

The Red Man Never Forgets.

IT was a clear star light night. The shores of the ice bound river were heavily wooded. All was quiet save for the occasional howl of a timber-wolf or the hilarious sounds from the half breed camp further up the river.

Not very far from the bank stood a rude log cabin most probably built in the long ago by some hardy frontiersman, as some slight protection against his twin enemies—the biting frost and the painted savage. Sparks flying from the chimney and the light fitfully shining through the chinks showed that the cabin was tenanted. Up till late it had been empty—the door fallen from its fastenings and the mortar from the walls. Of late a wandering blackfoot had made his home in this neglected “Shack” but with the laziness and negligence habitual to his race he had scorned to demean himself by engaging in manual labor and consequently the old cabin remained in the state of utter neglect in which he had found it. Of his past life no one seemed to know anything and with the stoic reserve and studied taciturnity of his people he disdained to answer the queries of the curious who would know from whence he came.

The Indian was seated in front of a large fire industriously engaged in mending a snow shoe and the skill with which he handled the deerskin thongs showed that necessity had at least forced him to become an adept in that line of work. A grunt of satisfaction announced the completion of the unwelcome task and rising quietly from the log he took a step forward the better to admire his handiwork in the full

glare of the fire. Standing six feet in his moccasins, he was indeed a magnificent specimen of manhood. A few gray hairs and slightly bent shoulders showed that he was past the prime of life, but his lithe step and the quick suspicious glance that he bestowed on everything around, showed that the years had touched but slightly his iron frame. As he turned to enter the cabin, his quick ear catches a sound, which because of its strangeness, arouses his suspicious instincts to a sudden state of alertness. He bends lower, takes a few more steps in the direction of the river, coolly unhitches the small axe at his belt, and strains his eagle eyes in the direction from whence comes the unlooked for sounds. The moon rising in all her glory above the woods and river casts a pale weird light over all, throwing the shadows of the giant trees on the opposite bank into bold outlines upon the crackling ice of the sleeping river.

This scene of beauty—at any time too commonplace to excite the Indians attention—has now little attraction in it for the nature-loving white men who sweeping around a bend of the river, as if borne on the wings of an eagle bursts upon the gaze of the astonished red-man. Not ten yards behind, and running with that long easy sinuous motion, that knows no fatigue, come the wolf pack. The sullen Indian uttered his one word of astonishment “Ugh,” as he saw that in a few moments the hungry brutes would be upon the fugitive, and in imagination he heard their snarls of rage as they fought for each tiny toothsome morsel. At the spot which the skater is now approaching a giant boulder shouldered itself well out into mid-stream and to the astonishment of the solitary spectator the white man, swerving suddenly from his course, has time to place his back

against it, draw his Colts 44, and prepare to dearly sell his life.

To think was with the red man to act and ere the report of the first shot was borne down to him on the crisp night air he was on his way to the help of the stranger. Quickly he reaches the white man's side and the wolves disconcerted by this unexpected reinforcement draw sullenly off. But the respite is short. In a moment they come boldly on again the weakness of the succor and the hope of more food, sufficient incentives to courage in those blood thirsty buccaneers of the wilderness.

Down comes the axe and a howl of pain from the foremost, shows that age has not dimmed the Black-foots vision nor made weak his sinewy arm. Again and again falls the deadly axe but the wolves are not discouraged. Meanwhile the skater has time to reload his revolver. No breath is wasted in useless words nor does he waste a single shot.

The crack of a whip lash sounding like a pistol shot and the yelping of "huskies" told the men fighting for their lives that succor was close at hand. The wolves too had heard the sounds and becoming more desperate, their fearful hunger intensified at the prospect of being baffled - they attacked the now tired men more fiercely than ever.

The Indian in aiming a blow at one of the foremost slipped and fell, the axe at the same moment falling from his weakened grasp. Almost instantly the fangs of the foremost fastened upon him and he was dragged beyond the reach of his companion, who fearful of an attack from the rear could not leave the shelter of the rock for an instant. The two half-breeds and their dog team running with the speed of coyotes were

now almost upon the scene and the half-famished half-beaten wolf pack reluctantly drew off to the shelter of the forest. Thoroughly exhausted from exertion and loss of blood the white man sank down upon the ice. The Crees lifted him gently and placed him upon the toboggan. With hissing curses and stinging blows from the whip the hungry huskies were persuaded to continue on their journey towards the cabin. The white man comfortably stretched upon the sweet smelling spruce of the cabin floor soon recovered sufficiently to inquire after his unknown preserver. The Cree who brought him in professed ignorance as to the identity of the charitable Indian, but his companion coming up at the moment supplied the look for information.

Burning Mountain, the dead Indian, the son of a Blackfoot chief, had been unhappy in his love affairs. Through opposition on the part of her father, he was unable to take into his wigwam the squaw of his choice. Aided by a white trapper he stole his dusky bride and a couple of cayuses and bade adieu to the camp of his fathers. A short time after the great Getchie Manitou called her to the happy home of the warrior and the maiden. His love for his dark-eyed queen of the forest had never wavered; he returned not to the lodges of his father but wandered through the wilderness from year to year in the bitterness of loneliness. The sight of the white man in extremity recalled to him the favor of long ago shown to him by a pale face for the red man never forgets. At break of day the white man felt sufficiently recovered to continue along his solitary way, and his heart though heavy with sorrow for the death of the man that he knew not, was lightened by the thought that an act of kindness wherever placed will merit its own reward.

CARTEN.

“ For our sakes without question

He put from him all that he cherished.

Simply as any that served him

He served and he perished.

All that kings covet was his

And he flung it aside for us.

Simply as any that died

In his service he died for us.”



KING EDWARD VII.