

CITY SPARROWS.

Like brown leaves whirling in a gust of autumn wind, they flatter down. Amid the whirring dais and dust. Upon the pavements of the town. They swing upon the electric wires, Dangling as who knows below. They gossip softly from the spires That pierce the sunset's amber glow. Gay vagabonds, I wonder why You choose the town's tumultuous crowds. When ye have wings to rise and fly To daisied fields and floating clouds? Ah! do ye never pause and dream Of tiny nests and blossomed trees, That bend above some shadowy stream And murmur secrets to the breeze? Had I your wings, I would not stay Amid the city's baggeling strife; But on this balmy summer day I'd seek my childhood's peaceful life. —Antony E. Anderson.

The Rescue of Henri De Blavier

The old Canadian fort, Beau Sejour—or Cumberland, as it is now called—is situated on the narrow isthmus that connects the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. It was built by the French, who made the first settlements in this part of Canada.

A regiment, officered by enterprising young aristocrats, was sent from France to hold it against all comers and for nearly a hundred years battle in some shape or other, raged almost incessantly around its casemated walls. French and English fought each other for its possession, while the Indians took a hand in the conflict whenever and wherever plunder or revenge could be obtained, and tortured, tomahawked and scalped alike settlers and soldier, French and English.

On a mild day in early spring, about the year 1759, an Indian runner came out of the great forest that surrounded it, waving over his head a small, square, white packet, which proved to be a cry for help from the beleaguered fort at Lanisburg, on the neighboring island of Cape Breton.

It was nobly responded to, and in a few hours the runner was again crossing the clearing before the fort, with of the gallant defenders of Beau Sejour at his back; but almost before the last of the column had disappeared into the forest the Indian warwhoop rang through its leafy shades.

Scattering shots told that the ubiquitous savage was dogging the rescuing party, and great was the alarm and anxiety among the scanty force left behind, for young Henri de Blavier, the sixteen-year-old son of the commandant, was in the forest, accompanied only by Antoine Pointier, the hunter of the fort, and Joel Anderson, a New England hunter and trapper, whose wanderings in search of peltry had brought him into the neighborhood a few days previous.

In return for hospitable entertainment, he had made himself exceedingly useful, bringing in many a choice bit of game for the officers' mess that their less skillful hunters were unable to capture.

The three had started shortly after daybreak in search of game, and, as no Indians had been seen on the isthmus for some time, they might be neglecting the usual precautions.

In any case, their situation was one of extreme peril, and Col. de Blavier immediately organized a rescue party; but, just as they were leaving, Anderson sprang out of the woods, followed by a flight of Indian arrows, and they waited to hear his report, which was by no means encouraging.

They had struck the trail of a moose almost under the walls of the fort, and followed it together until it crossed some "bear signs," when they separated, Henri and Antoine keeping on in pursuit of the moose, while Anderson went after the bear.

About noon his experienced eye detected indications that Indians were in the neighborhood, and he immediately attempted to rejoin his companions; but finding that impossible, he next directed his energies to returning with the tidings.

"The woods is just alive with them painted varnints, Colonel," he continued. "It wouldn't do to venture in them with less than a regiment at your command, and even then it would be risky. Maybe Antoine and Henri have found cover, and been waiting for night to come in. It would be their only chance, anyhow; and if they ain't here soon I'll go out and see if I can discover what's become of them. It's a case where one can do better than fifty, if he knows what he's about."

The obvious good sense of this remark compelled acquiescence, and while a signal was being arranged by which Anderson could summon help, in case of need, an orderly came in to report that something had been detected crawling through the clearing. It proved to be Antoine, with an arrow sticking in his shoulder and almost dead from fatigue and loss of blood.

While the surgeon dressed his wound he told his story, which proved in many respects to be a repetition of Anderson's. He, too, had detected "Indian signs" very soon after they separated, and immediately turned about to regain the fort; but while proceeding as carefully and cautiously as possible they fell into an ambush.

Henri had been spirited from his side and into the forest almost before he realized that they were attacked.

He had managed to escape after killing two of his assailants and wounding a third, and had been lying for hours in the undergrowth, within sight of the fort, waiting for the friendly cover of night to get under its guns.

His successful defense made young De Blavier's position one of the greatest danger. The scalp of so important a person as the son of the commandant would be considered a very fair set-off against the lives of the two who had fallen, and if he were not already dead every precaution would be taken against rescue or escape.

Nothing could be done until his position was ascertained, and Anderson immediately set off on this dangerous errand.

Clad in garments that even in broad daylight could scarcely have been distinguished from the undergrowth through which he must make his way, he crept through a low arched door in the most inaccessible part of the fort,

specially designed for the use of the scouts, and in a couple of hours he had located the Indian force.

It consisted of nearly a hundred warriors, in full war costume. They were encamped in what had once been a stone quarry. The granite blocks of which Fort Beau Sejour was built were cut out of it, and in quarrying them the workmen had cut through a great hill of rock in such a way as to form an artificial precipice of great height.

At the foot of it sat poor Henri de Blavier, with his legs bound tightly together, and a stalwart Indian guard lounging beside him. Some playful savage had daubed his face with patches of black paint, but no disfigurement could disguise his pitiful condition, as he watched, with agonized features, the movements of a party of young Indian braves, who were busily employed near him.

A stout stake had been firmly driven into the ground, and around this they were keeping up small fires, intending evidently to girdle the little knoll it crowned with a path of red-hot coals. Anderson took in the situation at a glance. Henri was to be tied loosely to the stake, and, bare-footed, was to be bated around the track of glowing coals with fire-brands and blazing pine-knots, and anything else handy that could be utilized to agonize the human frame.

To thus torture the son almost without sight of his father's stronghold would be as much of bliss as a Micmac could hope to experience this side of the happy hunting-grounds.

"Well," whispered the scout to himself, after a moment's contemplation of the careful preparations with which the occasion was being honored, "a bullet would soon stop that work, and it shall be stopped that way if there ain't no other, but I wish I could bring him off alive."

Even while he was speaking a possible means of rescuing the boy occurred to him. When out in search of game he always carried a strong piece of rope. In case he should kill more than he could carry home with him, he would then have the means of securing the surplus in a tree, out of the reach of forest prowlers.

He observed, too, that Henri's guard took such an interest in the preparations for Indian fun going on around the stake that he seemed wholly unable to keep away from it, and every once in a while would leave his charge for a few seconds, and saunter over to lend a hand at the fascinating job.

A guard over the worn-out, helpless boy seemed indeed wholly superfluous, and no doubt the wisest in the camp would have considered it all-sufficient to merely keep an eye on him; and this was evidently his jailer's view of the situation, as his excursions to the spot where all the hilarity of the camp was concentrated became more frequent and his stays longer.

"There's just one chance," muttered the old scout, as once more he commenced to creep through the bushes towards the brow of the precipice under which the unfortunate Henri was seated. In order to avoid the Indian scouts he was obliged to make a wide detour, and when he at last reached it, and cautiously peered over, Henri was still sitting at its foot, and his guard, anxious to have the fun begin, was eagerly assisting in the horrible preparations for an aboriginal kind of amusement.

They were almost complete, and every one seemed intent on the finishing touches. "It is now or never," thought Anderson, as he put his mouth against the rock in such a way as to make it conduct his voice, and gave a gentle "S-s-t." Immediately following it by "Don't move, Henri. It's me, Anderson. I'm going to send you down a rope, but don't move till you see it swaying before your eyes."

The hunter put the end of the line over the cliff, and had let it down a foot or two, when the Indian guard suddenly bethought himself of his charge, and hurried over to where he sat.

Henri had the wit and self-possession to look so utterly hopeless and terror-stricken that a single glance sufficed the savage, and he hurried back to the stake, now almost completely girdled by a track of glowing coals.

Down went the rope again; this time until it reached the eager grasp of the strong, young hands.

It was new and well-twisted; there was courage, muscle and intelligence at both ends of it, and luck was on the right side that day, or rather night, for no Indian looked their way until De Blavier was over the cliff. Once out of sight and they were safe, for even an Indian cannot follow a trail in the darkness.

Before daybreak they were back in the fort. Boundless thanks and valuable gifts were lavished on the brave scout by its garrison, but he never recounted the story of the rescue of young Henri de Blavier without regretting that he couldn't have stayed to see the disappointment among "them varnints when they found they'd got no use for them good live coals."—Clara A. Harper.

Why People are Eight-Handed. Right-handedness, which is found to have existed in the majority of mankind from the earliest times, is traced by Dr. D. G. Brinton to the erect posture. The apex most resembling man are ambidextrous, displaying no preference for either hand; but the erect posture opposes the powerful retardation of gravity to the distribution of the arterial blood above the level of the heart, and thus introduces a new distribution of force in the economy. The great arteries arising from the aorta carry the blood in an apparently shorter course, and in less time, to the left brain than to the right. Its nutrition being therefore the most abundant and its vitality the more active, the right side of the body, which it controls, is more ready to respond to any nerve stimulus.

A Great Blast. Probably one of the largest blasting operations ever performed in a quarry was carried out recently at Dinorwic quarry, in Wales. Three and a half tons of Nobel's gelatine dynamite were exploded at once. It took two days and nights to put the explosive in place, and when it was fired some thousands of tons of hard granite were displaced.

Excessive Originality.

"Er'um, Mr. Gagsmith," said the wealthy manufacturer of Puckerham's Pollucid Panacea For Peculiar People, turning around in his revolving chair as his testimonial writer entered the room. "I have sent for you for the purpose of calling your attention to the fact that the bona fide testimonials which you have been turning out of late are not exactly suited to our purpose."

"But, Mr. Puckerham," replied the talented young man mildly, "I have endeavored to carry out the instructions you gave me a short time ago, to infuse originality, vim and sparkle into them, to make them entertaining as well as instructive, and"

"It is true that I so directed you, Mr. Gagsmith," interrupted his employer, "but it seems to me that you have carried out my instructions a trifle too literally. There is such a thing as being excessively original. For instance"

The manufacturer of Pollucid Panacea picked up a couple of specimens of the talented young man's handiwork and read aloud, as follows: "Dear doctor, I was a constant sufferer from nervous exhaustion for three years. After using a few bottles of your valuable remedy my mother-in-law died, and I am now entirely cured."

"Dear doctor, I was cured for a collar button on my neck, which I used for a collar button. After taking two bottles of your excellent remedy I can now button my trousers on it."

"I grant you that this style of literature sparkles with originality, but it is a trifle too fin de siecle for our use. In future, Mr. Gagsmith, you will please bear constantly in mind that we are not publishing the London Punch, but running a manufactory for the production of Puckerham's Pollucid Panacea For Peculiar People. That is all, Mr. Gagsmith. Good day!"

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heed the signal

Many persons take a variety of remedies and try many novel procedures to reduce their weight. We do not refer to these. If you have been in fair health, with a normal amount of flesh, and yet have been losing weight of late, there is something wrong. If there is an inherited tendency to weak lungs; if your cold hangs on, or if you are weak, without appetite, losing color, and easily exhausted; this loss of flesh is the signal of distress. Heed it, promptly.

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