka sleep the Muskoka air has good sleeping properties Jonas made his way into that room, and leaving the bear-meat, appropriated the haunch of venison, which the Warden had taken from Mr Hewitt. As silently as he had come, Jonas made his way back to the lake, and then paddled as hard as he could for Sandy Bay.

After Jonas left the Parsonage a heavy wave of intense loneliness swept over Mr Hewitt. He flung himself on his knees before his little lounge, and buried his face in his hands. A strange sense of oppressive darkness came upon him. It startled him and made him look up. Just over the lounge and the place where he was kneeling was the window of his log cabin, which faced the west. The autumn sun had not set; but the cloud-banks, robed in the hue of deepest midnight, piled themselves up around the sun and obscured all the light. After this wall of darkness had overshadowed the world for a few minutes, it seemed as if some gigantic power had taken hold of the inky cloud, and torn it across, as a draper tears a web of cotton. The glories of the setting sun burst through. The ragged ends

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

of the inky clouds turned, in the sunlight, to violet, crimson, and gold. The scene fascinated Hewitt; his knees seemed to be riveted to the floor; but a hallowing sense of peace and companionship came to him. His heart was flooded with a new light. New hope came to his soul, and throwing back his head, as his face glowed with divine emotion, he cried, with the triumph of the Psalmist

The Lord God is a Sun and Shield:
The Lord will give grace and glory:
No good thing will He withhold
From them that walk uprightly.

The clouds passed away, the sun sank behind the verdant hills, and the autumn twilight came upon the land.

Mr Hewitt sprang from his knees. His despair had gone with the clouds, and his rich baritone voice rang out a favourite hymn: There's glory in my soul.

As he went around to do some household duty he remembered a promise he had made to go over to visit poor Mrs Brown, and to sit with her boy Charles, who was slowly sinking under the fell destroyer, consumption. He was the fourth of the family to fall a victim to this disease. The eldest daughter had died, an elder son, and the husband; and now Charles, a boy who had given promise of more than usual strength and health, was, at seventeen years of age, fast fading away under the same white plague.

Mr Hewitt brought out his horse, sprang on its back, and quickly rode to the widow's home, at which place he was always a welcome guest.

Very glad to see you, Mister Hewitt, said the poor mother, as her face brightened up to greet the smile and sympathetic look of her pastor.

How's Charles?

He is very weak; but he is always glad when you come. He says you always bring a cheerful breeze with you. He always feels so much better when you come.

The pastor did not wait to weigh, or even to accept, the compliment. He had been to that house so often, that he hesitated not to push into the room where the sick boy sat propped up in a home-made invalid chair.

With happy words he spoke to the boy, and with kind inquiries after the other members of the household, Mr Hewitt soon put them all at ease. During the evening some of the neighbours, who knew that their pastor was to be at Mrs Brown's, came in both to have a talk with him, and also to sympathise with the widow. Mr Hewitt was greatly pleased at this, and was soon very happy in their company. Their lives, plans, thoughts, were of great interest to him. All his private cares and burdens were forgotten in his desire to help them. As he had their utmost confidence, they did not hesitate to open their hearts to him.

With words of encouragement to one, of advice to another, and of gentle warning to a third, he replied to the statements given to him. All felt the love, sympathy, and helpfulness of his words; and though sometimes they felt rebuked of rashness, and even of sinfulness, they knew that he was right in his words, and that he had only spoken for their good.

There was an accordion in the house. This Mr Hewitt secured, and played several airs, and then led the company in singing some of the songs and hymns and psalms they had learned and loved. After a happy evening was thus spent, enjoyed by all, especially by the invalid, the loving pastor called them to prayer and addressed the Throne of Grace on behalf of each one present. After prayer the people cordially shook hands with each other, and spoke

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

a few words of affection and cheer to the needy one. Several of the visitors surreptitiously slipped some substantials and dainties for the family into Mrs Brown's kitchen, making their gifts in such a way that the poor woman could only look, but dare not speak, her thanks. The tears of thanksgiving that hung in her eyes were pearls of richest payment to the givers, and such as the Lord treasures in His remembrance.

The company then separated for their homes. Mr Hewitt stayed with Charles, and sat the vigil with him. The young men had much to say to each other; eternity seemed so near.

CHAPTER THREE. OLD DAVE DODGE.

At the earliest blush of dawn Mrs Brown relieved her pastor. He soon found his horse and was on his way home. He galloped along the little road, and as he turned into the bush the sun arose above the horizon and lit up one of the most beautiful scenes that man ever beheld. In his enthusiasm, Mr Hewitt exclaimed

It's a pathway for a king!

It was an autumn scene of rarest beauty. The wind had shaken the beeches, maples, and other trees that composed that bit of Muskoka woods, and their gorgeously coloured leaves covered the ground. In the night, a nipping frost and a passing cloud had joined their forces, and ere the morning sun cast his brilliant beams through the limbs of the trees they had dropped a light shower of snow upon the leafy carpet. The fall had been so light and the leaves so laid that it seemed as if thousands of little golden and crimson cups, of as many varied and antique shapes, were upturned, and in the morning sunbeams were filled with limpid pearl.

The rider reined his horse to a walk at this scene of entrancing beauty. With heart filled full of wonder, he exclaimed

Orion and Pleiades can hardly show amore beautiful scene than earth has prepared for me to-day. The curtains of tinted clouds that at sunset God hung in His western sky were beautiful, but His carpet this morning is fairer far. Truly He spreadeth out the heavens at His pleasure, and the earth clothes herself in rich apparel at His word. Might and art have concerted together to please and praise their Master. The fall of the leaf is in His knowledge, and the Frost King is but His servant. They make clouds for His garments, and wrap them up with the winds; they spread the snow as a carpet, and remove it at His command. They speak of His glory, His skill and His power; they call forth our wonder, our admiration, and our praise. But the love of Christ surpasses these. In Him, love as pure as the snow was nursed in a crimson bowl of suffering. His fingers moved the frost and guided the wind, but His arm and life brought salvation. May my life praise Him.

Dolly was restless under her master, even if he were singing a psalm of praise, and when the word was given she soon sprang into a gallop, bounding over the uneven bush road like a deer, and soon reached her home.

After seeing his horse carefully stabled and happily eating her breakfast, Mr Hewitt went into his Parsonage and kindled a fire. He broiled a steak, and after eating it he threw himself upon the lounge for a rest. After a short nap he awoke. He went to the lake, and kneeling at the bank, had a refreshing wash. Then, returning to his house, where he finished his morning toilet, he bowed in thankfulness for his many blessings to God, rejoicing that He who had spread the heavens and set the sun in his place was his God, his Father and his Friend. Full of faith in His everlasting Friend, he set about to prepare himself to meet the Game-Warden and the Justice of the Peace at Duck Lake Hotel.

The house that bore the name of Duck Lake Hotel was a medium-sized frame building, fitted up for a few summer boarders, with a bar-room at one end and a post-office at the other.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Dave Dodge, the proprietor and manager of this hotel, was a sour-hearted, scheming man of about fifty. Almost from the day of the arrival of Mr Hewitt, he and the proprietor had altercations; both declaring that their motives were purely for the benefit of the community. The preacher had denounced the disgusting beer-parties and low dances that Dodge had got up in his bar-room. Dodge had, in his early days, seen the delight that many men in the city had taken in sparring-matches, and he was not going to have less attractions for his hotel. So, for the benefit of his summer guests, he got two of his lounging *attaches*, of whom he had quite a number, well primed with whisky, and set them to fighting. This brutal work Mr Hewitt had denounced in scathing terms. To the credit of the boarders be it said, they took the next means of conveyance, and left Dodge's place. This action of the guests and the denunciation of the preacher made Dodge very angry.

The latest conflict that Mr Hewitt had had with Dodge was over the night-school. Mr Hewitt and the school-teacher desired to open a night-school for the benefit of the young people in the neighbourhood, who had not had early opportunities to attend such places, and now had to work all day for their living. Dodge had managed to get himself elected as a school trustee. There were two other trustees; one was a parishioner of Mr Hewitt's, and an open-minded decent man; the other was a good-natured sort of a settler, with no mind of his own, and no conscience.

Dodge had talked of the school and its expenses, until the people thought that he was going to work great reform on the score of economy. In carrying his point on these lines, he had reduced the school opportunities of the boys and girls to barely six months of the year.

Mr Hewitt thought that this was outrageous, especially in view of the liberal grants that were given by the Government to encourage education.

When Mr Hewitt and the school-teacher had talked the matter over, they came to the conclusion that if the trustees would open the school, they would give lessons two nights a week.

The people thought that this was a generous offer; and Dodge also agreed with them; for he reasoned that they were getting double the work out of the teacher, all for the same money. So the young men started the school. The teacher made his work so interesting that the school was popular from its inception. Dodge soon noticed that the school diminished the evening attendance at his bar-room; and the amount spent in drinks and treats was correspondingly reduced. This must be rectified.

So he at once started an agitation about the expense the young men were putting the community to in the way of lamps and oil. The teacher put the statement of expense before the parents of some of the young people who had been attending the school instead of the bar, and had, therefore, been showing marked improvement in their general home-conduct. They at once started a subscription, and this expense was quickly met.

When this objection was overcome, Dodge agitated about the reckless wear and tear of the school property; the desks were only made for children, not for grown-ups. The whole of them would soon be busted, and they would be put to the expense of getting new ones. Public sentiment was against Dodge, and he was angry in secret. So he took another tack. The school trustees had the handling of the school. He knew that he could not manage Mr Hewitt's friend; but he, with the other trustee, would be the majority. So he determined to work him; which he succeeded in doing when he put his figure high enough.

To try and win back popular favour, and to make amends for closing the school against the wishes of the majority of the people, Dodge came out with this generous offer.

It is a good thing, and no mistake, to help the grown-ups to a bit more schoolin'. But the schoolhouse is no place for 'em; the seats were never meant for 'em. Let 'em come to my bar-room. It is a good large place, well lighted, and I'll lend you some tables, chairs, and all all free.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

The people saw through the ruse. Mr Hewitt publicly denounced Dodge and his scheme to entrap the young, and to tempt them with the fumes of destruction. His real motive was to get them into his hotel; and then he would induce them to treat at his bar. The young preacher said he would not advise his young men and maidens to go there, any more than he would ask them to swim around Niagara's whirlpool.

Well, said Dodge, you come to my bar, or your good-for-nothing night meetings'll stop.

The meetings shall be held, sir, and our young people will not be tempted by the dangerous fumes of your dirty bar, was Mr Hewitt's reply.

The young preacher, the school-teacher, and many others were much disappointed in the third trustee. They coaxed, pleaded and argued; but all in vain. He didn't see any harm in their falling in with old Dodge's scheme, and it would be a mighty saving to the community. He was not to be moved.

Well, said Mr Hewitt, the upshot of the thing is, we'll have to hold the night-school outside of the schoolhouse. But where can we go?

That was a grave question, where the homes of the people were so small, and where even these were widely scattered.

While wrestling with this problem, Mr Hewitt visited a lumberman across the portage, about three miles from the hotel. This man had increased the number of the workmen in his saw-mill, and having to find a suitable place in which to house them, had built a commodious boarding-house with a good-sized dining-room.

Mr Hewitt made bold to ask for this, and to his delight received not only a hearty consent, but also sympathetic co-operation. The fact was at once made known, and the school reopened with brighter prospects of success.

The removal of the school to a distance had caused a few of the men who lived around the hotel to drop off; but their places were taken by many who were nearer the saw-mill. Some people who had been tenants on Dodge's land threw up their property, and found better accommodation, with school opportunities for their children, across the portage.

Taking the thing altogether, while Dodge had won his point in closing the school, he was by far the loser in the end; and as he placed most of the success of his opponents to the tact and energy of Mr Hewitt, he was exceedingly angry with that young man, and also very desirous of humbling or getting rid of him.

This was how matters stood between them when Mr Hewitt set out on that eventful morning to meet the Justice at his place.

After the Game-Warden had left Mr Hewitt and Jonas in the woods, he went to the Duck Lake Hotel. Here he was met by Dodge, who said

The Justice will be here to-morrow.

So he wrote me, replied the Warden.

Have you any business with him? cautiously inquired Dodge.

Yes, I have caught a poacher. I am going to clean up this part of the country of poaching. See if I don't.

Who have you caught? asked Dodge, within tense interest.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

That young preacher across the bay.

At this Dave gave a low whistle of surprise, and also of relief, for fear had risen at the mention of bringing a poacher to justice. Then a Satanic grin came over his face, and he assumed a most knowing air.

Do you know anything about this fellow? asked the Warden.

Know him? Yes, I know him like a book. It's just what I expected you'd find him up to some devilment.

What do you know about him? asked the Warden, ready for any information that would assist him in prosecuting his case.

He's the veriest hypocritical preacher that ever struck these parts. He had some dirty schemes on hand, I knew, when he wouldn't board with a settler, though there was a many what would a taken him in. He lives in his log-house alone. Laws only knows what he's a-doin' there. Just as like done most of the poachin' around here. He's been seen going home late at night, whistlin' when he thought no one was around like as not had a deer in front of him, over his horse. Then he's keeping company with that sly sneakin' Indian, that pretends to catch fish for a living, but, between you and me, he and the preacher schemes and does a lot of devilment.

The Warden was prejudiced against the young preacher because of his stubborn denials of facts, as he called them; and as he knew nothing detrimental to Dodge, he was quite ready to accept these lies and innuendoes, almost without questioning. He, however, asked

Will you swear to your statements? Can you prove them?

Prove 'em! Well I should say! Lanky, call Huddy out of the bar, and come here.

The man addressed was a tall, thin man, who was at that moment leaning against the bar-room door. He did as he was bidden. As the two men came up Dodge told them that the young missionary had been summoned for poaching, and also what he had said about the young man; and then added that the Warden wanted some one to back up his statements.

The men were ready to corroborate anything that Dodge said, and followed his words as well as they could.

The Warden gravely thanked Dodge for his information, and asked him to be on hand on the morrow, and to have these gentlemen there, as their statements might be of some assistance to him.

When he was gone, Dodge led the men into the bar. He poured out a stiff glass of brandy for himself and drank it. Then, with a leer, he asked the men what they would have. Each took a glass of whisky; and as they were drinking Dodge hissed

We've got that preachin' cur by the throat now. What a gull that new Warden is! If we can only load the moose all on the preacher, eh! Get him out; then the Warden will go out for a rest; and we can get to work again.

He may be a gull, Davey, said Lanky, but he's evidently a weasel after poachers. I wonder he hasn't got on to the two you bagged last week. I'll bet they're in your cellar now, and'll spoil before you get 'em out. But however has he got hold of the preacher? I never knowed him to fire a gun. He's no sport: though he's a cocky little fighter, and he's a brave preacher on the school question, ain't he, Davey?

This sally made Dodge very angry, and he would have hit Lanky, had not Huddy stopped him, saying

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Don't be a fool, Dave! Now you've got the lad on the hip; get your yarns down pat; and let us hear 'em. The Justice may ask us stiff questions, and get us muddled if you don't.

This answer cooled Dodge's anger a little, and the men set to work to gather fictitious proof for the statements made, and see if they could not add other damaging accusations.

The Warden noted the points that Dodge and his men had given him, and carefully wove them into his indictment, which he prepared with elaborate care to deliver to the Justice at the trial.

As Mr Hewitt hurried along the bush road to his trial, he was so assured of his innocence, of meeting Jonas and Horace Fitzgerald, and of having the matter easily cleared up, that he was quite light-hearted. He had made no efforts to bring friends to uphold him, or to testify to his good character; the necessity of such a thing never entered into his mind. The morning was beautiful; the sunshine glistened and played with the dewdrops; and the forest seemed full of gladness.

As the young preacher was walking along, drinking in the beauty and song of Nature, he was attracted by a little scene that presented itself to him. He was walking on the brow of a little hill that abruptly descended to his right. At one time, perhaps, a stream had run along the bottom of the valley; but now it was dry and partly filled with leaves. The root of a large tree had elbowed its way out of the side of the hill. This made a delightful place for a rabbit's home. A pretty bunny had burrowed her nest under the root; and just as Mr Hewitt came along she had her little brood out for a frolic in the leaves, while she, with pleased and matronly contentment, watched their gambols.

The wind was blowing from them to Mr Hewitt, so they did not catch his scent as he paused a moment to see them. He had not watched them long before he became aware that there was another watcher. A sly old fox had his eyes upon the mother, and was cautiously creeping up until he could get within springing distance. He was intent upon his prey, and being lower than the young preacher, he was unaware of his presence. The actions of the fox were so sly and quick, that it seemed but a moment from the time that Mr Hewitt first observed him, till he was ready to spring upon the rabbit.

With his promptness to help, Mr Hewitt shouted, snatched up a stick, and jumped to rescue the mother. The fox, startled and taken completely by surprise, abandoned his purpose and turned and fled. Mr Hewitt threw his stick, and although he struck the fox he did not stop him, and he was soon lost in the forest. When the preacher looked around, the rabbits had also disappeared.

Mr Hewitt felt pleased that he had been permitted to save a mother to her little ones. He might have taken warning that he, the pastor of a flock, was also watched by a veritable fox; but in his faith and light-heartedness such a lesson did not impress itself upon him. On he went, whistling, and thinking more of the beauties of Nature, and the majesty and power of Nature's God, than of his trial and his defence.

As he turned the road, and the hotel came into view, the young preacher, for the first time, thought that his old enemy, Dodge, the proprietor, might influence the Justice against him. Still, he hoped that the administrator of the laws of the country would be above such influence.

The Warden was awaiting his coming in the bar-room of the hotel, where Dodge had placed a table and some benches for the trial. The Justice, accompanied by a sworn constable, had also arrived, and was anxious to get through the business as quickly as possible, so that he might fulfil another appointment.

CHAPTER FOUR. THE BACKWOODS TRIAL.

The Warden greeted Mr Hewitt in a friendly manner, told him that he was glad to see he was so promptly on hand, and then presented him to the Justice. Mr Hewitt told them that he had one request to make, and when asked what it was, said that he did not wish to be tried in Dodge's bar-room, amidst its disagreeable fumes. The Justice smiled, but the Warden agreed that it was not a very desirable place in which to meet.

The Justice asked Dodge for another room. Dodge swore a little, and said that the time the Justice was there before, he held his court in the bar-room.

But, said the Justice, we've got a preacher to try, and we must consider the cloth.

Dodge cursed the preacher up and down, and said he could go into the bar as well as any other sinner. He hadn't another room in the house large enough, unless it was the kitchen.

We'll go into the kitchen, then, if it will please you, sir, said Mr Hewitt, calmly addressing the Justice.

All right, Dave, put the table and chairs into the kitchen, and hurry up. Come on, Fitzgerald, and let us get to business at once.

Mr Hewitt looked anxiously around. There was neither Horace Fitzgerald nor Jonas; no, not even one man whom he could call a friend, and from whom he could expect a word of advice or sympathy. For a moment his strength seemed to leave him. He was hardly prepared for this; but the sweet memory of last night's scene floated in upon him, and as the words of the Psalmist again rang in his ears, he upbraided himself for unbelief. New strength came to him, and with interest he followed the proceedings of this backwoods court under a county Justice of the Peace.

After Dodge had reluctantly prepared the kitchen for the court, the Justice, followed by the Warden, Mr Hewitt, the constable, and the hangers-on of the bar-room, entered the house, and the business of the day was opened.

The Warden then took up his case against Mr Hewitt for moose-poaching, and said

Your Honour, I have a rather sad duty to perform to-day; namely, to accuse of poaching moose a young man who is a licentiate of one of our prominent Churches, and who, I believe, up to the time of his coming here, has had an honourable career. But, sir, I have such facts and evidence that it will be merely a matter of routine duty upon your part to receive it. Part of the evidence I shall give myself from my own observation; and I have also a few witnesses here, who will testify to the general conduct and life of this young man since his arrival in these parts. He then called upon Dodge and his men as witnesses. Their statements were merely repetitions of what Dodge had already said to the Warden; made, however, more effective by more direct statements and apparent proof.

Mr Hewitt, whose faith in humanity had been shocked at Dodge's previous actions, but not shattered, was almost dumb with surprise, amused, and yet saddened, that about his simple life and acts of kindness and self-sacrifice such abominable lies could be told.

In summing up his evidence, the Warden said

Thus, sir, we find this young man, coming out here ostensibly to preach the Gospel, but falling into the temptation of his surroundings, making his home, so-called a 'parsonage', a thief's den, consorting with a thievish Indian, in whose company I saw him myself, and under the cover of ministering to the eternal welfare of the neighbouring people, robbing the country of its game.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

As I have stated before and the evidence lies before you: the venison, the gun, and the knife I caught this young man red-handed in the act, almost over the moose. He had barely disposed of his part of a deer, no doubt taken away by his Indian accomplice, and, thinking himself secure, after having lunched off that piece which you see, was taking a nap, when I fortunately passed that way, saw the offal of the deer, followed the blood-marks on the trail, and in this way most convincingly found the thief.

While, sir, I beg you will have due regard for the youth of the poacher, it being his first offence, and also his position as a minister of the Gospel, I hope, sir, that you will remember the majesty of the law, which, in these parts, demands summary enforcement, to maintain its dignity and to retain proper regard therefor at the hands of the people.

Turning to the Warden, the Justice very gravely said

The fact that this young man has been trained for the ministry only adds to the heinousness of his crime. He, above others, should have known better than to have done such a thing, even from a higher motive than that of breaking his country's laws.

This is what the Warden really thought, and it pleased him very much to hear the Justice say it.

Then a grim smile played and rippled over the big, weather-beaten face of that backwoods Justice, and he emitted a succession of Ehms, which decidedly aroused the spectators and told them that something unusual was coming. Then the smile flitted away, and he asked the Warden, with the coolest deliberation

Is that the piece of meat which you took out of Mr Hewitt's home?

Yes, the Warden promptly replied.

The spectators were now alert to catch every word and even every look of the Justice. The Justice never acted in the present way without a purpose. His reference to the meat made many eyes study it curiously, and set many brains at work to fathom the Justice's meaning. As some saw that it was bear-meat, and not venison, as the Warden had so emphatically stated, a loud guffaw broke from several quarters. This piece of information was quickly passed from mouth to mouth, with increasing uproar. This greatly pleased the Justice, then he continued talking to the Warden. Half apologetically, he said

We backwoods people are simple, but we think we can tell what we have to eat. Your bloody axe and knife are tell-tales, but that meat, that meat! Come, Warden, tell us again how you got it?

This made the spectators uproarious over the Warden's meat, which he had so pompously displayed as evidence of moose-killing against the preacher. Even Dodge and his perjured parasite witnesses began to weaken, when they felt the sympathy of the spectators turning against the Warden, and also saw what the Justice was alluding to.

The Warden was annoyed at the innuendoes and mock humility of the Justice, and decidedly flushed at the laughter of the spectators, which he could not understand. A Government city official to be so badgered by a county Justice, and jeered at by country clowns!

We are waiting, said the Justice, who read the Warden's thoughts with well-disguised amusement, to hear you tell us exactly how you came by that meat.

I got it, began the Warden, in Mr Hewitt's home, so-called a parsonage, and it is part of a large moose

A great laugh from the spectators greeted this last remark. The Justice also smiled, but said sternly

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Silence!

Then, turning to the Warden, as if wishing him to proceed with his evidence, he said suggestively

This is venison, eh?

Yes, replied the Warden, with a good deal of hauteur.

Well, Mr Fitzgerald, I fear that you are not a well-qualified epicure, for I think that that piece of meat is cut out of a bear, and

The kitchen was nearly a pandemonium. The Warden was in a rage.

I traced the blood-marks to that house, he declared.

A bear has blood as well as a moose, said the Justice, in no wise disturbed at the noise or at the Warden's sudden rage.

Well, I'll take you to the ground, said the Warden, and I'll show you the rest of the deer cached in the trees.

Do, said the Justice; adding, I declare this court adjourned, to meet on our return.

The sympathy of the simple-hearted, rough bystanders ran quickly to Mr Hewitt. He had been a hero in their eyes because of his fight on the school question, and they respected him because of his brave and fearless preaching; but they had preferred to stand in with the man who served out their whisky. Now, however, they jumped to the conclusion that the young preacher was the victim of some plot hatched in revenge by Dodge, who had somehow duped the green Warden; and so, when the Justice dismissed the court, to manifest their sympathy with Mr Hewitt, they picked him up on their shoulders and carried him out of the house. It was a moment of triumph for the young preacher, and the rough fellows let loose all their pent-up admiration, and defying the power of Dodge they told him what they thought of his brave deeds.

At this turn of affairs, capped by the demonstrations of the men over Mr Hewitt, Dodge was very much chagrined. In the very worst of humour he drove out all who had lingered in the kitchen or on the doorstep, and he slammed the door upon them.

When noon arrived, and a large number of men presented themselves with the Justice and the Warden for dinner, Dodge's professional hospitality restored his good-humour, which was increased when some of the men told him that the Warden had shown the Justice the cache in the trees, and that they had traced unmistakable signs of the moose's blood to the Parsonage. The Justice had seen all this, but they could find no trace of venison in the Parsonage. There was bear-meat there in abundance", but not an ounce of venison. These latter facts were, however, not told to Dodge.

The news of the trial of the preacher had spread quickly around the country, and a number of Mr Hewitt's parishioners came up to look after their pastor. Mr Miller took him and the constable, whom Mr Hewitt specially invited, to dinner.

When the court re-assembled in the afternoon the Warden was very stern. He would make no mistakes this time, and he would have his revenge on the whole of them. The Warden could not understand the change in the Justice, especially in the matter of haste and expedition of business. In the morning he said he had another engagement he wished to fulfil, and he was in a hurry to get away. Now, however, he was very slow, deliberate, and rather too friendly, thought the Warden, with the spectators. The Justice knew that his other engagement could wait, but it

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

was not often his privilege to have a green conceited Warden in the toils, and he was not going to spoil his fun by rushing matters through too quickly.

Seeing some of Mr Hewitt's parishioners, the Justice called upon several of them to tell what they knew of Mr Hewitt's movements, especially during the last few days. One of those called upon was Mr Farley, who had gone for Mr Hewitt to come and help his sick hired man. As he told of that ride through the dark, over the rough roads, many a heart was thrilled, and there was some faint effort at a cheer. Mr Miller followed, and told of Mr Hewitt's faithful attentions to Widow Brown and the dying Charley. This story touched many of the rough hearts, and there were many wet eyes among the spectators and many a smothered, God bless him!

After one or two others had spoken, the Warden again took up the prosecution. It was mostly a repetition of his former address, with all reference to the haunch of venison carefully left out. Just as he was finishing, there was a sudden commotion around the kitchen door, and in burst Horace Fitzgerald, almost out of breath, followed by Jonas.

What's all this nonsense about the preacher's shooting moose? demanded Horace, breathlessly.

Don't interrupt the court, Horace, said the Warden, taking his cousin by the hand and trying to quiet him. I caught the young preacher poaching moose.

You never did, said Horace, emphatically.

But I did, insisted the Warden, and I have proved it to the Justice.

Well, I'll unprove it again for you. What have you proved to the Justice?

That I saw the remains of the moose near Hewitt's place, and traced the blood-marks to his house. Isn't that evidence enough, especially when I found the axe and knife which he used and the man himself almost on the spot?

No, sir, that is not evidence enough, said Horace.

But I caught him on the spot, insisted the Warden.

He had just returned from his pastoral work, then, declared the thoroughly aroused Mr Horace Fitzgerald.

Well, said the Justice, a moose has been killed, and Mr Hewitt's tools seem to have been used. The question now is, Who killed the moose?

I did it, sir, said Horace, straightening himself up. I did it. I went to pay Mr Hewitt a visit, but he was away. Jonas here can tell you where, if you want to know, or ask Mr Hewitt himself. I went into his place to rest, and saw his gun. I wanted to try the weapon, and that moose was the first thing that I saw to shoot. I gave Mr Hewitt a haunch of venison for the use of the gun.

Then, noticing the piece of bear-meat, he said to the Justice: What have you got this bear-meat here for?

Oh! said he, amidst the laughter of the crowd and before the crimson cheeks of the Warden, this is a piece of meat that the Warden has exhibited for your haunch of venison. It must have strangely disappeared, for when I visited Mr Hewitt's place I saw plenty of bear-meat, but no venison. However, on your confession, Mr Fitzgerald, said the Justice, with heroic deliberation, that you have shot a moose out of season, I shall have to fine you.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Fine away, said Horace; only don't go and accuse an innocent man, a lover of mankind, and a noble soul all round.

But the hotel-keeper, here, swears to seeing him with a thievish Indian, and taking moose to his house at night.

The Justice knew that these were lies, but he wished to draw Horace out a little.

Dodge has spoken falsely, then, said Horace. His name should never be mentioned in the same breath with that of that splendid young Indian. Just think, that man has paddled and portaged all night to get me, and, without waiting either to eat or rest, has hurried me here, to rescue Mr Hewitt from your false accusations. Has any one of you done a nobler thing? And as to the lies about Mr Hewitt's bringing moose home at night; I'll guarantee that old Dodge is the guilty party. Where was he, to see Mr Hewitt at night? or any of his beer-soaked followers? Mr Hewitt was homeward bound from some deed of love and mercy, and if anybody had moose, I'll guarantee it was old Davey Dodge.

You're right, Mister Horace, said Jonas, whose delight was shaking even his Indian imperturbability, and most of the spectators sympathised with him. Jonas was near the door that led to the cellar, which was partly open; and he added

Venison down there, p'rhaps, for sure; me smell him hard.

Get out! shouted Dodge.

I'll no get out for you, Dave Dodge, ven'son there, said Jonas, in a way that made Dodge keep back the hand which he had lifted to strike him.

Horace understood the meaning of Jonas words, and said

I accuse this man also of poaching, and demand that his cellar be searched.

There was some parley over this; but Horace won his point. He demanded that the constable should take charge of Dodge, while Jonas and the Warden be sent to search the cellar.

These two men quickly returned, and stated that the bodies of two large moose, lately shot, were there.

That means a forty-dollar fine at least, with costs, said the Justice.

Watch that man, constable, said Horace, for he's got to go with you, for he hasn't the money, the old scoundrel! How much is my fine, Justice? I want to get out of this mess, and go and see my wife.

I'll straighten that out, Horace, said the Warden. I am glad you have saved us from punishing an innocent man. I am very sorry that I have falsely accused you, Mr Hewitt. I shall return your knife and rifle. I'll send them over to you by Jonas. And as for him, I hope that I can secure his assistance. I want just such a man as he.

Well, said Mr Horace Fitzgerald, laughingly to his cousin, it is a pleasure to see your conceit humbled for once; but I shall pay my own fine, thank you. Perhaps, Justice, my accusation of Dodge, which has so quickly brought conviction, will give me part of his fine. Just figure out the sum, and send me my bill or my cheque, and it will be promptly acknowledged.

Then, turning again to the Warden, he said slyly, as a reproof to his hasty accusation

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Next time you catch me shooting a moose give me time to get my breakfast, ere you drag me before a Justice.

The Warden was very red in the face. He did not even turn to his cousin, but was looking at Mr Hewitt for a reply to his apology.

With his usual unselfishness, the young preacher said

I am glad that you have something for Jonas to do. You will find him as true as steel and as honest as the sunlight.

You better than that, Mister Hewitt, for sure, replied Jonas.

The constable, Justice, and Dodge were having some lively words between them, in which the last-named gentleman was cursing the interference and scent of the Indian, and also calling maledictions down upon the laws of the land.

Horace gave Jonas a pat on the back, and said

Stick to the Warden. You're well fixed now, old boy.

Then, slipping his hand under Mr Hewitt's arm, he said

Come, let us get out of this.

And they went home to supper.

CHUBB

CHAPTER ONE. THE COW SHALL FEED WITH THE BEAR.

The cow and the bear shall feed, read Mr Hewitt, in the Sunday morning service, their young ones shall lie down together.

Chubb turned in amazement, and looked at the reader.

His attention had been arrested when he had heard the preacher say wolf and lamb, but the connection escaped him. He caught the above words of Isaiah's glowing prophecy, and they photographed their images instantly upon his mind.

Chubb was a shy boy, and always sat near the door. He liked the preacher well enough, but he felt safer when the door to the woods was open. He was a child of the forest, and at the slightest sign of danger he would fly to his leafy home. It was his refuge; his strong tower. In fact, any little excuse, a dog barking or a horse neighing, caused him to leave the preaching service. Mr Hewitt had often noticed this, and was several times about to reprove; but he wisely checked himself, his better spirit telling him that his present hearers were not to be won by reproof. The first notes of that harsh spirit might steel their shy natures against him, perhaps for ever.

To-day, however, Mr Hewitt noticed the intent face and eager eyes of Chubb. They always met him squarely when he looked towards the door. The preacher was thankful, and prayed that the Holy Spirit would give him a special message for Chubb, that sturdy, but shy child of the woods. His theme was the incoming of Christ's kingdom of righteousness, peace and love, and the overthrow of fear, and hate, and sin. He finished without any

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

further references to bears and cows, and in this Chubb was greatly disappointed. But having been once aroused, he was going to find out more about what he had heard. Was it true that a man had seen a bear and a cow feeding, and cubs and calves lying down together?

Chubb waited for the preacher that day. When Mr Hewitt had shaken hands with his parishioners, and was hurrying along the path through the bush, he heard some one behind him. He turned and saw Chubb. He remembered again Chubb's eager eyes, and his own prayer on the boy's behalf, and so he was very glad to see the little fellow coming to talk with him.

Good morning, Chubb, he said heartily. How are you to-day?

Pretty good. You are going to Bethel?

Yes; my boat is down here at the landing. Would you like to row over with me?

Dunno. Say! he exclaimed, plunging directly into the subject that was on his mind, wasn't the man crazy who wrote what you read in the book to-day?

What man?

Why, the chap that said, 'The cow shall feed with the bear, and their young ones shall lie down together.'

That man was Isaiah, one of God's prophets. He was not crazy. He was sound as an oak.

But that's a funny idea of a cow and a bear feeding together.

Yes, Chubb, the whole is a wonderful prophecy of good times to come. Some of them have come, and who knows, added the optimistic preacher, but we may see the grand fulfilment of what this godly man foreshadowed!

Chubb was greatly impressed, and walked along almost in silence. The day was warm and beautiful. The aroma of the woods was rich, almost heavy in its sweetness. Mr Hewitt spoke of the trees, flowers, birds, lakes, God's day and His word. Chubb heard it all, and while believing it was all right, because Mr Hewitt said so, he comprehended but little. His mind was really absorbed by a plan to test the prophecy he had heard. If he could only get a bear and her cub and a cow and her calf together!

When they reached the lake, Chubb abruptly said, Good-bye, and turned into the woods.

CHAPTER TWO. THE BEAR-TRAP.

After leaving Mr Hewitt, Chubb sought his Indian friend, Jonas. This man was, as a rule, not easy to find, but good fortune favoured Chubb, and before he had gone very far he met Jonas. They had not met for some time, and so they were glad to see each other.

After the first greetings were over, Chubb asked a little abruptly

Seen any bears lately?

Some time ago.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Where?

Over there, he said, pointing towards the west, where the forest was thick, in spruce dark place.

Have you got a bear-trap?

No; make one.

Now? asked Chubb.

Now, replied Jonas.

So the two walked over to the spruce forest, and in a dark place, likely to be a hiding-place for bears, they built a dead-fall. Into the side of a little hill they dug a hole, facing it with logs. Two heavy logs were placed in a slip, so as to fall upon the curious bear that would attempt to enter. The trap was rough, and heavy, and clumsy; but it was such a thing that awakened the curiosity of bears.

The week that followed did not see Chubb at school, and very seldom at his home. Four times on Monday he visited his bear-trap, and three times on Tuesday, but the slip-logs were still in the air, unmoved.

To be near at hand, Chubb built a rude shack for himself out of birch and poplar poles. He covered the frame with birch-bark, and made a fine bed out of balsam boughs. Without leave one night he brought away from his home a blanket, a gun, and an axe. He also took fishing-tackle, and with it caught what fish he needed to eat. Jonas visited him on Thursday, and was greatly surprised to see his hut. He was, however, pleased to partake of Chubb's hospitality, as the boy invited him to supper, and to stay over night. Jonas was sorry to hear that Chubb had not had any luck with his bear-trap. He suggested that Chubb should get a bit of pork, and, after dragging it around the woods, put it in the trap as a bait.

Chubb paid a visit to his home the next evening. When questioned about his absence, he merely remarked: Been at Lodge. This phrase now had a double meaning. What the parents thought of was the hunting-lodge of the school-teacher. Having turned off the curious questions of his parents, Chubb asked about the cattle, and was told that one of the cows, which was about to calve, had been lost for some days.

This bit of news was not unwelcome to Chubb, and he resolved to find her and have her on hand for his experiment.

Chubb stayed with his people on Saturday, and helped them with their haying. On Sunday he went again to church. Mr Hewitt's theme was the Parable of the Sower, and his treatment was such as was very helpful to his hearers. He had certainly planted a strange seed in virile soil in Chubb. As Mr Hewitt made no reference to his pet idea, referring to no animals, only to a few birds that picked up the grain that fell by the wayside, Chubb did not think that there was anything in the sermon for him. During the day he secured some pork, put it into a bag and cached it ready for the morrow.

Monday morning he started off as if to school, with his lunch. Seeing an old halter on the fence and some rope by the barn, as he passed, he appropriated them, thinking that they would come in handy to make a muzzle for the bear.

When Chubb visited his trap that morning he could hardly believe his eyes. The slip-logs were down! And on nearer approach he found a yearling bear, crushed under the logs. But he was stone dead, and must have been there at least a day.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

With a good deal of effort Chubb got the logs up and the bear out.

This was somewhat disappointing. He wanted a live bear.

Got a bear, Chubb?

Chubb turned his eyes to see the owner of the cheery voice.

Yes, Jonas, but he's dead.

That's all right. Save bullets.

Chubb was going to say something; but he bit his lip. Then, quick as a flash, a new idea struck him. He would stuff the bear, or he would get the teacher, Mr Green, to do it for him.

Jonas, he said, did you ever stuff a bear?

Stuff him in my mouth when cook.

Chubb laughed.

No, not that way. I mean did well, have you not seen Mr Green's lodge, and his birds?

No.

Then you ought.

The bear was dragged to Chubb's lodge, cleaned and hung up on a tree.

Chubb went to school that afternoon.

I have missed you, Chubb, said the teacher, kindly. Where have you been?

Hayin' and studyin'.

What are you studying now?

Cows and bears.

Good subjects. Isn't it about time you came again to my lodge?

Will go to-night.

So it was settled, and Chubb spent that night with Mr Green.

CHAPTER THREE. BACK TO NATURE.

The stipend offered for teaching school at Duck Lake was not such as induced men to be numerous amongst the applicants. But this year there had been one man, and he had been successful in securing the appointment. This man was Sheldon Green. Tall, thin, hollow-cheeked, he had come to Muskoka for his health. Threatened with

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

consumption, he had been told that the Highlands of Ontario had the atmosphere to restore his health, if he would make proper use of it. So he had therefore applied, and was successful in being appointed to the Duck Lake school.

Mr Green opened his school, and began to teach in the stereotyped way. His physicians had given him explicit instructions to keep out in the open air as much as possible, and urged him to cultivate sport and other outdoor attractions. But he was under contract to put in a certain number of hours at school with his scholars, and he did so faithfully at first.

He began his educational career at Duck Lake with a bare dozen of indifferent scholars rough, shy, and ill-kempt and, adopting the old-fashioned methods, he had the usual success with rebellious scholars. Within a few weeks, however, his methods, learned in good, model schools, underwent considerable alteration in his hands. When the sessions for intermission came he went out with his pupils, taught them games, and took part in them. In the freer conversation of the play-hour he found that some of the boys who were apparently the most stupid at their lessons were very well informed in the facts of Nature. The answers of these young woodsmen interested him greatly, and by them much instruction in natural history, botany, and woodcraft was received and imparted.

These outside conversations of the teacher and scholars became eagerly anticipated by all concerned, and the intermissions on fine days were considerably lengthened. The flora of the country was searched, and grasses and mosses, ferns and flowers, were made to yield hostages to these searchers after truth.

The settlers wondered at their children's eagerness to get away to school, and older boys and girls began to ask permission to attend school once more. In this way the attendance increased to a score, and was now well on into the second score.

One day Chubb almost disorganised the school and suddenly enlarged the teacher's horizon of efforts and work.

Chubb did not arrive at school that day until recess. He then appeared, driving a little black and white animal. Around its neck and left shoulder was a rope. With a stick Chubb kept it moving reluctantly towards the school.

As soon as they saw him the children ran and gathered around the pair.

Look out! said Chubb to some who, he thought, were getting too close. Look out, or he'll shoot you!

What have you got there, Chubb? asked the teacher.

A new subject to study, said Chubb, adopting the teacher's language.

The teacher came rather boldly and suddenly forward, and Chubb's little animal crouched, and his dark brown hairs were almost lost in a forest of white bristles.

A porcupine, said one of the boys.

The teacher touched it with the toe of his boot, and got a slap on his leg with its tail that sent one or two of the quills into his ankle. With an exclamation of pain and surprise he drew back his foot and picked the quills out of his shin. Chubb was rather dismayed that the teacher had been hurt, and feared that he would suffer greater punishment for being late.

Where did you get him? asked the teacher, kindly.

The tone of voice relieved Chubb's fear somewhat.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Roped him in the lake.

Roped him in the lake! exclaimed the teacher.

Yes. I was paddling over to school, and I saw him swimming towards an island. I paddled around him until I tired him a bit. Then I slipped this rope around him and brought him to land. He walked awful slow, and so made me late.

The teacher first smiled and then suddenly grew stern.

Yes, he said, you are very late to-day. Would you have got here in time if you had come right through?

Yes, sir, said Chubb, eagerly, for he thought there was some hope of pardon in the master's voice; been here in lots of time.

Did you know that you were running a risk of being late?

Never thought of it till I saw you. I was so busy with the porcupine.

And when you saw me you expected that I would punish you?

Dunno. You know when a fellow has caught a good thing.

Yes, indeed, Chubb, said the teacher, laughing, I do. And I also know when to forgive a pupil for being late, and so I forgive you.

Chubb was greatly pleased at these words, and vowed that he would fight for that teacher whenever he was called upon.

But, Chubb, added the teacher, what are you going to do with your porcupine?

He's for you to box up and teach us about.

Well, said the teacher, rubbing his chin in some dismay, we'll see about it. It is now time to go in to school. Tie your porcupine to a tree, and come in.

Chubb did as he was bid. Ere he entered the schoolhouse he looked back, and saw the poor tired little animal settle down to rest. So he went contentedly to his lessons.

The noon hour was one of great excitement. The boys were eager to establish a menagerie, and determined to press their idea upon their teacher. They ate their lunches around the porcupine, and told each other all the stories they had ever heard about porcupines. Some morsels of food were given to the little captive, but none were so acceptable as the bits of rind that Chubb cut off the slabs of pork that were in his roughly made sandwiches.

There was no recess in the afternoon, and so Chubb did not get out until four o'clock. When he and the others came out they saw no porcupine. There was the rope tied around the tree, neatly cut in two at the loop. Master porcupine's sharp teeth had cut through the rope, and he had escaped again to his freedom in the woods.

Chubb was much chagrined. But the teacher consoled him by telling him that it was wrong to kill porcupines or to take them from their native haunts. They could live where other animals could not, and many a hunter had been saved from starving to death by coming across a porcupine in a barren land. Then he promised the boys that,

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

while he could not see his way to set up a menagerie, he would try to help them start a small museum. For a few months during his college course he had stayed with the taxidermist of the university, and had learned something of his art.

With the assistance of some of the boys he built a hunter's lodge in the forest, about two or three miles from the schoolhouse. With traps and snares he caught many birds and four-footed animals. The boys delighted to help their teacher, and it became an object of rivalry amongst them who was to spend the night with the teacher in his hunting-lodge.

Chubb's turn came. He handled the tools with skill, and mastered the use of the medicines, as the boys called them, with which the teacher doctored the skins. Proving himself an adept at this work, Chubb was longer and more frequently at the teacher's lodge than any of the other boys.

Thus it was that Chubb had been missed by the teacher, and his absence from the lodge so keenly marked. The teacher was glad to welcome back his most enthusiastic pupil in taxidermy.

The evening of Chubb's return to the lodge was also marked by a visit from Jonas. The Indian was greatly interested in what he saw. He had many questions to ask the teacher, and he stored up many more, to ask Chubb in the greater freedom of the woods. Near the close of the evening's visit, Jonas suggested to Chubb

Give bear-meat for medicine.

So the boy told Mr Green that he and Jonas would like to get some of his chemicals to cure a hide, and offered some bear-meat in exchange. To this the teacher readily agreed, and so some medicine was wrapped up and given to Jonas.

That night Chubb imposed on his friendship with the teacher to borrow, without asking leave, some of his sewing needles and his big book on taxidermy, with its numerous illustrations and coloured plates. Having secured these ere the teacher rose, and after placing on the table a large piece of bear-meat, he slipped away into the forest, and was not seen again by the teacher for some time.

CHAPTER FOUR. THE COW AND THE BEAR.

Jonas had spent the night in Chubb's lodge, and when the boy returned in the morning the Indian was eating his breakfast. After enjoying a meal of bear-steaks, Chubb and his friend visited the bear-trap, re-set and baited it with pork. Jonas made Chubb a wooden frame on which to build up his bear, then he started out to dispose of the rest of the bear-meat amongst the settlers.

Chubb worked carefully on his bearskin and cleaned it thoroughly. Then he secured from a stack in a clearing some good dry hay for stuffing. While going for the hay Chubb kept a sharp look-out for the lost cow, and when he was returning with his bundle of hay he was delighted to see her.

She was a lively beast at any time, and now she was doubly alert. Cattle that are allowed to run loose in the bush ruffle up and are much more active and spirited than the stall-fed. And Chubb saw the cow look at him with head up and ears alert. The way in which she held her horns told him to be careful how he approached. All this Chubb noticed, and was glad. He did approach her, and gave her a few wisps of his hay. But he almost dropped his bundle in delight when he got beside her, for out from the trees there bounded towards them a lively little calf.

By driving and coaxing, Chubb got the cow near his lodge. Then he tied her to a tree with a rope, and kept her to be introduced to a bear. He was blessed in the mean time, for the milk the cow gave him made a great addition to

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

his regular diet.

But Bossy did not have to wait long for her strange introduction. On the second afternoon after her arrival Chubb came dancing home from his trap. There was a big she-bear in it, and a little cub outside. Chubb hastily got out his halter and ropes. Untying the cow from the tree, he led her and her calf to his bear-trap. When the cow scented the bear her eyes grew wild, and she almost pulled the rope out of Chubb's hands. He succeeded, however, in tying her to a tree, and then he went over to the bear. The weight of the logs had crushed the animal almost senseless. Cautiously pulling away a side log, Chubb slipped inside, and managed to get his halter over the bear's head. She roused herself a little, but the logs held her fast. Chubb added a rope to the halter, and tied it around the bear's nose as well as her neck.

Having finished this work to his satisfaction, he lifted up the slip-logs. Relieved of the weight that crushed her, the bear recovered her senses and was angry, but she could only roll over and groan in her pain. She roused herself, however, very quickly when she saw Chubb near at hand and the cow not very far away. With every minute her strength increased.

The cow was now frantically pulling at her rope. She would run around the tree, this way and that, trying to get away; trying also to keep her calf in sight, and sometimes making as if she would like to have a drive at the bear. The bear could not see her cub, and, as the cow was making such a fuss, it seemed to think that the cow was the cause of all her trouble. It was greatly annoyed at the straps and ropes around its head, and tore at them with its paws. The halter-straps broke, and then, to Chubb's horror, he saw the bear slip the ropes off its head. Thus free, the bear stalked over towards the cow. Whenever the bear moved, the cow would wheel around and face it, with her horns near the ground, ready for any attack. The bear had not fully recovered from its crushing, and therefore only slowly and cautiously approached the cow. When the bear rested the cow would raise her head and bellow to her calf, and try to get away with it from that dangerous place.

When near her antagonist, the bear raised itself on its hind legs. This action caused the cow to make another frantic effort to get away from the tree. The rope broke, and she was free. With her tail in the air she charged the bear. The bear caught the cow's horns in her paws and nearly broke her neck, but the cow's charge was too furious to be stopped. One of her horns caught the bear's paw and tore it. A stream of blood spurted over the cow's nose. The smell of blood angered her still further, and she charged again. This time she was more successful, and sent a horn right between the bear's ribs.

With a groan of rage and pain the bear fell. The cow ran this way and that way in her excitement, bellowing all the while for her calf.

Chubb thought that the bear was killed, and went over to it. Though badly hurt the bear turned suddenly, and caught Chubb by the arm. She nearly ground it to bits with her teeth. In his agony Chubb fell on the ground, while the bear raised itself up and stood over him. In its fury it clawed his shoulder and back, and Chubb would have been killed had not the cow noticed the movement of her antagonist. When she saw it up, she charged it again. Catching the bear squarely on the side, she sent it rolling off the boy.

Chubb, thus relieved, got up and ran as hard as his legs could carry him to his lodge. He had a few thoughts by the way, but they were not upon the virtues of prophecy. Overcome by fright and pain, he threw himself upon his bed of boughs, and became unconscious. In this condition Jonas found him.

CHAPTER FIVE. CHUBB'S HOME.

Mr Green did not miss his big book on taxidermy until a couple of days after Chubb's visit, but he somehow connected the book with Chubb, for the boy had shown a special fondness for it. Still, he was surprised that

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Chubb had taken it without asking leave. It was a very valuable book, exceptionally well written, and handsomely got up, with coloured lithographs. So the teacher made inquiries for Chubb, but none of the children knew of the boy's whereabouts.

About a week after Chubb's visit and disappearance, the teacher walked several miles through the bush to the former's home. The house was made of pine-logs, fairly well built, but the barn and sheds were in sad condition for want of completion and repair. Plough and harrow were exposed to the weather, while two half-fed tired-looking oxen were lying on the side of a heap of manure. The garden gloried in its weeds.

Poor Chubb! sighed the teacher; what inspiration did you get from this home?

Passing round to the back door, the teacher saw a girl of ten or eleven, though from her wan features she looked much older, carrying a baby and trying to pick up the chips at the same time.

Hurry up with that wood! rang out sharply from the house; and the owner of the shrill voice appeared almost immediately in the doorway. She was a rough-looking woman, with a frowsy head of hair, a stranger for at least a week to a comb. Her feet were adorned with rusty, torn, unbuttoned shoes, while her dress was short and ragged. Her sleeves were rolled up to her elbows, and her hands were covered with dough and flour.

Oh, the new teacher, she said, changing her tone and manner, as she saw Mr Green approaching.

Yes. My name is Green, and yours is Mrs More, I presume.

Yes, sir, that's our name.

The teacher made an effort to help Jennie in with her burden of chips and squalling baby.

Drop them chips and shake hands with the teacher, the mother shouted to Jennie. Where are your manners?

What a bear! thought Green. While Jennie on her part was almost overcome by fear and bashfulness.

Jennie is doing all right, suggested the teacher.

All right! repeated the mother. I never seed her do a thing right. These children have no manners.

And no mother to teach them, said Green to himself; and his heart went out in purest pity for both Jennie and her brother, Chubb.

Come in, won't you? asked Mrs More. We ain't very clean, but now you've come this far, come right in.

Green entered. He wished for a hoe the floor seemed to have never made the acquaintance of a broom. In the centre of the room stood a rusty cook-stove with broken damper. Before it a lad five or six years of age was playing with a stick in the ashes. On a box near the stove rested a pan of dough, which the mother was working up for bread. When that worthy woman came back from scolding Jennie and inviting the teacher to enter, she grabbed the little boy by the shoulder and whirled him around. This caused his stick to flip a lot of ashes over the pan of bread.

You young brat you! she exclaimed, and gave him a severe cuffing. Then she resumed her punching at the dough the ashes going in with the flour, Mrs More never making the slightest effort to remove them.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Dear me, thought Green, this country needs some one besides a school-teacher, for parents need instruction as well as children. Some Good-Home Association should send up missionaries.

Green thought that he could not have been more uncomfortable in a bear's den, so he plunged into his errand with a desire to be through with it and get away.

Where is Chubb, Mrs More?

Why, said the astonished mother, straightening herself up from her pan, and looking sharply at the teacher, we thought he was with you in your hunt-lodge! The young brat; has he been truanting again? Just wait till I catch him. I'll hide him! But we haven't seen him for a whole blessed week. He said he was going to 'the lodge,' and we thought it was yourn.

Green saw that Mrs More was no wiser as to Chubb's whereabouts than himself; but though he was greatly surprised, he thought that, for Chubb's sake as well as his mother's, he had better quell any fears about the boy.

Oh, well, he said, somewhat indifferently, he was at school a little while ago, and I guess he'll turn up all right.

He usually does, said Mrs More, very coolly.

The teacher rose, patted the little boy on the head, and moved towards the door. When in the doorway, he turned and said that he was glad to see them so well, and that he must hurry on.

But you'll stay for supper, won't you? I'll soon have this bread ready for the oven, and when it's cooked we'll have supper.

The teacher's eyes rested for a moment on the ashed dough, and then he replied

No, I thank you. I cannot stay to-night. Good-bye.

Mrs More rubbed the dough off her hands, and came to the door. She was greatly disappointed in the teacher, and pressed him to stay; but he was firm.

Good-bye, Bobbie, he said to the little fellow, patting him on the head. Turning to Jennie, he patted her cheek.

Cheer up, my little girl, he said. Tell your mother to let you come to school.

Then, with a doff of his hat, he went down the path, through a gap in the fence and on into the woods.

CHAPTER SIX. NO TELL.

Mr Green, you no tell on Chubb?

Why, Jonas, where is Chubb?

When he had not found Chubb in his miserable home a place that roused his deepest sympathy with the rising inmates the teacher took a new path through the woods, so as to reach his boarding-house ere dark. After he had tramped for a couple of hours, he had to pass near the spruce bush; and here, before a rude poplar and birch-pole hut, six or seven miles from the Mores' home, he was stopped by Jonas.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

You no tell on Chubb? repeated Jonas. He in there. Want you.

The teacher hurried into the hut, and there, on a bed of balsam boughs, he saw Chubb.

The poor boy, said the teacher, laying his hand on the boy's brow, he is in a raging fever. What is the matter?

Jonas told him that he had been hurt by a bear. The teacher then carefully examined the wounds, and while he noted that they were healing badly, he saw no reason why they should prove fatal. He made Jonas bring him some water from the lake, and he bathed the wounds. Then, tearing his own white shirt into strips, for he was miles from any home and linen, he bound up the wounded boy.

With a sigh of relief and thankfulness, Chubb opened his eyes and looked up. But when he recognised the teacher, that sigh was quickly chased away by thoughts of fear and anxiety.

Teacher, he stammered, I've not been a good boy.

Never mind, Chubb, said the teacher, soothingly. Just you keep quiet and get well, and then we'll talk about it.

I took your book without asking. I was going to take it back when I got the bear stuffed. It is over there. He tried to point, but in raising his arm the pain was so great that it made him groan.

There, there now, my boy. You must lie still.

Looking quickly around the place, the teacher saw the bearskin shaped up and partly-stuffed. Beside it, lying open on a block of wood, he saw his precious book on taxidermy.

I see you have been working and studying hard.

Teacher, said Chubb, anxiously he was pleased with the teacher's kind words, but his mind was troubled about something else that would not let him rest teacher, he repeated, don't tell the boys that a bear licked me nor the folks will you?

He turned his head and looked imploringly at the teacher.

But you killed the bear. You have him partly-stuffed.

That isn't the bear that did it, he said, and looked to Jonas to explain.

Found big dead she-bear by our trap. Cub lying over it crying, said Jonas. Jonas caught cub. Fixed big bear. Big hole in bear's side. No gun, no knife made it. Jonas dunno more.

Chubb turned excitedly.

Our red cow knocked the bear off me. She hooked it.

Yes, for sure, said Jonas, make big hole in ribs.

Then Chubb's fever came back with a rage, and in his ravings he muttered

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

The cow and the bear shall feed, and their young ones shall lie down together.

Whatever is up? said the teacher to Jonas. The lad is quoting Scripture.

Dunno, for sure, said Jonas. Better see Mr Hewitt about it.

Good man to see, any way, and he is not more than four miles away.

For sure. Jonas go find him.

And the Indian started off on the trot towards the Parsonage.

CHAPTER SEVEN. NEW QUARTERS.

Quite a while before Jonas and the young preacher arrived, Chubb had come back to his senses. Green was so curious about Chubb's experiences, and especially his quoting the Scripture, that, in spite of the boy's illness, he made Chubb tell him, as well as he could, all that had happened.

When the two men entered Chubb's face was bright, and the teacher was laughing heartily.

What is the matter now, Green? asked the young preacher.

Matter of unfulfilled prophecy, I fancy, said the teacher, rising to greet the preacher. There is work here for all of us, he added; Chubb has been trying to negotiate an introduction between Mrs Bear and Mistress Cow, but the two came into conflict as some females will and so he is now laid up in consequence.

No time for speech-making, Green. How did the bear catch Chubb? asked the preacher, pushing past the teacher.

Am I not trying to tell you? was Green's laughing reply.

Jonas had told Mr Hewitt that Chubb had been torn by an old she-bear, and that his face was as hot as fire. So the preacher brought with him a roll of cotton for bandages, some ointment and quinine.

After administering some quinine, Hewitt soon had his coat off and sleeves rolled up for work. He removed the blood-soaked bandages, and cleansed the wounds. Seeing the shirt-cotton on the boy, the preacher glanced at the teacher's throat, and, missing his shirt, realised what he had done.

No wonder you succeed with your pupils, Green! he said.

Why? asked the teacher, whose face was still wreathed with smiles.

A man who so readily sacrifices his shirt will and deserves to win the love of his pupils.

Tut, man! there was no other bandage cloth around. But, he added, with a twinkle, that wasn't in the prophecy you taught, was it?

What prophecy? Talk so that I can understand. You are an enigma to me to-day. Here is a boy, one of your boys

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

And yours.

And mine, nearly had his life torn out of him, and you stand laughing over him.

And all because of prophecy!

What prophecy?

Well, be still, and I'll tell you. Do you remember when you read Isaiah's prophecy of the animals, at a Sunday morning service in the Pine Bluff schoolhouse?

Yes; but what has that to do with Chubb?

Pretty nearly everything just now. Do you remember Chubb telling you of the funny idea of Isaiah in saying that a bear and a cow should feed together?

What? Do you mean that Chubb took that literally, and

Yes, yes, said the teacher, laughing heartily.

Jonas was beginning to see a little of the fun, and also laughed in his quiet way.

Here, you fellows, get out of this, said the young preacher, rising from Chubb's side, and motioning with his right hand, dripping with blood and water, to the exit.

How are Chubb's wounds doing? asked the teacher, checking his laughter as he stepped up and looked over the boy.

There is nothing to fear, said the preacher, as he settled down again to his work, if Chubb has good care. Chubb is going to know more about Isaiah's prophecy, and as my teaching caused Chubb to get hurt, I'll take him to my home. So you and Jonas can make me a stretcher as quickly as you can.

But I've got something to say in this, said the teacher.

Well, say it quickly.

You've got other work to do, and you cannot be always with Chubb.

Do you want to take him to his home?

Heaven forbid! said the teacher; at least, not just yet. He'd die of dirt and neglect if he went just now.

Jonas will help me nurse him.

Jonas help, for sure, said the Indian, stepping forward. Jonas get fish, get duck, get nice things for Chubb to eat.

Good for you, Jonas. That is practical, and we'll need help that way.

And you can count on me for all medicine and clothing that Chubb needs, said the teacher. And I shall take the liberty of relieving you on Saturdays and Sundays.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Then all is easy, said the preacher, eh, Chubb?

Chubb was a silent, patient, intent listener and observer of all that had passed. He did not understand why Mr Green laughed so heartily, but he understood the preacher's look at the teacher's collarless throat, and he loved his teacher better than ever. Then Mr Hewitt's kindly touch almost hypnotised Chubb's pain away, and he felt a resignation under him such as he had never had before.

As the teacher was going out with Jonas to make the stretcher, Chubb said

Teacher, you'll not tell on me? Green came back to the bedside. He told Mr Hewitt of Chubb's request not to make known his accident to his schoolmates or folks at home. After a little consultation the men told Chubb, to his great delight, that nothing less than a fatal turn in his illness would cause them to make known his accident.

Jonas got a couple of stout poles and lashed cross-pieces to them. A blanket fastened over these completed the stretcher. Then, by easy stages, Chubb was carried through the woods to the little log Parsonage.

CHAPTER EIGHT. MORE PROPHECY.

In his new, clean quarters Chubb steadily improved. He made Jonas tell him all about the fish he brought in, where and when he caught them, and also where he shot the ducks and partridges, or snared the rabbits. He was eager to hear of his escapades with poachers of his Majesty's game, for Jonas was one of the Warden's best men. Chubb never tired of hearing Jonas describe his journey to Sandy Bay to get Mr Horace Fitzgerald to save Mr Hewitt from the grip of the law.

During his convalescence, Jonas and the teacher brought Chubb's tools and chemicals, and also his partly-stuffed bear, over to the Parsonage. To Chubb's great satisfaction the teacher finished the work for him, giving Chubb, as he did it, many valuable hints in taxidermy. Chubb's delight was nearly complete when the teacher affixed in the bear's head a couple of greenish-coloured glass eyes. Mr Green had many a merry tale to tell about school, but none pleased Chubb so much as the teacher's description of the commotion caused by his bringing a porcupine to school.

Still, above the others, the boy's interest grew in the young preacher. His kindly touch was a surprise to Chubb. He had never before known such a thing. He was much impressed with the work and manner in which his amateur physician examined and treated him; then the way in which he measured and poured out his decoctions interested Chubb greatly. It was a great thing, thought the patient, to doctor the skins of birds, and stuff a bear; but to pour out medicines to make a sick boy well! To kill and cure was great; but to make one feel good was greater. To destroy was in the natural wildness of things; to build up and redeem was something above the common order of events. Thus the preacher came into a large place in Chubb's heart.

One day, when the preacher was quietly reading his Bible beside his patient, Chubb said

Mr Hewitt, read again for me what the Book says about, 'the bear and the cow shall feed together.'

All right, Chubb, I will.

He hoped that he could make the passage clear to him, to-day. So he read the latter part of the sixty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, telling about the new heaven and new earth, wherein the wolf and the lamb shall feed together.

Wished I'd begun with a wolf, said Chubb.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Did you ever catch one?

No; but a pack nearly caught me and my father. It was when I was very little, and we toted a load of hay in to a lumber camp, and we was late getting home. The wolves broke into pa's sheep-pen two winters ago, and cleaned out all our sheep. I don't believe that they are any better than bears with cows, added Chubb, disgustedly.

In spite of himself, Mr Hewitt had to laugh.

That man's crazy who wrote that, said Chubb, sturdily. I don't believe a word of it.

Don't decide too quickly, Chubb. Isaiah is not writing of things as they are naturally found, either in his day or ours. He says that all this is to take place in the 'new heavens, and the new earth,' where righteousness, love, and truth dwell. It is a prophecy of a better day; but it may begin in our midst now. Love will cast out hatred and murder from our hearts. This beginning with us will go through all creation until murder is known no more; when even the wolf will change his murderous nature, and become as docile as a lamb. But this is not all that this great writer says about animals. Let me read the other chapter.

Then the preacher read the eleventh chapter, Chubb putting in a whistling comment as the animals were told off to enjoy themselves in peace. When the reader had finished, Chubb lay in silence for some time. Mr Hewitt waited for him to speak.

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, he muttered. The cow shall feed with the bear, and their young ones shall lie down together. A little child shall lead them.

After repeating these passages over to himself, he suddenly raised himself in his bed, and turning to Mr Hewitt, he said earnestly

Say, that's great. I'd like to hunt 'em, like Jonas. I'd like to know of 'em and stuff 'em, like the teacher; but I'd like best of all to lead 'em.

You may lead them some day, Chubb, said the young preacher, with a look into the boy's eyes that was a prayer and a hope.

How? asked the boy, eagerly.

By knowing the Great Leader, and being like Him.

Who? Isaiah?

The one of whom Isaiah wrote; the one on whom rested, as Isaiah says, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the Lord. Jonas knows, continued the preacher, where the ducks fly, and where the fish swim; so he applies his knowledge. He goes, catches and kills them to make us food. That is one man. On him rests the spirit of knowledge and might. The teacher can take lines and figures, letters and words, and can find lessons and laws of God for us to learn. On him rests the spirit of understanding and counsel. That is another man. But it takes a third man to make the perfect child of God, the one who is to lead the rest; and this man has not only knowledge and counsel and might, but also the fear of the Lord, which buds forth into a passionate love for God, for man, for all created things.

That's you, said Chubb, following the preacher intently.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

I hope I have some of this fear and love, Chubb, but Jonas is learning it, and I believe the teacher has much of it. You remember he tore his own shirt up to make bandages for you. His fear lest you should suffer and his love for you made him do it.

And I love him for it, said Chubb, as grateful tears sprang into his eyes.

So in most men three men seem to exist, though they do not all get equal development. There is the hunter, who delights to chase and kill; but a man who becomes no better than this will be little better than a bear or a wolf. He will live only a brute's life. The man of knowledge, the one who delights to analyse, compare, and draw conclusions, may be satisfied to see things as they are, and not help to make them any better. His soul may be as black as midnight, and he may be cruel and vicious.

And the third man, said Chubb, impatient to hear of the last of the three men who all live in one man.

The third one is the man of aspiration, the man whose eye is on God, who, seeking peace in his own soul, would teach all things to be at peace amongst themselves. He fears God; and, Chubb, you may have this fear too.

What? Fear? Fear makes cowards. Jonas isn't a coward; no more am I.

No more is the teacher; no more is Jesus Christ; or 'the child who shall lead them.' One kind of fear fear of man, of animals, fear of getting yourself hurt makes cowards; but fear of God fear of doing wrong is a fear causes you to forget yourself, and makes you as brave as a lion.

Then I want that fear.

That's right, Chubb. Desire it, ask God for it, and you shall have it. That fear means the best that is in man. Yes, it is better than is in man. It comes from God's Spirit being in man, and He teaches us to love God, and to love everything God has made; He teaches us to fear to treat anything wrongly or unkindly. It will be the effort of our lives to know men and serve them, to know animals and to master them by being a means of blessing to them.

Blessing to a bear! exclaimed Chubb in surprise. Why, a bear nearly killed me. I wished that I had killed it.

There are worse bears, Chubb, than those that have fur coats on.

The preacher looked meaningly at the boy.

Do you mean my father and my mother? said Chubb, his eyes flashing, for if you do I'll get right up and go home!

Did I mention any names?

No.

Well, then, whenever you meet any one, whether father or mother or any one else who treats you unkindly, remember that the bravest thing is not to fight back, but to patiently suffer, pray to God, and try to find out some way to be a blessing to them.

But shouldn't men fight and kill anything?

If you and I met a bear, we would not hesitate to kill it as quickly as we could. But I was going to tell you that in calling to your assistance the three men who, I said, lived in every man, you should begin with the man of prayer,

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

the man after God's own heart. If you can conquer your enemy by love, you have won a great victory. But if your man of knowledge tells you that life is dependent upon your efforts, whether to get food or to preserve life, then you should call your hunter, and send him to work with all his powers.

I'd kill wolves too. They killed all my father's sheep, the vermin. I'd kill every one of them if I could!

But, Chubb, if man had done so at the beginning you would have had no collie dog, like your Duncan. On every farm where there is a sheep and a dog, the prophecy 'the wolf shall dwell with the lamb' is to that extent fulfilled.

True for you, Mister Hewitt. The dog is a tame wolf, for sure! said Jonas, as he entered and dropped a bag of game inside of the door.

That was your 'Amen', Jonas, laughed the preacher.

Thus, you see, continued Mr Hewitt to Chubb, that the sheep's worst enemy has been turned by wisdom, love, and training into being his best friend and protector. There are other animals to be won. 'A child shall lead them,' Chubb; why not you?

Much good luck this week, Jonas? asked the preacher, formally greeting his Indian friend.

Ah, huh, was the laconic reply.

Can you stay a little while with Chubb?

Ah, huh, said Jonas, and smiled with pleasure.

Then, seizing his opportunity, Mr Hewitt left Chubb in Jonas' care while he hurried away to fulfil some of his pastoral duties.

CHAPTER NINE. PURCHASING THE RED COW.

Chubb had almost forgotten the cub that came with the old mother-bear on the eventful day. Suddenly thinking of it when Jonas was his nurse, he asked

When you found the dead bear by our trap, Jonas, did you see the cub?

Yes, for sure.

Did you catch it?

Yes, for sure.

What did you do with it?

Keep it for Chubb. He get well soon. Train it to lie down with the calf.

And the Indian's eyes twinkled.

Do you believe that that can be done? said Chubb, almost springing out of bed and looking Jonas squarely in

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

the face.

Chubb try again, came from the almost imperturbable man.

Yes, I will, replied Chubb, subsiding under the blankets.

When Jonas is around.

All right; but where's the calf?

Dunno. Gone home, per'aps, for sure.

With Mr Hewitt's permission the cub was brought to the Parsonage. He was a sturdy little fellow, about the size of a collie dog. Jonas had given him a few lessons, so that he would now stand, when asked, upon his hind legs and walk around the room, turn somersaults, and do some other antics which were amusing in their clumsiness.

This cub, with a new desire to repeat his experiment, helped Chubb's convalescence, and his improvement was now rapid.

Jonas and the teacher made Chubb a big easy-chair, and on fine days he would sit outside in the sunshine. The cub was not far from him, and he would watch the little fellow and talk to him. Chubb's arm had to be carefully kept in a sling, and his back was still so painful that he could not walk much or sit up for any length of time. So, in spite of his new playmate, he spent much of his time in bed.

Chubb's query about the calf caused Jonas the next time his duties took him near the Mores' clearing to look into the place. He found Mrs More and Jennie, the latter with her omnipresent burden, the baby, upon her back, out in the potato patch. Mrs More was digging with a fork, and Jennie was picking up the potatoes and putting them into a bag.

Not seeing any cattle, Jonas moved around towards the barn. Here, leaning against a corner of the weather-beaten but unfinished shed, he saw the proprietor himself with folded arms, smoking. But he was not altogether indifferent to his surroundings. He kept a sharp eye upon the women in the field to see that they were not idle, and he saw Jonas almost as quickly as Jonas saw him. Seeing that he was discovered, Jonas came out of the woods and approached him at once.

What do you want around here? was More's gruff reception.

Want to buy your red cow, Jonas replied, with business-like directness. The result was electric. Out of his mouth More took his pipe and then keenly scrutinised his visitor.

Buy her! he exclaimed. Buy my red cow! Why, man, what have you got to pay?

Mr More know a good bearskin when he see it?

Yes, I've a pretty good idea.

Jonas unrolled the skin of Chubb's bear before the father's eyes.

Prime, said Jonas.

Not too bad, remarked the other.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Teacher say him worth twenty dollar.

At the mention of the teacher More swore.

Don't mention teacher to me, he exclaimed. Look here, Jonas, with his tomfoolery he has kept Chubb away from here nigh on to three weeks. I've been nearly killed with hayin' and harvestin', and now the potatoes is to be gathered.

Bearskin worth twenty dollar, repeated Jonas, passing over More's outburst as irrelevant. Red cow worth fifteen dollar. Trade even.

The red cow had not come home with her calf, and so More did not know of the existence of the latter, or whether the cow was dead or alive. Here was, however, he thought, a chance to make something out of her, and so, after some more haggling to keep Jonas from thinking he was any too ready to sell, he carefully rolled up the bearskin and put it inside of his barn.

It's a bargain, Jonas, he said. Now go and find the cow. She is somewheres in the woods.

Ugh! grunted Jonas.

More expected some disapproval; but ere Jonas could complain further, More said

Jonas, I wish you'd go to the teacher and tell him to send Chubb home. I want him. The young rascal, he ought to be here to help his poor father pick potatoes. Have you seen him lately, Jonas?

Yes, for sure.

Where?

Made bear-trap for him.

Oh, he's been truanting again with you, has he? Just wait till I catch him, if I don't hide him! Look here, Jonas, if I ever catch him with you, I'll thrash you too.

Jonas smiled.

Tom More thrash Jonas, ha, ha! said the Indian very quietly, taking a step forward and looking the white man squarely in the eyes. More stepped back quickly.

Then, by Chubb's trap, continued Jonas, thinking to raise some fear, if not kindly feelings in the father's heart, Jonas find bear, dead she-bear. Claws filled with Chubb's torn coat: but no Chubb.

Oh, my boy is killed, my boy is killed! exclaimed the mother.

While the men were bargaining Mrs More had ordered Jennie to continue the work of digging and picking the potatoes, and then she came to hear what the men were talking about. When she was within hearing she caught Jonas' last words.

Oh, the bear has killed him! she continued, wailing. Oh, my dear Charlie! Tell me, will I never see him again?

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Jonas was about to answer, when she began her talking again, her imagination and loquacity and endearments seeming to have no end. Jonas stood there, politely waiting for her to finish, so that he might speak.

Oh, won't you tell me? Then I'll make you, you stupid Indian! said the mother, suddenly drying her tears and stepping up to lay violent hands on the Indian. Jonas gently but firmly pushed her aside.

Jonas saw dead bear by trap, but Chubb not there, he calmly repeated. Then, with a stately bow, he stepped back and went into the woods.

CHAPTER TEN. JENNIE'S ERRAND.

I believe it's all that teacher's doin', said Mrs More to her husband after Jonas had disappeared. If I were a man I'd make him leave my boy alone.

Oh, you shut up, and get back to your potatoes!

I'll know where my boy is, Tom More. Pretty father you be, to let a school-teacher fill him with foolish notions, and then get killed in the woods by a bear. Oh, my Charlie! and she sat down on a big stone and cried.

Come, woman, get up and get some more potatoes in. It looks like a shower's comin', and you can't pick in the mud.

So Mrs More went back to her potato digging.

Oh, mother, what's the matter? You've been crying! exclaimed little Jennie.

Shut up, you silly-head, and go along with your work! was the poor little creature's rebuff.

That night Jennie heard her father and mother talk about Chubb. They repeated all that Jonas had told them, and added some surmises of their own. Poor Jennie's heart was nearly bursting with sorrow and fright. Then, in reply to her mother's pleadings and crying, she heard her father declare

If that boy doesn't turn up in a day or two, I'll shoot that teacher.

There was no sleep for Jennie that night, and very early the next morning she left her rude bed, which was only a blanket on a rough mattress of straw. She ran as hard as her legs could carry her through the woods. The teacher boarded at Mr Miller's, so it was generally understood, and Jennie must find him. She must find out where Chubb was, and tell her parents, so that her father may not shoot the teacher.

Look, look, pa! Well, I do declare. There's Tom More's little Jennie running, bare-headed and bare-legged, through the woods this cold morning. Whatever can be the matter?

Mrs Miller had gone, pail in hand, to help her husband milk her cows. They were a thrifty pair, and got their work started and completed while some of their neighbours were beginning.

You're right, wife. Take the poor little dear in and warm her up, and see what is the matter.

Mrs Miller hardly needed the kindly advice, but it was just like Miller to give it. He helped her along in the good work by catching up the shivering little girl and pressing her to his big heart.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Whatever brings this little lamb out such a drizzly morning? he asked, as he carried her into the house.

Jennie's teeth chattered so that she could not make herself understood.

After placing her in the big rocking-chair and drawing it up to the kitchen fire, Mr Miller went back to his work in the stable. Mrs Miller busied herself to get a warm drink and flannels. Thoroughly fagged out after her four-mile tramp through the wet woods, Jennie sank into a deep sleep, and when she awoke in the afternoon she found herself in Mrs Miller's big bed, with white sheets over her and wonderful pictures on the walls. As her eyes wandered from one to the other they fastened on one depicting the Saviour carrying a little lamb.

Mrs Miller's quick ears heard Jennie moving, and she soon appeared carrying a bowl of steaming broth.

You poor dear, she soothed, you've had a long sleep. How is my pet now, better, eh?

Is that Mr Miller? asked Jennie, abruptly, pointing to the picture of the Saviour and the lamb.

No, dearie, that's the blessed Jesus.

Well, it's the way Mr Miller carried me, and he called me his lamb.

Just like him, the good man.

Oh, Mrs Miller, exclaimed Jennie, suddenly recollecting her errand, where's Chubb?

I do not know, dearie. Have you lost him?

Well, he hasn't been home for ever so long.

There, there, dearie, don't get excited and spill your broth. You'll be sick if you don't mind. Chubb is a good boy, and he'll come back all right.

Oh, I'm so glad! said the little one, comforted. But ma blames the teacher, and pa says that if Chubb don't come back to-day or to-morrow he'll shoot the teacher.

There now, dearie, be still. I just feared that your mind had been turned. Be very quiet, dearie. Just drink some more broth. It's good, isn't it? Now, hush; don't say another word. We'll hunt up Chubb for you, and we'll see that the teacher is not hurt. Now lie down, and I'll cover you up. Now just lie still and sleep.

* * * * *

The poor dear is out of her head, said Mrs Miller that evening to her husband.

Take good care of her, wife, and bring her round.

But something's wrong, husband, or she wouldn't have run away or babbled like that.

Well, my dear, we'll hear soon enough. But the teacher ain't home.

No; he said he wouldn't be. He's gone to the preacher's to spend the night with him. They're very friendly these days.

That's so, wife. But you'd better leave a lamp in the west window, to help him to see the way through the bush, supposin' he took the notion to come home.

CHAPTER ELEVEN. THE SEARCH FOR JENNIE.

Jennie! Jennie! called Mrs More. You little hide-away, where are you? But no Jennie appeared, and the baby was howling his loudest.

Woman, make that child shut up! said the gruff-voiced husband.

Do it yourself. Can't you see my hands are full, getting your breakfast?

The man jumped up in a rage and shook his wife by the shoulders until her neck was nearly dislocated. When the woman ceased her talking and screaming, the ruffian gave her a shove from him, causing her head to hit the side of the house, and she fell in a heap.

There, now you'll do what I say, said the man, as he stalked out of the house.

Partially recovering, Mrs More buried her bruised head in her lap and wept.

Oh, Jennie, Jennie dear, where are you? she wailed. Chubby is gone killed by a bear and have you run away? Oh, Jennie, come and help your poor mamma, Jennie, Jennie!

The mother was on her feet again, and in spite of her suffering body she ran after her husband.

Tom, she said, I can't find Jennie anywhere. I do believe that that Indian has her away.

He only came to buy a cow that red cow we haven't seen for weeks, he added silyly.

Oh, he had her, eh? And she was going to calve too.

More had forgotten the latter point, and had not thought of the former; and, as it had occurred before, his wife made him see that he was not nearly so smart as he thought he was.

Oh, hush up! he growled.

Has Jonas paid you? persisted the woman. You'll make us as poor as a rail fence, giving away things to Indians. And now he's got our Jennie too, I do believe.

Get in to your work, will you? he exclaimed; and Mrs More, dodging a billet of wood, went back to the kitchen, where little Bobbie was bravely trying to quiet his crying brother, and a pot of potatoes was boiling over on the stove.

The loss of little Jennie was so keenly felt by her mother that she kept at her husband until, in desperation, he took his gun and went out to search for her. He made inquiries of the nearest settlers, but found no trace of the little one, nor any of Chubb.

He wandered to the Duck Lake Hotel, and there he stayed to drink. He told the proprietor, Dave Dodge, that he had a good bearskin in his barn and a good crop of potatoes in his field. Dodge supplied him with liquor and kept him over night. When it was dark he sent Lanky, one of his confederates, and another man to More's barn for the

bearskin. It proved to be such a fine one that Dodge did not hesitate to supply More's demand for more liquor on the second day. In this way the search for Jennie was not energetically pushed.

CHAPTER TWELVE. JONAS FINDS THE RED COW.

After concluding his purchase of the red cow, Jonas wandered into the neighbourhood of the bear-trap and Chubb's old lodge. He was not far astray in his calculations, for within a quarter of a mile of the scene of the conflict between the cow and the bear he found Bossy and her lusty calf.

Out of the bark of some red willows he twisted a good long rope. The cow was quiet enough when Jonas went to put the rope around her neck, but it was a different thing when he attempted to lead her. She jerked Jonas back so quickly that he was thrown to the ground. Jonas jumped up and looked at the cow in the greatest of surprise. Bossy looked very meekly at him. When Jonas tried again to lead her she resisted as before, though with no such success in upsetting him.

Taking another method, Jonas tried to drive her. He succeeded for a while beyond his most sanguine expectations, for Bossy led him at a lively pace over rocks, roots, and fallen logs, dashing through creeks and splashing through muddy marshes. Jonas endeavoured many a time to ease the pace, but with no success until the cow stopped, stalk still, to take a breath. And she took a good many ere she moved again! For a little while she looked wildly around, but when she saw her calf coming down the hill behind her, she lowered her head and assumed an air of general meditation.

Wet to his thighs and bespattered with mud, Jonas was also glad to rest. But as night was coming on, he wished to be at the Parsonage ere dark. So he intimated to Bossy his desire to advance. The cow, however, did not deign to notice his request. Jonas took up a stick and beat her. Bossy flipped her tail in disapproval, but moved not. Jonas then carried his rope ahead, put it round a tree, and attempted to pull her, as he had helped voyageurs pull a boat up a stiff rapid. But he only pulled the cow to her knees, her toes did not come an inch ahead. When Jonas relaxed his hold, Bossy dropped on her side, brought up a cud and began calmly to chew it.

Jonas coaxed her, pulled her, and in his desperation clubbed her; but all to no purpose. The red cow would not move.

The calf was not far away, and a new idea struck Jonas. Untying the rope from the cow's neck, he caught the calf. Twisting a noose, he put it over the calf's head, and placed a rope on each side, to use as a pair of lines. He had no sooner completed his work than he saw the cow spring to her feet, making for him with dangerous intent. He found it advantageous to keep the calf between him and the cow. Still, the cow's action seemed to give the necessary incentive to the calf, for between the man and its mother it started off in the right path, and kept up its pace grandly. But Jonas had to keep his lines well in hand, for he had many a tussle with the frisky calf to keep it from going into the woods. Several times it was questionable whether he would win or not, but the arrival of the cow settled it. The calf seemed as anxious to keep away from his mother's horns as it did from Jonas. So in the end Jonas triumphed, and he came into the Parsonage lot on the run, his calf the full length of the lines ahead of him, and the red cow not far behind.

The teacher, who was in charge of Chubb when Jonas arrived, came hastily out to learn the cause of the racket. When he saw Jonas covered from head to heels with mud, hanging on to a lively calf, he laughed.

What have you been confiscating now, Jonas? he shouted.

No confiscat. Jonas buy red cow. Tell you soon. Get breath now, stammered Jonas, as he tripped the calf and brought it to a standstill.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

The teacher came to the rescue, as well as his laughter would allow him. The red cow was caught and tied. Then the two men went into the house, and a change of clothes was found for Jonas while he put his own to dry.

Jonas then explained his transaction.

Splendid, Jonas, splendid! said the teacher. The milk will be just the thing for Chubb, and for the preacher too. But, Jonas, we had better fix up a place for either cow or calf in the stable.

Perhaps, for sure, for both, replied Jonas.

After they had had an early tea, the men set to work, and soon a corner was boxed off for the calf, and an extra stall made for the cow.

The teacher had some difficulty in explaining Jonas' deal to Hewitt, but he eventually overcame the scruples of that conscientious man by declaring emphatically that the cow had been properly bought and paid for. Thus the red cow, at least, became part of the Parsonage property.

Chubb was greatly delighted at the acquisition, and was restless to get that calf and his cub together. If their mothers had no desire to fulfil prophecy, perhaps he could induce the young ones to lie down in peace together.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN. JENNIE AND CHUBB.

Jennie, for once in her life, was in the midst of quietness, plenty, and kindness; but her little heart beat for her brother, and for fear lest her father would carry out his threat to shoot the teacher. She quickly saw that her good friend, Mrs Miller, refused to believe her, and so she determined to leave this home as she had left her own. But Jennie, however, did not reckon with her hostess. A dog and Mrs Miller were too many for her, and she was caught in the act of running away.

Mrs Miller quickly put Jennie back into her bed, and warned her not to leave it until she gave her permission. As a precaution, the good woman carried most of Jennie's garments away with her.

The next day the teacher came home, and was soon told of the little one's presence. Hastening to Jennie's side, he was greeted with exclamations of delight. Jennie soon found him quite sympathetic with her view of things, and she eagerly poured out her little heart to him.

The following morning the teacher asked Mrs Miller for Jennie's clothes, and for things to complete an outfit.

You're not going to take her back to those cruel people, Mr Green? Just think, the dearie's back is full of black welts. They're brutes over there, to beat a child so.

It is not my intention, said the teacher, quietly, thoroughly sympathising with the good woman's indignation, to take her home just yet.

Then I'll get her clothes, and and a choke came into the good woman's voice. Yes. I'll get her my little Mary's shoes and stockings. You don't remember the precious dear I lost nigh on ten year ago. She was just like this dearie in size. The boots and stockings will do no good in my box 'cept to take out and think about and cry on. They'd better be a-warmin' poor Jennie's feet, and they will, too.

With this determination, Mrs Miller went to her room, and got out the little things that once belonged to her baby-girl. She had a good cry over them, and then, bravely brushing away her tears, she brought them along with

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Jennie's clothes. Soon Jennie was clothed, and her little feet made comfortable in Mary's shoes and long warm stockings.

When Jennie was brought down, Mr Green asked Mrs Miller for a lunch, and then with the little girl he set out into the woods. Mrs Miller watched them keenly. Jennie knew not where she was going, and Mr Green would not tell. But Mrs Miller was satisfied when she saw them take the path into the woods in the opposite direction to the one that led to the Mores' clearing.

Mr Green hastened with his charge over the bush road. When Jennie was tired he carried her, so that they might reach their destination as soon as possible.

After an hour's tramp they sat down by a brook and ate their lunch. Mr Green was merry, and soon had Jennie laughing, but he evaded all her inquiries about Chubb. Then, after enjoying a drink from the brook, they hurried on.

Sit down here for a minute, Jennie, said the teacher, when they had reached the barn that belonged to the Parsonage.

So, behind the barn, Jennie sat on a log, while the teacher made his presence known to the inmates of the Parsonage.

When he entered he found no one there but Chubb.

Where's Mr Hewitt? asked the teacher.

Gone to the lake for a pail of water, replied Chubb.

All right, I'll go and see him.

The teacher was delighted with this news, for he wanted Jennie to see Chubb alone first. So he slipped out to the barn, and told her to go quickly and quietly into the house, and she would find someone she would like to see.

Shortly after she had entered there was a little scream in the Parsonage, and Mr Hewitt came hurrying up the path from the lake.

What's the matter? he asked, as he met the teacher. Was that Chubb calling?

No, I think not, replied the teacher, coolly.

Well, that was strange. I thought I heard a scream, and it sounded like a human cry, and as if it came from the Parsonage.

So did I, and we shall investigate presently. But, Hewitt, he added abruptly, turning the subject, I fear we shall have some trouble over Chubb.

Why so?

His father is on the war-path with his gun.

Is that so?

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Yes, and some one is going to get hurt.

I've no fear of More.

Neither have I when he's sober, but he's being filled with Dodge's bad whisky. I accidentally heard of him last night from two sources. So we had better be on the look-out.

After some more conversation, the two men returned to the Parsonage.

Somebody is in there, for I hear talking, said Mr Hewitt, again getting anxious about Chubb.

Hush! said the teacher, with a deprecating action to the preacher. Then, on tip-toe, he went up and shoved the door in a little.

Just look here, he whispered.

Curled up on the bed was little Jennie. Chubb's head was in her lap, and while she was petting him, he was telling her about his many adventures. It was a sweet picture of purest love and simplicity.

Why, it's Jennie! exclaimed the preacher. On hearing him, Jennie quickly placed Chubb's head on the pillow, and jumped down to the floor.

Good-bye, said the teacher, I must be off to school. I'll call for you to-night, Jennie. Mrs Miller wouldn't welcome me without you.

Followed by a chorus of Good-byes, the teacher hurried away to his duties at the school.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN. THE COMING OF THE FATHER.

Hello, More, you here? exclaimed Silas Woods, on seeing Tom More in the bar-room of the Duck Lake Hotel.

Given up housekeeping, eh?

What's that? asked More, assuming a bellicose attitude.

Have you given up housekeeping? I asked.

See here, if you fellers want to fight, just go outside, roared Dodge, the proprietor.

I only asked More a civil question, Dodge, remarked Woods.

You insulted me, said the drunken man, with menacing manner and thickened speech, and I'll have shatishfashion.

What's the row, anyhow? demanded Dodge, laying his hand forcibly upon More's shoulder, and pulling him back.

I only asked him if he had given up housekeeping.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Why did you say that? asked Dodge.

Why, well because I saw his Chubb in the preacher's place some time ago, sittin' in a chair, quite at home like, and now as I passed I seed both him and his sister Jennie. So, thinks I, More must have given them up to the preacher.

What was you a-doin' at the preacher's?

Just a-tellin' him about our wee Maggie. She's sinkin' fast. Give me a drink of whisky, Dodge. I've been up with her for two nights.

Jennie's father waited to hear no more. When Dodge went to help Woods to the liquor, he staggered out. He found his way to the room that he had occupied, and, after securing his gun, he started off through the woods, taking the road which led to the Parsonage.

In his call upon the Parsonage that morning Woods had left startling news about the condition of his little Maggie, and Mr Hewitt was filled with deepest anxiety about his little parishioner. Chubb was much better, and was able to be up and show Jennie his little bear, and other things around the place. So with Jennie to play with him, and keep him company, the young preacher saw no reason why he should not ride up to the Woods' home, and see what he could do to minister to the little sufferer.

Dinner was therefore quickly prepared, and after a few words of caution to Jennie and Chubb to stay by the house until his return, Mr Hewitt sprang into his saddle, and rode away.

In the middle of the afternoon, Chubb and Jennie heard some one or some thing in the bush near the house. Running out, they saw a man stumbling along the path, and ere he came out of the bush something, a stone or a root, caught his foot, and he fell full length on the ground. Jennie wanted to run to assist him, but Chubb restrained her. The man rose slowly to his feet, and came staggering along.

Oh, it's father! said Jennie; and in terror she seized Chubb's arm, his sore arm, and though it hurt him, he only straightened himself up like a man, and bore the pain.

I know it, he replied to his sister's exclamation, and he's drunk. Run into the house, Jennie, and hide.

What will you do?

Never mind me. Run into the house, and shut the door, quick! demanded Chubb; and Jennie obeyed, though she took her position at the window.

Bruised from his fall, surly in temper, and crazed with liquor, More came unsteadily along.

Come here, he shouted, as he noticed Chubb standing near the house, come here, you young rascal, and I'll teach you to run away from your home again!

Chubb did not move, but calmly watched his father. More straightened himself up a moment, as if in surprise. He looked around him at the strange surroundings, and realised that he was on new ground. So he thought to adopt a new tack.

Chubb, my son, he said, with a cunning leer, come to your father. Come and see what he has for you.

Chubb did not move.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

More took several very unsteady steps nearer the boy.

Chubb, my dear boy, he almost whined. Come to your papa.

Father and son were now nearly in touch with each other.

Well, if you won't come to me, I'll make you! said the man, as he sprang forward with a shout.

But Chubb was not there to be crushed by the weight of the man. Quickly taking several steps at right-angles to the charge, he again turned and faced his father. Barely recovering himself from a fall, the father turned, and, with an oath, ran after his son. The little fellow ran down the path to the lake, and sprang into the canoe, intending to paddle out of his father's reach. But ere he got away his father grabbed the end of the canoe. Chubb put his paddle against a stone, and shoved with all his might. This caused his father to lose his balance and fall splashing into the water. The shock greatly sobered him, but it only gave his mean spirit better control of a shaky body. The father hung on to the canoe, and Chubb thought that he was caught. Dropping his paddle, he ran and jumped out of the canoe on the opposite side from that where his father was struggling in the water, trying to regain his feet. Pouring out terrible threats of vengeance, the father came up from the water. In reaching for the canoe, he had dropped his gun, and now, as he came up, dripping and angry that Chubb had eluded him, he picked it up again, and swinging it as a club, he followed after his boy.

The excitement and exercise had been too much for the poor little fellow, and he fell exhausted, and fainted. Jennie had been watching the whole of the proceedings from a corner of the window. When she saw her brother fall, she forgot his words to remain in, and ran to his assistance. She reached him only a moment before her father.

You young rascal, are you here also? he said, and gave his little girl such a blow with his hand that it sent her staggering back in pain.

Oh, pa! she said, partially recovering from the blow, and trying to keep back her tears, oh, don't kill Chubb! he's been awful hurt with a bear.

Get away home with you! shouted the father.

Then seizing his boy he shook him. But Chubb showed no signs of consciousness.

I'll bring you round, said he, see if I don't!

Then, to Jennie's horror, she saw her father pick Chubb up, carry him back to the lake, and submerge his head in the water.

There, shouted the father, as he splashed the boy's head up and down, I'll learn you to trip your father in the water!

Jennie, unable to stand this any longer, picked up a stick, and, running to the bank, beat her father as hard as she could on his back.

Let him alone, let him alone! shouted Jennie, as she beat her father.

Lifting Chubb up, More threw him on the bank, and then seized Jennie. He cruelly pinned her arms behind her back, and then, seizing her stick, he beat her furiously over her head and shoulders.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Now you cut for home, shouted the father; and he gave Jennie a shove into the path that led towards their distant log cabin.

Turning his attention again to Chubb, he stood him on his feet, and shook him. The boy opened his eyes, and instantly closed them again, from sheer exhaustion.

Here, none of your monkeying! Get to your feet and walk, demanded the father, enforcing his words with a cuff on the side of the head.

Chubb opened his eyes again, and looked wildly around to see where Jennie was. Seeing her up the path, he thought that she was safe enough, and then he fainted away again.

You won't do as I say, eh? declared the father. Then, with a stick as thick as his arm, he beat the boy as he lay on the ground.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN. THE YOUNG PREACHER SHOT.

What are you men doing here? demanded Mr Green of two men in the bush, whom he saw peering around the trees towards the Parsonage. They were Dodge and his inseparable Lanky. Scenting trouble from what they had heard in the bar-room, when they found that More had left they followed him.

Just seein' More trim his children, said Lanky, in a smart sort of way.

Seeing what?

Tom More is over there after his children that the preacher's got. He has laid out the boy, and started the girl home.

And you did not interfere with the brute?

Naw, said Lanky, with a shrug of the shoulders; but we weren't going to let him shoot them.

With a look of contempt the teacher left them, and hastened to the rescue. When Jennie saw Mr Green she ran to him as hard as her legs could carry her.

Oh, come quick and save Chubb! she shouted.

Green hurried down the path with Jennie after him. They were just in time to see the young preacher come out of the other side of the bush. He was off his horse in an instant, and on to More like a whirlwind. Catching him by the arms, Hewitt swung him around so quickly that More staggered back and sat plumply down on the ground several yards away.

You poor boy! said the preacher, turning his attention to Chubb, and dropping on his knees beside him; what did he do to you?

Springing to his feet, More seized a club, and rushed at the preacher, saying

I'll learn you to steal my children! Ere he could strike, Green sprang upon his back and bore him to the ground.

I'll have you men arrested for kidnapping my children, declared More.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

And I'll have you arrested for cruelty to your children, retorted the teacher.

With an oath, More shook himself free of the teacher, and struggled again to his feet.

I'll get even with you fellers yet! he growled, and turned away.

The teacher thought he was going away, and turned to see how Chubb was. More hastily found his gun, and, without a moment's warning, raised it and fired. The ball grazed the teacher, cutting a hole through his clothing, and crashed into Mr Hewitt's shoulder, causing him to fall over Chubb.

There, yelled More, that'll learn ye!

The teacher sprang to Hewitt's side. More, seeing Jennie standing alone, seized her and ran for the woods.

What was that shooting we heard? demanded the Game-Warden, Mr Fitzgerald, of More. He and Jonas were coming to pay a visit to the preacher, and had just reached the edge of the woods when they heard the shot, and soon afterwards met More hurrying away with a smoking gun under one arm, and carrying little Jennie in the other. More tried to pass on.

Stop that man, Jonas, in the name of the King; and hold him until we investigate.

Hands off! said More.

Then you go back. You tell the Warden what he ask, said Jonas, with eyes gleaming, while he flourished a silver-mounted pistol before More.

Muttering a curse, More put Jennie down, and went back, as Jonas ordered. As soon as she was freed by her father, Jennie ran back to Chubb. Mr Fitzgerald had hastened to the scene of the shooting, and was exceedingly pained to learn that Mr Hewitt was the victim. He, however, proved a timely arrival, for he had some skill in surgery, and was now delighted to bring it into service.

Many thanks, Mr Fitzgerald, said the preacher; but please attend to Chubb first.

Jennie and I will look after him, said the teacher, and Mr Hewitt submitted calmly to the treatment of the Warden.

Picking Chubb up in his arms, the teacher carried him into the house. He soon stripped him of his wet clothes, and put him to bed. Consciousness having returned, he left him in Jennie's care while he hastened to assist the Warden.

After staunching the flow of blood, and roughly binding up the wound, the Warden and teacher helped Mr Hewitt into the house.

They fixed him up on the couch, where the Warden re-examined the wound, cleansed and dressed it.

During his work the Warden learned from his patient the history of events, Jennie supplementing Mr Hewitt's account by the story of her father's arrival and his actions since.

The brute, exclaimed Mr Fitzgerald, he ought to be made swing for it!

Still, he is their father, and I suppose we had no right to keep Chubb away from him, said the preacher.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

He would have been dead long ere this, if he had been taken to that hovel, put in the teacher.

Where is Mr More now? asked the preacher.

I left him with Jonas, said the Warden. On hearing this the teacher stepped outside, and almost as quickly came in again.

You are wanted out here, I think, he said quietly to the Warden.

Going out, the Warden found that Dodge and Lanky had tried to rescue More from Jonas, but had found the Indian too many for them. With drawn revolver he had rounded up the whole three and had them sitting peacefully on the ground. The men looked baffled and angry, while Jonas was apparently indifferent, and so cool, that the teacher laughed. The Warden took in the situation at a glance, but was too dignified to smile.

More, said he, addressing the father of the children, you had better go into the house and see what amends you can make for your evil deeds. You had better be pretty penitent unless you want to spend the rest of your life in jail. Go in with him, Green.

And what brings you men here? demanded the Warden, after More and the teacher had left.

The men were silent.

Did they try to interfere with you, Jonas?

Some, was the laconic reply, and Jonas' face lit up, as he saw the baffled rage of his captives.

I thought so, said the Warden. Now, Dodge, I have had enough of you. You and your like are a curse to any community. I'll give you just one week to get out of this country, and if you don't go I know a way in which to make you.

And you, continued the Warden to the other man, had better settle down to your farm and leave poaching and whisky alone. Do you both understand me? Well, then, go!

Dodge and his companion arose without a word and slunk away into the bush.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN. THE PREACHER AND THE FATHER.

With his face hard and set, and revolving thoughts of vengeance, even of murder, More followed the teacher into the house.

And this is your father, Jennie, said Mr Hewitt cheerily, from his couch. His shoulder was bound up with many cloths and smarting painfully, but none of his pain was seen in his face or heard in his voice. I am sorry that I have not called upon you, Mr More. I have not been able to overtake all my work. I hope that you will pardon me.

The hard-faced man looked at the preacher with a scowl.

Then, when Chubb was hurt, continued Mr Hewitt, I should have let you know about it, but Chubb did not want you to know that he had been beaten by a bear; while we had hoped to have sent him home to you well. Poor boy, he is having a harder pull back to health than we thought.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

More looked over at Chubb, who was lying on the bed, his little face as white as a moonbeam.

Then there's dear little Jennie, rambled on the preacher. She only came to see us this morning. You should have seen her up on the bed nursing Chubb. It was one of the sweetest pictures I ever saw in my life. But, Mr More, she says that you have not kissed her yet. You are a father, and no doubt you are glad to see your children again. Look, Jennie is just hungering for a kiss from you now!

I never kiss my children, growled More, shifting his feet uneasily.

Then you had better begin now. You are their father, aren't you? Look, how can you keep your hands off a sweet little lassie like Jennie? If you don't kiss your precious girl I'll have to do it for you.

The rough man stooped to his little girl and kissed her. Jennie threw her arms around his neck, and, hugging him tightly, she said

Oh, papa, that's the first time you ever kissed me, and I've wanted to kiss you ever so often.

The big man staggered back as if hit by a hammer. He found a chair and sat down. Jennie climbed up into his lap.

Papa, she said eagerly, come and kiss Chubb too. He'd like it most as much as me.

The father rose unsteadily, and, led by his little girl, he went over to Chubb's bedside. The boy, in spite of his suffering, bravely smiled up at his father. The man took the boy's white face in his two rough hands and kissed it. Then, sinking to his knees, he cried out

Good God, what have I done? I've nearly killed my children and my best friend. God forgive me!

He will, said the preacher, as tears of thankfulness sprang into his eyes, and the other eyes that beheld were by no means dry. He will forgive, bless His holy name!

As if suddenly aroused, More struggled to his feet, and came over to the couch on which the young preacher lay.

Mr Hewitt, he began, and his voice choked, when I entered this house I vowed in my heart to kill you, and here you are praying to God to bless me.

God is merciful and forgiving. Just try Him, Mr More.

Mr Hewitt, you are hard enough to deal with. Have mercy on me, and say that you'll not send me to jail for what I've done to you.

Nay, nay, my good friend. I might have sent the man who came into this house to jail, but you are going to be a new man now in Christ Jesus. God has opened your heart. Go and love your children. Let the past be buried in oblivion. Let God and your children be your guiding stars in the future.

The man stood as if in agony of spirit, and seemed unable to move.

Why, man, your clothes are wet, said Mr Hewitt. Green, please see if you cannot get something dry out of my trunk for this man. Jonas, make up a fire, like a good fellow, and dry Mr More's clothes. Then, after supper, he and Jennie will go and tell Mrs More about Chubb's fight with the bear. She must be very anxious, with nearly all her family away.

The preacher's wishes were promptly obeyed. Then, after Mr More was in dry clothes, Mr Hewitt and Jonas and the teacher, with some comments from Chubb, entertained the Warden and Mr More with an account of Chubb's experiences with the bear and the red cow. An early tea was served, and then Mr More picked Jennie lovingly up in his arms and went away.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN. GOOD-BYE, MY BOY; I LOVE YOU!

And you are not going to prosecute that man for shooting you! exclaimed the Warden to Mr Hewitt that evening.

What's there to prosecute him for? He couldn't be made better by a thousand years in jail.

Why, man, if all men acted in this way we might close up our jails and send our magistrates and constables on an eternal holiday.

Oh, happy day, to be honestly desired, eh, Mr Warden?

Well, you are merry to-night, said Mr Fitzgerald. I'll bet your shoulder hurts and burns like fire. Are you merriest when your body is most twisted with pain?

Why, my friend, think of the rest that I have enjoyed and the number of servants I have had to-night to run around and do my work! And then God has been so good.

I am afraid that you are over-excited. Be careful, my boy.

Mr Fitzgerald, please don't!

Don't what?

Don't play the tempter, and rob God of His praise. We have certainly been shaken up in body, but God has graciously visited this place to-day, and I hope that you will not miss His blessing.

Well, confessed the Warden, this is all new to me. I've attended a few religious services, and have heard preachers declaim about the promised outpouring of the Spirit of God, but I never saw it on this wise before.

May you do so again and again, said the preacher.

It is certainly touching and hallowing. I wish Horace had been here to-night. You have been a great blessing to him. You have been to us all, and we hope that you will not receive any permanent ill from your wound.

You are very kind to say all this, but I shall be up to-morrow. Chubb wants me and my mission needs me.

Then I'll send Horace and his wife over here to keep you in bed, declared the Warden, and I'll leave Jonas here to keep you down until they come. Come, Green, you have been as quiet as a lamb to-night. You haven't let a bleat out of you, except to Chubb. Come and help me put Hewitt to bed.

All right, responded the teacher, promptly rising from his seat beside the bed; but my thoughts have not been idle, Mr Fitzgerald. I believe Hewitt will make new men out of all of us.

Hello, another convert, eh? said the Warden, cheerily. Now look out, men! Mr Hewitt's arm is as touchy as

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

quick. Jonas, that's the man. You can be as brave as a lion and as delicate as a dove.

So Mr Hewitt was carefully undressed and placed beside Chubb in the Parsonage bed. The teacher and the Warden soon afterward took their departure. The teacher went back to inform Mr and Mrs Miller what had become of Jennie, and warmed their godly souls with a tender account of what had taken place. Mr Miller's prayer that night was full of shouting, and his praises took many practical forms.

The Warden spent the night with his cousin, though he could hardly restrain that impetuous individual from going over at once to see the preacher. It was with difficulty he persuaded him that he had left Hewitt all right, with Jonas to wait on him, and warned him that his visit would only disturb him.

So, with Jonas as their nurse, Chubb and Mr Hewitt passed the night. Their sufferings were too many and too intense for perfect sleep, but their hours of wakefulness were not all unrelieved pain.

Chubb seemed as happy as the preacher, and as the morning light was breaking in the east he confided to his bed-fellow

When pa kissed me good-bye last night, he said, 'Good-bye, my boy, I love you.'

Wasn't that fine? commented the preacher. Then there was a long pause in the conversation. The light was growing brighter and brighter.

And and I love him too, added Chubb, bravely.

God bless you, Chubb, and make your love perfect.

Chubb watched the increasing light with interest. He seemed to forget all about his pain-racked body. Then, as the sun rose, in delight he exclaimed

Oh, Mr Hewitt, was ever the sun so beautiful? He seems to shine right into my insides.

Yes, Chubb, forgiving love shines right into the heart, and leaves no darkness at all. That is the light that Jesus gives us, and it is sweet and blessed all the time.

Then I want this Jesus light all the time. Just listen to the birds singing, and my heart is also singing.

Let us have a song too, Chubb.

Softly at first the preacher sang

There's sunshine in my soul to-day,
More glorious and bright
Than glows in any earthly sky,
For Jesus is my light.

Then more rapturously he sang the chorus, and Chubb joined him

Oh, there's sunshine, blessed sunshine,
While the peaceful, happy moments roll;
When Jesus shows His smiling face,
There is sunshine in my soul.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

From his couch Jonas jumped up in a hurry.

Beg pardon, Jonas, said the preacher, for arousing you. It was very selfish and thoughtless of us, but Chubb and I are so happy that we just couldn't help it.

Some more sing, said Jonas.

And Jonas sing too, said Chubb.

Jonas try, said the Indian, as the sun lit up a smile upon his swarthy features. So the preacher sang on

There's music in my soul to-day,
A carol to my King;
And Jesus, listening, can hear
The songs I cannot sing.

There's springtime in my soul to-day,
For when the Lord is near
The dove of peace sings in my heart,
The flowers of grace appear.

There's gladness in my soul to-day,
And hope, and praise, and love,
For blessings which He gives me now,
For joys laid up above.

At the end of each stanza the chorus was repeated. Thus Jonas was enabled to pick up the words and melody, and something more. For the spirit of love and happiness in the others was contagious.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN. THE NEW DAY.

Horace, said the Warden, you go in and see if they are ready for us.

Mr Horace Fitzgerald needed no such instructions to enter the Parsonage, for he was impatiently striding ahead of his wife and cousin, eager to see his wounded friend.

Whatever have they done to you? said Horace, bursting into the house, and hastening to Mr Hewitt's bedside. This is too bad.

It is very good of you to come over and see me so soon, said the young preacher, gratefully.

I am an advance guard to see if you are ready for visitors, said Horace. The Warden and my wife are here, while I saw Green and old man Miller coming through the bush.

It's a very untidy place, said Hewitt, apologetically, casting his eyes around the room, filled with disorder after the events of the previous evening, especially so for your wife, Mr Fitzgerald.

Jonas, he added, addressing his Indian friend, clear away these breakfast things, like a good fellow.

Well, they are here now, said Horace, as the Warden and Mrs Horace came in, and, just behind them, the

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

school-teacher, accompanied by old John Miller, who had a big basket of good things on his arm.

Here now, young man, said the Warden, sternly addressing his cousin, don't you excite my patient.

Then, taking the wrist of Mr Hewitt's well arm in his hand, he said

How's your pulse, eh? Beating like a trip hammer. We must attend to this at once.

With a smile on her face and eyes full of tenderest sympathy, Mrs Horace came up beside Mr Hewitt.

These awful men, Mr Hewitt, what next will they be trying to do to you?

The missus sent a bit of bread and a chicken over to you, put in John Miller, coming up beside Mrs Fitzgerald.

The young man's words of thanks and other conversation with Mrs Horace and Mr Miller were drowned by the Warden's peremptory orders.

Jonas, he said, bring some hot water. Mary, get out your bandages and medicines. We must 'tend to our patients, Mr Miller. We cannot talk much just now.

So the Warden ruled, and the others were willing to obey.

Mrs Horace proved an excellent nurse, and Father Miller, as the young preacher styled him, seconded her efforts bravely. With their assistance, the Warden soon re-dressed the wounded shoulder.

The teacher took Horace out to the barn and showed him the red cow, the valiant conqueror, and her calf and the cub, and entertained him with a racy account of the exploits of Chubb in school, hunt-lodge, and in the woods. Horace commended the teacher for the manner in which he played chore-boy. Then Jonas relieved him, as he had to hasten to his school.

Having finished his work on Mr Hewitt, the Warden, with his assistants, gave Chubb a thorough overhauling. The shock from his dousing and beating had been severe, and great welts stood out where he had been so cruelly struck. These called out many expressions of sympathy with the boy on the part of Mrs Fitzgerald and Mr Miller, while the Warden denounced the brutality of the father. Still, the night's rest, the breakfast that Jonas had given him of fish and broiled partridges, with his happy spirits, had helped him wonderfully, and he declared that he was ready to get up. This, however, the Warden strictly forbade. So, after a warm bath, Chubb's bruises were anointed with liniment, and he was again stowed away beside Mr Hewitt.

These duties performed, and the blinds drawn, the Warden and Mr Miller went outside, while Mrs Horace, whose housewifely heart had been pained with the disorder that reigned in the Parsonage, quietly and bravely attacked the chaos.

As the Warden and Mr Miller left the house they met Farley and Woods. These men had heard of the shooting of their pastor, and had come to see the extent of the injury, and what could be done.

And you let More go home in peace? said Woods to the Warden, after the formal greeting was over, and inquiries about the health of Mr Hewitt and Chubb were answered. You should have tied him to a tree until we arrived. The brute ought to have been lynched!

I wanted to have him arrested; but Hewitt wouldn't hear of it, replied the Warden.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

There's another spirit besides whisky, Woods, remarked Mr Miller, addressing the former speaker; but in a very different tone he added: But tell us, how's your Maggie?

Much better, thank you.

Miller, said the Warden, you people have no respect for the laws of your country.

Ay, ay, we have, as a last resort. We are to try the law of God, the law of love, first. It's much better. If we Christians had always the spirit of Christ, there's none that could withstand us. Trouble is whisky and self; pride and hate get in, and the devil makes merry over our a-jawin' and a-jailin' of each other. It does mighty little good, I can tell you. There's Dave Dodge. He's been to jail half a dozen times, and he comes home madder and worsen than he ever was before. He is only slyer and slicker in his work, and gets it back hard on those that helped to send him down. That's the devil's way. I'm with Mr Hewitt.

You won't be troubled with Dodge any more, declared the Warden.

How's that? asked Miller.

I've ordered him to leave the country.

When?

Within a week.

Poor man! where'll he go to at his time of life? I must see my wife about him. He killed three sheep and two cows because I testified against him once, and burned my barn because I sent him down again. I've not properly forgiven him, and I must see him again before he leaves. Poor man, where'll he go to? and him an old man now!

The old villain! said the Warden, emphatically. Why, Miller, you ought to send him to jail for life for burning your barn.

Nay, nay. That's not the right spirit, Mr Fitzgerald. I thought that way once; but I've another spirit now. It is better to carry, and it keeps one sweeter, whatever else it does. You'd better try it, my friend, and the old man looked very kindly into the Warden's face.

Then I'd have to give up my job, said the Warden, straightening up, and trying to smile.

And there are better, was the sententious reply.

Well, we'll see about it later, Miller, though you are the bravest man that I have met.

Whatever are you men up to? said the Warden, turning abruptly, and addressing his cousin and Jonas.

Want to see the development of prophecy, replied Horace, almost breathless, as he endeavoured to hold on to a lively young calf. Jonas was leading another animal, which was almost as determined not to follow as the other was to break away from its captor. The men, however, succeeded in bringing the two animals near each other. The cub, which Jonas had brought out, at first curled himself up like a ball of fur on the ground. With a rush the calf jumped over the cub, and nearly jerked the rope out of Horace's hand. Then it came back on the lee side of the bear, and with a sniff and snort gave his bearship a bunt in the ribs. This caused Master Bruin to straighten himself out and lose his bashfulness. When the calf came up the second time he received a cuff on the side of the head that gave him ever after greater respect for the cub. Still he bunted and jumped, and the bear boxed and

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

danced around until they were both tired, and the spectators were almost sore from laughing at the antics of the pair. Then the calf laid himself down, and the cub curled up quietly beside him.

Chubb must see this, said Horace; and he ran into the house. Picking Chubb up, he wrapped a blanket around him, and brought him out.

Look at this, my boy, said he. If the old ones won't be good and do right, the young ones will lie down in peace.

Chubb's eyes sparkled with delight.

Bless the boy! said John Miller; he likes to see this peaceful scene as much as we enjoyed their wrestling. A little child shall lead them.

CHAPTER NINETEEN. THE FATHER AGAIN.

After Jonas had served evening tea Mr Hewitt whispered something into his ear. Chubb had asked several times during the day about his father and mother and Jennie. Mr Hewitt also wondered why one of them at least had not come to see Chubb, and now he quietly sent Jonas to see what was going on. Jonas also had a message to carry to the school-teacher. He found Mr Green talking with Father Miller, in the latter's barn.

He was all alone in the field diggin' potatoes when I come up, he was telling the school-teacher. I never saw a man work so hard in my life. His Jennie was playing outside with little Bob and the baby, and his missus was scrubbin' the floor. In the house I said, 'Good day, Mrs More, your floor is as white as a table.' 'We're gettin' ready for Chubb,' says More, comin' up behind me. 'That's right,' says I. 'I saw him to-day. He's doin' fine. And he was askin' for you all.' Mrs More just scrubbed right on, and never says a word, but Jennie she comes beside me and grips my hand tight. Pullin' me down, she whispers, 'It's all right now. Pa loves us, and ma, she's most washin' the floor with her tears.' 'Bless her soul,' says I. 'Mrs More,' says I, touchin' her and stoppin' her scrubbin'. She stops, wipes her face and eyes with her apron. 'My missus says she ought to have remembered your baby before this, and wants you now to accept these little things. She'd 'ave come herself, but the walkin's so bad.' The poor woman began cryin' again. More, he turns to me and says 'Mr Miller, you are too kind, you and your wife. You took our Jennie in, and saved her from catchin' a death of cold. Thank Mrs Miller for us, and tell her that we'll both be over soon to see her.' 'We'll be glad to receive you when you come, and be sure you bring Jennie and the baby.' 'We'll remember,' says he. Then I kissed Jennie and the wee un, and I come away. Bless the Lord, for there's a wonderful change there.

Jonas stood by respectfully, waiting until Mr Miller had finished his account. Then he delivered his message, and hurried on to the Mores.

The teacher, after a hasty supper, went over to the Parsonage. He repeated with some comments of his own what Father Miller had told him about his visit to the Mores. Tears of thankfulness were in the preacher's eyes long before the story was completed; but he still wanted to hear more, and eagerly awaited Jonas' return.

What did you see, Jonas? asked Mr Hewitt, a little impatiently, as Jonas entered.

Jonas see much. See a light, and look in window. Glass broken; Jonas see. Jonas hear. More, he make a new bed in corner. His missus, she cry and sew new blankets. When More, he done bed, he get a book, the book, and he sit down on chair by light. Jennie, she rock cradle and boy asleep on floor. The missus stop her sew. She hear him read. He find that place, Mr Hewitt, you tell about and Chubb; the cow and bear and young ones, and he laugh and she laugh and Jennie laugh. Then he cry and they all cry. Then he turn back and read about the ox knows his

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

owner, but people forget their God; and God, He say, Come, consider; your sins be red, I'll make white as snow.

That's right, Jonas. That's the first chapter of Isaiah, said Mr Hewitt in great delight. What did he do next?

He kneel down, missus kneel down, Jennie kneel down. Then More, he say:

'Lord, we was like the ox. Forgive and make us good.' He say lot more. Then he say: 'Make Chubb better, O God, and let him come home.' Then he say more.

'Bless the teacher, and bless Mr Hewitt, and, oh my God, make him well again.' 'That's right prayer for you, More,' say Jonas.

Well, said Green, recovering control of his voice, and what did you do then?

Jonas leave More's clothes at the door, and come away. He no talk to More, after More talk to the Great Spirit.

About the middle of the afternoon of the next day, Mr Hewitt was awakened out of a nap by a knock on his door.

Come in, he said; and Mr More entered.

From his shoulder he swung a big bag of potatoes, and a smaller one.

How are you to-day, Mr Hewitt? he asked somewhat bashfully.

Oh, much better, thank you, said Hewitt, cheerily.

Where's Chubb? ventured the father.

The day was so beautiful that Jonas took him and Mrs Fitzgerald for a canoe-ride on the lake.

Will they be in soon?

May be in any minute.

We can never thank you, Mr Hewitt.

How's Jennie? asked the preacher, cutting Mr More rather short.

She is all right, but wants Chubb. And, Mr Hewitt, so do we all. We've made a new bed for him, and got new blankets, and we'll take good care of him. But we can't thank you.

Give thanks to God.

We've done that, and will do it, and we'll do it to you, too.

Oh, father, said Chubb, bursting into the house, and rushing up to his father. The man sprang to his feet, and caught up his son.

Your father has come to take you home, Chubb.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Chubb shook himself, and his father put him down. The boy looked puzzled. He came slowly over to the bed, and looked inquiringly into Mr Hewitt's eyes.

It is right, Chubb. I'd like to keep you; but it is right that you should go home.

Chubb walked bravely over to his father. Mr More picked his son tenderly up in his arms, and, saying Good-bye, left for his own home.

DAVE DODGE

CHAPTER ONE. THE BURNING OF DUCK LAKE HOTEL.

When Dodge slunk away into the bush, with the Warden's threat upon him, he ground his teeth in silent rage. Was he not one of the first settlers here? yes, he and old John Miller were *the* first that came into that section to take up land. They had wrested it from a wilderness, had built roads through it, and had induced others to come in and settle. They had organised the district, built the school, and made it what it *is* to-day.

The truth of the matter was that while Dave Dodge and John Miller were *the* first settlers, Miller was first, and plunged into the bush with his axe and stout heart. He soon had a clearing and a log cabin, to which he brought a bride as capable and stout-hearted as himself. Then came in Dodge, a shrewd, unscrupulous man, fond of drink, and when drunk, surly and quarrelsome; but he was a sociable fellow when sober, and had some other good qualities.

He took up land by the lake. A situation that was somewhat superior to John Miller's, and in time, because of its location on the lake front, proved the more valuable possession. He built himself a little shanty, and spent most of his time hunting and trapping. When lumbermen came in, he shrewdly fore-stalled them by cutting all the pine himself and selling it on the plea of clearing his land for farming. He thus netted himself some good hard cash, enlarged his house, and went to a neighbouring village, where he secured a wife. Several other men came in and took up land, and Miller petitioned the Government for a grant to build a road through their district. This was readily given, for the Government was ready to encourage its settlers, especially in new districts. Miller was given the contract for a portion of the road, and Dodge secured it for another section. Miller sought a road expert, and, though the condition of his section was the worst imaginable from rocks, ledges, ravines, still his road is creditable to this day, and the bridges were well made. Dodge had a much leveller piece of ground, and only a couple of narrow streams to bridge; but from the first his road was dangerous, and was a nightmare to all travellers after dark. Within three months, Miller with the other settlers had to turn out and rebuild the bridges and relay most of Dodge's corduroy road. The most important part of the business to Dodge seemed to be to draw the money from the Government. With that money he secured permission to turn his house into a backwoods saloon and lay in his first supply of liquor. When the lumbermen had camps near by he held high carnival every night, and began to think himself the most important man in the whole district.

Instead of helping to secure the school, he threw every obstacle possible in its way. He bullied the settlers, and tried to drive Miller from his purpose. But he fought in vain. The Government's inducements to the settlers were tempting, and the needs of their children were pressing, and so John Miller had the honour of leading his fellow settlers in a bee to build their log schoolhouse, which he saw was the very best that could under the circumstances be built. From that time the contest for improvement was fought by John Miller, and his determined enemy was always the saloon-keeper, Dave Dodge. But this was only a small portion of the inimical work of Dodge. His saloon became the centre of backwoods brawls, and evils that wrecked many lives and even some of the homes of the settlers. The place became so lawless that the Government had to take special measures to maintain order.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

But as Dodge went home from the little Parsonage he was full of self-righteousness and self-justification. All that was good and beneficent in the neighbourhood he and Miller had done, and, in his estimation, Miller's honour by no means outshone his. And now, after all this service to his district, and the tourists beginning to find out the beauties of the country, and to flock in scores and hundreds in the summer-time, thus making hotel business very profitable, to have this upstart of a Warden to threaten lifelong imprisonment over his head because of his mistakes not to say diabolical sins against his fellows, if he did not leave the country within a week!

Lanky was awed by Dodge's manner, and had not been with him for years without knowing when silence was the better part of discretion. When Dodge reached his home, a very little provocation was needed to bring heavy penalty upon the first culprit. This one, unfortunately, happened to be his wife. The poor overworked creature had lain down on her hard couch in the kitchen and had gone to sleep. Two passing shantymen had called for a drink, and finding the bar-room unoccupied and no one in the house but a sleeping woman, had helped themselves. Then, with a liberal supply of bottles of whisky and other liquors, they hastened away.

Raging as he was when he entered his bar-room, Dodge saw that nearly every bottle of liquor in sight was gone. He hurried into the kitchen, only to find his wife asleep.

Who's been here to buy whisky? he demanded of his wife.

The wife sprang to her feet, rubbing her eyes.

Eh? she asked.

Who's been here for liquor? he thundered again.

No one that I know, she replied. Then with an oath, he said

You've allowed some rascals to rob me, you sleeping idiot! and with another oath of rage he struck her full in the face. With a screech the poor woman fell back on the couch with a broken nose.

Dodge hastened back into the bar-room, and after consoling himself that his till was not touched whisky provoking the thieves sooner than gold he pulled out another case of liquor, uncorked a bottle of whisky, and without the assistance of a glass poured it down his throat. When Dodge finished his drink, it was only to fall into a profound stupor. The demon of thirst was aroused, and when he awakened it was only to demand more whisky.

When John Miller came home from his visit to the Parsonage he told his wife many things, but he did not mention the sentence that hung over Dave Dodge. He pondered over it, and became more quiet than ever. His prayers at the family altar, night and morning, took on a greater intensity. He did not forget to pray for his pastor's recovery, for God's blessed Spirit and sustaining power to dwell with More in beginning the new life, and for grace to increase in the hearts of all the neighbours; he earnestly besought God to purify their hearts from all manner of evil thoughts, prejudice, and unforgiveness, and also that God would gird His saints with power to lay down their lives, if need be, for their fellows. He chose his passages of Scripture carefully, reading the sixth chapter of Matthew, the twelfth of Romans, and the fourth of Ephesians.

Mrs Miller noted these things and tried to fathom their meaning, but though she was usually very shrewd she did not succeed.

John, she said one day, do you despair of our preacher's life?

Oh no, Mary. Thanks to God and kind friends, he is coming around all right.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Is More holding true? she ventured again.

As true as steel, praise His name!

Then, John, why are you growing so white and quiet like? I never heard you pray so in your life.

Mary, my good wife, I never needed God's light and grace so much. The Warden has ordered Dave Dodge to leave the country within a week dear me, and this is this is the morning of the fourth day now. And you know, and God knows, that I haven't fully forgiven him for burning our barn.

No, I don't know that, replied Mrs Miller, stoutly. You didn't send him to jail, as he ought to have gone. You have pardoned him time and again for killing sheep and hogs. He stole a calf. You merely told him that he did it, and you could prove it. He drove you off with curses. You have prayed for him, night and morning, and never allowed an unkind word to be said about him.

And would you speak one now? Why, where will he go to? He is 'most as old as me, and we have always lived here together. What would I do without him?

Why, you'd have a chance to live in peace, and his dirty, little hell-hole would be shut up.

Mrs Miller seldom spoke as warmly. She had a large heart, and forgave many things; but her faith and love were limited. Dave Dodge was beyond the pale, and she could not understand why her husband clung so tenaciously to the old rascal.

Mary, said Miller, quietly, I want you to pray earnestly for me, for I am going to see Dave to-day, and see what I can do for him.

I'll pray that God will send you back to me alive, said Mrs Miller. And added quickly, when she saw the look that came upon her husband's kindly face, Yes, John, I believe that you are right. May God bless you, whatever happens!

And God bless you, my dear, and fill you with the sweet love of Jesus!

Then John Miller turned his attention to his morning's work. After it was all completed, he dressed himself with much care, and bidding his wife good-bye, he went down the road to the Duck Lake Hotel.

On the same morning, the fourth day of Dodge's debauch, his wife, poor creature, with her bandaged face, became alarmed at his terrible condition, and begged of Lanky and Huddy not to supply him with any more liquor. So the men desisted.

Dodge was in his bedroom over the kitchen and helplessly stupid. He begged, pleaded and coaxed, but all in vain. Then he stormed and threatened. His strength came to him suddenly as that of ten men, and he sprang up in a fury. The men ran for their lives down to the kitchen. They locked the door going into the bar-room, and then fastened the kitchen door on the outside. Dodge came down, breathing curses and threatenings. When he found the door to the bar-room locked, his fury knew no bounds. He sought a billet of wood, but found none; then, to the horror of the people watching through the windows, he opened the stove door, took out a stick of wood that was burning a little at one end, and with that pounded open the bar-room door. Then, throwing down the stick, he made a rush for a bottle of liquor; but in doing so he fell, and in falling brought down a shelf of bottles. Some of these broke. The liquor ran out, took fire when it touched the burning stick, and spread with astonishing rapidity. Dodge jumped up, seized a bottle of whisky and hurried back to the kitchen, unmindful of the flames. Then he hastened upstairs, and getting into his bed he broke the top off the bottle on the side of the bed, drank deeply, and fell into a

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

stupor.

The flames made terrific headway in the dry old house, and as the smoke began to pour out of the bar-room door, Mrs Dodge exclaimed

Oh! my Dave will be burned my Dave will be burned! And before the men could stop her she had pulled away the barricade at the kitchen door, and run in and up the stairs.

The men secured some pails, and, bringing water from the lake, dashed it ineffectually on the burning building. The fire raged with most fury in the bar-room up to the roof, and then back to the kitchen. So the stairs had not caught fire.

CHAPTER TWO. TO THE RESCUE.

While the men were engaged in throwing water on the building Mr Miller came running up, his face full of horror at the sight of the fire, and almost breathless from running.

Where's Dave Dodge? he asked of the men.

Inside, raving drunk! replied Lanky.

Where's his missus?

Inside too. Trying to get old Dave out.

And you here, not trying to help her! said Miller, with a look of contempt and scorn at the cowards.

Then, turning, he whipped off his coat, and holding it over his head as a shield, he plunged into the smoke. He found the stairs, and saw Mrs Dodge shaking her drunken husband and trying to awaken him to a sense of his perilous position.

Oh, Mr Miller, save Dave, won't you? she cried, and sank to the floor unconscious from the smoke.

You first, said the good old man, as he threw a blanket over her head and gathered the woman up in his stout arms.

He carried her downstairs and handed her out to the men, and then rushed back for Dave, seized him by the head and arms and dragged him downstairs, and had him nearly out of danger outside the door when the roof fell. Some of the burning timbers fell on Mr Miller and pinned him to the ground, burning him severely as they did so. The men, roused by the old man's heroism, rushed to his rescue. They got Dodge away with little injury, but before Mr Miller was released he was terribly burned. However, he was delighted and full of thanksgiving to God that he had rescued the people, and though the building might go, no lives would be lost.

Mr Miller told Lanky to go and secure help and take them all to his place, and tell Mrs Miller to get an extra bed ready.

Lanky sped away to secure help, while Huddy took charge of the patients. He wanted to help Mr Miller, but though he was suffering intensely he said

No, my man, dash some water in the woman's face and bring her to.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Huddy obeyed, and was rewarded by the woman opening her eyes and looking around in alarm.

Where's Dave? she asked.

Over there, beside Mr Miller, replied Huddy.

Oh yes, now I know, she said. Mr Miller saved him.

Yes, he did missus, and you too.

Then let me up, she said; but in trying to raise herself she fell back in weakness.

Huddy then attempted to see what effect a little water would have on Dodge's face.

Where am I? he growled, opening his eyes.

You were pretty nearly gone, said Huddy, only John Miller pulled you out of the fire.

Where is he?

Right here, nearly killed from trying to rescue you.

Dodge rose on his elbow. He looked stupidly at the burning building, and tried to comprehend the situation; but his drugged senses were slow and halting.

Is that my house?

It is, replied Huddy, amused at the man's stupidity and the distortions of his face as he tried to see clearly.

Who set it on fire?

You did, when you chased us and went for more liquor.

Chased you?

Yes, you chased Lanky and me, broke open the bar-room door with a burning stick of wood from the kitchen stove. You knocked some liquor down, got some more, and ran back to bed. Don't you remember?

You're a liar!

Why, there's your poor broken-nosed missus. Ask her. Do you remember smashing her nose?

Dodge looked as black as thunder at Huddy.

Then, as true as you did that, you did the whole thing.

And who brought me here, out of my bed?

John Miller, I told you. There he lies, behind you, nearly smashed and burned to death when the roof fell.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

John Miller, John Miller! When the roof fell! said Dodge, half stupidly to himself. Why did John Miller save me? I never did him a good turn in my life.

Better ask *him* why he saved you, suggested Huddy.

Where is he?

Oh, Dave, Dave, come here! I am so glad that Mr Miller got you out safely, said Mrs Dodge, as she looked over at her husband.

Dodge looked at her for a moment.

What's the matter with you, missus? he asked half kindly.

Why, man, said Huddy, she nearly died trying to save you; but she couldn't, and then Mr Miller had to save you both, see.

Dodge reached over and took his wife's extended hand, and pressed it half-unconsciously, half-affectionately. The world was whirling around him. He remembered distinctly hitting his wife, and now she nearly perished trying to rescue him. He remembered a hundred mean, tricky, dishonest things he had done to John Miller, but that John Miller should come and drag him out of his burning house he did not comprehend so distinctly.

And what was John Miller doing in my house? he asked.

Come here, Dave, and I'll tell you, said Mr Miller, when he heard the question.

Dodge struggled to his feet with a blanket around him and walked over as a man in a dream. Though suffering great pain, and his exertion increased it fourfold, he held up his blackened and badly burned hand to Dodge.

Take that, Dodge, and say that you forgive me.

Forgive you! stammered Dodge.

Yes; God says that we are to forgive one another as He, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us. I've had some hard thoughts about you, Dave; I want them forgiven.

I should think you had.

Will you forgive them? repeated Mr Miller, almost pleadingly.

The score's all on the other side, Miller. Don't say anything more about it, said Dodge, as he dropped his hand and turned to see all who had come. Lanky returned with Woods, Farley, Mr Green, the school-teacher, and half a dozen boys.

The teacher took charge of the wounded while the other men looked after the burning hotel. The sides had now fallen, and all that was left was only a mass of burning and smoking timbers and debris. There was some danger of the fire spreading to the stable, in which Dodge had some cows and hogs. But the men soon stopped this, and made any further damage from the fire an impossibility.

Mr Green had some stretchers made of blankets that had been brought, and birch-poles cut from the forest, and then, on the instruction of Mr Miller, had the three wounded ones carried over to his house.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

When Mrs Miller first heard the news of the fire and the accident to her husband, she was nearly prostrated, but the request for another bed quickly roused her housewifely instincts, while the idea of receiving Dodge and his wife brought many mingled motives into play. When the men arrived with the patients, Mrs Miller busied herself to get them all properly attended to. Mr Miller was taken to his own bed, Dodge was put in the spare bedroom, while Mrs Dodge, who had nearly recovered, was permitted to rest on the parlour lounge.

Mrs Miller brought out her ointments, and the teacher applied them to the wounds; but Mr Miller's condition was so serious that he ordered Huddy to get the best horse he could find in the neighbourhood and hasten away to Sandy Bay for the doctor. Mr Miller was very quiet and patient.

Thank you, my dear, he said to his wife; that will do now. Let me rest, and you 'tend Dave. He got some burns too.

And so the good old body drew up the blanket, tucked it around her husband, pulled the blind down, and left.

When she came to Dodge, she found that the teacher had bathed him and anointed his wounds. He was sitting up in the bed, robed in one of Mr Miller's spotless nightgowns. In spite of all the care and attention, the cleansing water and soothing ointment, he was not sure of himself and was very restless.

Lie down and rest, said the teacher.

But Dodge treated him with a far-away look. The young man could not understand his thoughts, he seemed to say, and so he kept silent. But when Mrs Miller entered his face changed.

I'm ashamed to come under your roof, Mrs Miller, he said.

You well might be, Dave, for you've been a bad man to us, burnin' our barn, killing our sheep, and stealing our calves. You've got a lot to answer for. I hope that you'll repent of your sins ere it is too late, said the good woman; but she busied herself to fix the pillows and sheets and make the man more comfortable.

Perhaps I'd better not bother you any more, said Dodge, and get the men to take me to some other home.

And where will you go to, Dave? John's the best friend you've got in the whole place.

I thought he was my worst enemy.

That shows what a blind fool you were, Dave. John has prayed for you night and mornin', and he wouldn't hear a word said agin ye, though you did him many a mean turn sure enough. May the good Lord forgive you, Dave!

Dodge groaned in spirit under the woman's honest, straightforward words. The axe was not laid at the root of the tree. It was in the hands of a pure, stout-hearted woman, and was, in purest honesty and unconsciousness, wielded with accuracy against a tree of stubborn bitterness. Dodge's mind was very much alert. The journey through the woods had brought fresh air to his lungs, and the pain of his wounds awoke every slumbering faculty. The events of the morning were related again and again amongst his carriers until he understood the enormity of his own actions and the prompt and heroic work of John Miller. The unstinted kindness of the teacher, who told him that Mr Miller had instructed him to render Dodge any assistance that he could, greatly impressed him. Dodge would have been less than a man if such kindness and self-sacrifice had not roused his noblest manhood. The actions of Mrs Miller were full of kindness; while her words so full of truth reminded him of the evil nature that was not dead, but only dormant or stunned within him. As he thought of it all, he shut his eyes for a moment.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me? he groaned in agonising thought.

Mrs Miller turned from tidying up the room and looked at him.

That's the right kind of a cry, Dave. You're not the first man that cried it, either.

Was ever a man so guilty and sinful?

Well, Dave, whether he was or not, I'm not the one to say, but the teacher will read about the one in the Bible who was wretched because of his sins, and cried to be relieved. The preacher or John will tell you how you may get peace, and you'll come out all right yet.

Do you think so, Mrs Miller?

Well, Dave, John has faith in you, and I'm beginnin' to have some too, and I know that the Lord Jesus is no respecter of persons. He can save you as well as He can save anybody, and He just loves a good, heavy lift, Dave. Yes, He does, when a chap's away down, man or woman. He loves to get right down under them and lift them right up. `For when we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly.' He's got to go down a long way to get you, hasn't He, Dave?

Yes, groaned Dave.

Well, Dave, look to Jesus Christ. The teacher's here, and he'll read to you about the `wretched man.' I'll send ye up some nice gruel in a few minutes.

And the good woman hastened away to the kitchen to prepare gruel and other good things for all her patients.

CHAPTER THREE. THE GALL OF BITTERNESS.

The teacher opened his Bible as he was requested, and read the seventh chapter of Romans. Old Dave seemed to be in an agony of thought, and did not appear to drink in much of the truth of the chapter. But Paul's dramatic ending, so descriptive of the power of sin, indulged, over the body, and the threatened consummation of sin, death, roused the hearer. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? he repeated over and over. It seemed to be the phrase that suited his mental and moral condition, and he lashed himself with it; for he was, indeed, in the gall of bitterness and the bondage of iniquity, and, at the time, did not know that such a spirit of contrition presaged a way of liberty.

The teacher had ceased reading at the end of the chapter, and, perceiving Dodge's face covered with perspiration and hearing his groans, which now became audible, he turned to see if he could relieve him, for he thought his sufferings were physical.

What can I do for you, Mr Dodge? he inquired.

Read on, said Dodge.

The teacher, to his own astonishment, for he had never seen the Spirit working in this wise in a strong-willed man, now realised that the wrestling and pain in Dodge were less physical than mental and spiritual. He wished that the preacher were present, for he was sure that he would not only most truly appreciate such a wrestling of the Spirit, but he would also know what words of direction and encouragement to give the man.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

While better educated than Dodge, the teacher had neither Dodge's strength of mind or will, nor his long record of defiant sinfulness. The teacher belonged to that goodly class of people who have a desire to do right, and whose lives are morally correct, but who for a long time have lived in the moonlight of their own consciences and the starlight of the world's literature. When the teacher came into the clearer light of Christ, it was like the breaking of a calm, beautiful summer's day, in the easy, joyful coming of the morning twilight and then the sunlight.

But with Dodge the experience was vastly different. With him it was the bursting of the sun at noonday upon the land, where the morning had known only the darkness and devastation of a cyclone.

The blaze of the light of Christ, streaming into his heart, revealed to him the terrible havoc of sin, his soul in open rebellion to its Maker and the harbourer of iniquity; and his body, under such rebellion, sold to sin: the end of which was death, eternal death. In this light, the man reeled, dazzled, and seeing his soul laden with the seeds of eternal death rather than the means of salvation offered, he cried in his agony: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?

The teacher had taken up the Bible to read on; but the man's visible anguish disturbed him, and he persistently thought of physical relief.

Read on, I say, said Dodge, somewhat imperiously; read on! Let's hear the end of it, even if it lands me in hell!

The teacher felt shocked at the man's words, then he wanted to smile, but remembering Dodge's recent actions under liquor, he became fearful that Dodge's mind was again giving way. Dodge looked at him with blazing eyes.

Read on, young man.

The teacher sat down again and quietly read the next chapter, the wonderful eighth chapter of Romans. Dodge drank in the truth as a thirsty man. Then there was freedom offered from sin and death, freedom in Christ Jesus, freedom through the Spirit, life by being led by the Spirit, a son of God, the witness of the Spirit, the justification and glorification of God's elect!

Long ere Mr Green had finished the chapter Dodge's wrestling had ceased, the perspiration had dried from his brow, and he was very still and quiet.

Thank you, he said to Mr Green, when he had finished. It was the first time he had said Thank you to any one for years. Come and read the last chapter to me again to-morrow.

Here, Mr Green! called Mrs Miller; come and get some broth for Dave.

The teacher hastened to the hall, and found Mrs Miller at the foot of the stairs with a tray, the chief thing upon which was a large bowl of steaming chicken broth. Taking the tray, the teacher came back to Dodge, and after fixing him with great care of his wounds, in his bed, he placed the tray in front of him. The first few spoonfuls nearly choked him, because his thoughts seemed to place a lump in his throat, but his appetite was much better after he had swallowed some of the broth. Then followed the bread and butter and the jam and a cup of tea.

Dodge then felt so refreshed that he wanted to get up.

No, said the teacher. You can't do that, for two reasons. You have many bruises and burns, and are still a weak man. You will have to await doctor's orders. And then, you know, you have no clothes. Yours were all burned in the hotel!

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

Well, what a fix! exclaimed Dodge, with a smile and without an oath, which caused him to be somewhat surprised at himself. He was truly beginning to be a new man.

Send some one to Sandy Bay Thompson, the storekeeper, knows my size and get a whole rig out. He owes me money, and can turn it over to my account.

You won't need it for three or four days anyway.

I'll be ready to get into it as soon as it comes, said Dodge, emphatically.

While Dodge was thus making good progress towards recovery, John Miller was suffering intense pain and slowly getting weaker. The doctor arrived, and pronounced the injuries to the backbone and other parts of the most serious nature.

This report did not cause a word of complaint to escape the good old man. With infinite patience he submitted to the treatment, and assisted by the medicines given to relieve his pain he went peacefully to sleep. Mrs Miller was not made fully aware of the danger of her husband; but when Mr Green had the whole truth wrung out of him by his imperious patient, Dodge was overwhelmed in agony and remorse.

Hurry up those clothes, Green, for I must be up, and see if I can't save that man's life. I'm a worthless wretch compared to him. I hope that my wife is helping all that she can.

Yes, she is a bit unsteady yet, but she is rendering Mrs Miller good help in the kitchen.

Why doesn't she come to see me? said Dodge, a little peevishly.

Perhaps she awaits the request of her lord, replied the teacher, with a smile.

That's so, Green. I was forgetting what a brute I have been to her. Go and tell her I want to see her.

With pleasure Green hastened to the kitchen and told Mrs Dodge that her husband was anxious to see her.

A sudden pallor sprang into the woman's face, and she looked appealingly at Mrs Miller.

Go, dear, said the motherly body. He'll only do you good now.

Thus relieved, but with much fear and trembling, she entered Dodge's chamber. After showing her in, the teacher closed the door and went back, to see if he could not aid Mrs Miller in rearranging her household and look after the farm.

Mrs Miller told him that Mrs Dodge had thrown herself heart and soul into the kitchen work, and that she was all right there. Green then went outside, and was surprised and delighted to see that all the stock had been carefully put in, fed and bedded. To whom belonged the credit he did not know until the next morning, when he found Lanky carrying two brimming pails of milk to the kitchen.

How's Mr Miller? was his first question, which was quickly followed by, And how's Dave?

Mr Miller is very quiet, but will have a hard time, if he ever gets well, said Mr Green, with a sad face. But Dodge is much better, and wants a whole outfit of clothes. Will you be so good as to go to Sandy Bay to Thompson's for him?

Sure, said Lanky; when I put the stock to pasture I'll go.

CHAPTER FOUR. THE NEW SUIT.

The September day that had dawned was one of rarest beauty. The meadows, with their cattle slowly moving about and grazing, hung as in an azure haze; while the trees of the forest were painted in their autumnal colours. A little stream ran past Mr Miller's barn, and it shone like a band of silver in the morning light. Dave Dodge saw all this from his bed, and wondered if something new had not come into the world. It seemed changed, and it was in a way inexpressible to him.

While he was thus looking and wondering, his wife came in with some breakfast. She had lost her fear; but her face was very pale, and her nose was cruelly marked. In their interview the previous evening, the light was so dim that Dodge had not noticed the effects of his cruelty. Now, in the morning light he saw, and his heart smote him.

Here's some breakfast, Dave, said his wife, with a smile; I fixed it all myself.

Dave turned to speak; but he choked.

Oh, Dave, exclaimed his wife, for fear had not been driven very far from her heart, don't look at me like that!

Then a tear glistened in each of Dodge's eyes.

What's the matter, Dave? asked the woman, tenderly, putting down the tray and coming to the man's side.

You said you forgave me all, Mary, stammered the man.

Yes, I did, Dave, I'm so glad to. Now, won't you eat your breakfast?

Does it hurt you yet? asked Dodge.

What?

Why, your nose!

I haven't thought much about it, I've been so happy after what you said last night. Never mind the nose, Dave, if the heart's in the right place.

Do you think it can be healed?

It doesn't make much matter.

It will always remind me of my cruelty.

And keep us both humble, eh, Dave?

Well, Mary, I guess that you're getting on faster than I am in the good way, and I'm glad.

Now, Dave, eat your breakfast, or it'll be cold.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

So he ate his breakfast with much relish, while his wife fixed up his bedclothes and waited upon him with her heart full of a new hope and a new joy.

The day passed quietly. The teacher read again the eighth chapter of Romans, and regretted the illness that prevented the preacher from coming to explain things; but Dave's strong mind was in keen sympathy with that of the Apostle Paul, and the Word itself was sufficient for him.

Mr Miller put in a very poor day, for his pain was great. The doctor came again, and his face darkened. When Dodge found out the truth, he begged and pleaded that he might be allowed to rise.

Can't you rig me up a suit out of Mr Miller's clothes? he asked of the teacher. He and I are near of a size.

But your burns would be chafed?

Let them be.

And spoil the clothes?

Bring that doctor in here, demanded Dodge. The doctor came.

Doctor, I'm going to get up, and if you can fix my wounds so as to save the clothes, I'll be obliged.

You are better in bed, but if you will get up I'll fix your burns.

I *will* get up so go ahead.

The doctor anointed the wounds afresh, put some absorbent cotton gently upon them, and bound the wounds more tightly than he had previously done. The teacher got some of Mr Miller's garments, and made Dodge fairly presentable.

The doctor almost expected to see Dodge sink back into bed from pain and dizziness, or at least to hear him groan, but none of these things happened. Whatever agony he suffered his attendants were not made aware of it.

Now I'm fit, exclaimed Dodge; and he stood up and walked to the door. Where's John Miller?

When he was shown into Mr Miller's room he found Mrs Miller ready to serve him some tea.

You look tired, Mrs Miller. Let me wait on John, and you take a rest, said Dodge, with a courtesy and a kindness, and also with a steadiness of body, that surprised the spectators.

Why, Dave, are you so well? exclaimed Mrs Miller. She had refused to let any one else, not even the teacher, wait upon her husband; but she unhesitatingly handed the tea—things over to Dodge.

When on his best behaviour, Dodge knew as well as any one how to wait upon and serve with courtesy his hotel guests, and now when his love and reverence were awakened, he was all that could have been demanded by the most fastidious.

He won't eat much, wailed Mrs Miller, as she watched Dodge coddling up her husband.

You get some nice things once in a while, replied Dodge, and leave the rest to me.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

And so I will, Dave, she declared, for I see you can do more with John than I can.

And then she left the room, while the doctor and the teacher, who were at the door, went downstairs with her, leaving the two men alone.

With his left arm tenderly under Mr Miller's head, Dodge coaxed him to sip his tea. Mr Miller was supremely happy in that embrace, while his new self-constituted nurse, with set lips, was determined to do his duty whichever way it lay.

Do you think you can talk a little, John? asked Dodge, very quietly, after he had induced his patient to take all the broth.

I'm most too happy for anything, Dave. Bless the Lord!

What makes you so happy? You must be 'most racked to death with pain!

Not all the pain in the world can separate me from the love of Christ, Dave; and then He has given you to me. That makes me happy. Just to have you here. I've been wondering when you'd come. Oh, how kind and tender you are, Dave, and I love you! My prayers for you are answered.

Dodge sat down on a low chair by the bedside and buried his face in the bedclothes. He wept. Perhaps from weakness and his sudden exertion, but also from the welling up of his heart in response to the all-conquering love of Christ, as he saw it and felt it in John Miller. It was some time before he spoke again. Mr Miller lifted his hands in praise to God, and then let his right one fall with his blessing upon Dodge's head. Dodge let it lie there for a few minutes. It sent seraphic thrills through his whole being. Then he removed it to his lips and kissed it.

He rose quickly and washed his tear-stained face, for he heard a tap on the door. Then he opened it, and met the teacher.

Lanky has returned with your new clothes, and here's a letter from Thompson to you.

He quickly tore open the envelope and read amongst other things

I am very glad to send you a suit, and I also enclose a hundred dollars, which may be serviceable to you just now.

Bless his heart, that was thoughtful of him! exclaimed Dodge. I wonder if he has been converted.

That's not impossible, replied the teacher. Lanky was telling your wife of a wonderful revival down that way when I left.

That's it. It takes the grace of God to make men considerate.

The next morning, Dodge put on his new suit, and renewed his attentions to his patient.

After giving him his breakfast, Dave was reading the Bible to Mr Miller, as well as his full heart and overflowing tears would let him.

At that moment Mrs Miller ushered in Warden Fitzgerald. Dodge rose quickly and brushed away his tears with his coat-sleeve.

Duck Lake; or Tales of the Canadian Backwoods

I am very sorry to see you here, Mr Miller, he said kindly, as he pressed Mr Miller's hand.

I have my reward, bless God! replied Mr Miller.

What's that? asked the Warden, with a smile.

Dave. God has given me Dave's love.

The Warden turned and beheld a new man. The coarse, villainous look and defiant eyes had disappeared with the dirty, greasy clothes. A man with earnest demeanour, but eyes full of tenderness, even tears, and clad in clean new clothes, stood before him. He gazed with intense, even critical scrutiny; but Dodge did not resent that now. He coveted such examination, and wished that every bit of his wickedness might be exposed and purged away.

This is wonderful! exclaimed the Warden.

Dave smiled through the tears in his eyes.

Yes, said Mr Miller, it is wonderful, praise be to our Lord. He can do wonders.

Your week was up yesterday, Dodge, said the Warden, with mock imperiousness.

I should like to stay to nurse Mr Miller back to health.

Nurse Mr Miller back! exclaimed the Warden.

Yes, he's John's nurse, put in Mrs Miller; and he's a good one too. He can make John eat, and do things I can't. I hope you won't send him away now, Mr Fitzgerald. Whatever would I do without him?

Dodge, you have a better and more successful advocate here than any lawyer you ever had. May God continue to bless you, and make you a blessing, is all that I can say, except to add a hope that He may extend His mercy to me.

He will, bless Him! said Mr Miller.

And that order to leave, Mr Fitzgerald? put in Dodge, not quite satisfied.

It hangs over old Dave Dodge's head, said the Warden, with a significant smile, and if he ever comes back to these parts, woe betide him!

He'll never come back, said Dave.

Amen, said Mr Miller.

THE END.