

### THE COMMON PLIGHT.

There is no man, however poor his lot,  
But holds one thing too dear to be forgot,  
There is no man, whatever be his fate,  
But sees one thing that's his, or soon or late,  
Yet neither can, while hope or memory lives,  
Give up his all for what another gives.

There is no man, how sad so e'er he be,  
But fancies that some one for him would flee.  
There is no man, how glad so mote he sing,  
But longs for, above all, some hidden thing.  
Yet neither can, while friends abide them still,  
Give up the cup should each at Marah fill.

There is no man, nor ever was, I know,  
Who could on friend a costlier gift bestow,  
Than once he got in earlier, happier days,  
From one whose charms he's long since ceased to praise.  
There is no man—but why the theme repeat?  
E'en while we muse the play of life's complete.

H. V.

### A BRUSH FIRE.

It is said that fire and water are good servants but bad masters. Every one in the Kesagami Lake country just south of Hudson Bay, toward the end of August, 1902, thought that fire was distinctly a bad master.

During the whole summer I had been busy doing rough geological work round the southern shores of the bay, and near the end of the season found myself alone with two Indians, up the West River, a large stream which drains Kesagami Lake and flows north into Hudson Bay.

My two companions spoke not a word of English, but in my several trips among the Nascapuee I had learned enough of their language to make at least my wants known to them; and they, by numerous signs and a careful use of simple language, were able to communicate with me.

The summer of 1902 was remarkable for singular dryness in a region usually moist, and not a drop of rain fell during the months of July and August in the basin of the West River.

On this account my Indians feared a conflagration, and were always careful in their choice of a location for the camp fire. I was generally asked to camp either on the small rocky islets which lay in midstream, or far out on the gravelly points which stretched into the numerous lake expansions.

My experience with bush fires was limited to small autumn blazes in southern Ontario, or prairie fires in the great West; and it did not occur to me that a fire in the dense spruce forests of the north would be materially different. Therefore I did not feel especial alarm when I noticed the sun set in a dense red, smoky cloud on the evening of August 29th.

"Big fire over there," said Jacko, in monosyllabic Nascapuee, pointing to the west. "Good! Camp on Island!" Taking Jacko's advice, we camped on an island in midstream, and fell asleep without giving another thought to the great fire burning far to the westward.

The next day broke clear and calm, with not a sign or smell of smoke in the air. Accordingly, with no misgivings, especially as a little rain had fallen during the night, I started off on a two-day trip to the west, my endeavor being to make a geological section of the country between the West River and the Kattawagami, a much smaller stream said to lie some eight or nine miles from the former.

I took Jacko with me, and left behind Itzka, the other red man, to take care of the camp. All went well during the morning, and as the country was not of peculiar geological interest, we had already advanced far toward our destination when we stopped for lunch at noon.

Then, for the first time that day, I noticed that the air smelled smoky; and I felt some alarm when Jacko, pointing to the clouds swiftly floating eastward said:

"Big wind. Fire come here sure now."

It was indeed evident that the great fire was coming in our direction, for, as we watched, large black clouds of smoke floated rapidly by and the air grew gradually darker.

Now I began to realize fully our impending danger. To turn back the way we had come was impossible, for seven or eight miles of dense spruce forest lay behind us; and to be caught there in a fire meant certain death. To advance to meet the fire seemed equally hazardous. Still, we thought that the Kattawagami River could not lie very far ahead of us; although we knew nothing whatever of this stream, it would, no matter how small, give us at least comparative safety. Jacko, moreover, favored going ahead, and so we continued our journey westward.

Soon we emerged on one of those broad, wet, mossy swamps, deep with sphagnum, and thinly interspersed with stunted spruce, so common in the north, and known as muskegs. Jacko was of the opinion that we should stop here, and fight the fire in the open; but the long-continued drought had so dried the surface of the muskeg that I did not dare to do so, the more especially as I saw a slight dip in the country ahead of us,

which I supposed to be the valley of the Kattawagami.

My conjecture proved to be correct; but upon arriving there we were indeed disappointed to find only a narrow, shallow stream, a poor barrier to an advancing fire. But as a last hope, we were glad to seek its protection, and we decided to take our chances in midstream.

By this time the wind had risen to a gale, and the atmosphere was dense with smoke and rapidly darkening. By four o'clock it was so dark I was unable to see my hand in front of my face, and the air had begun to feel decidedly warmer.

I shall never forget the weirdness and uncanniness of that awful gloom; the loud shrieks of the night hawks and the loud hoots of the owls in that strange, unnatural night, or the rush of animals fleeing as before a terrible foe. Out in the thick spruce forest across the stream, in front and behind us, escaped caribou, moose and bear, besides innumerable smaller animals, such as rabbits and squirrels. We could not see them, but as each new animal found refuge near us Jacko, long accustomed to the various sounds made by the different inhabitants of the forest, announced its arrival.

The large animals came crashing through the forest, guided evidently by custom or instinct to this place of safety, there being no light to show them the way. Meanwhile the smaller animals often scrambled over us, and occasionally a singed owl or partridge fluttered down beside us on the bank of the stream.

The animals acted as heralds of the fire; and quickly the western sky, so lately ink-black, turned to a dull, dark orange and then to red. Now we could see the animals all round us in the water, each making the strange sound common to it, the caribou and moose uttering low moans, while the bears growled and snarled at each other and at the other animals. In the eyes of all was the same terror felt by ourselves.

Evidently our foe was steadily advancing. By this time the heat was so intense that we were obliged to take to the water, an example already set by our dumb animal companions. We sat on the bottom of the river with only our heads above stream. We had soaked our woolen coats and had them in readiness to fling over our heads and prevent suffocation when the worst came.

All of a sudden the fire burst upon us. I shall always remember the solemn moment when that awful sea of flame over one hundred feet high, rolled in upon us, and licked up in a minute those giant spruces. I can still hear the groans and shrieks of the animals near us, the crashing of the falling trees and the hideous roar of the fire. I can still see that terrible wall of flame sweep across the river and plow its way on toward the east.

The heat was so intense that the coats over our heads several times caught fire, and the surface temperature of the water rose from that of a cool stream to lukewarm.

For several hours the fire raged furiously round us, and many times I thought either Jacko or I would suffocate. Jacko scarcely spoke, but when he did speak his words were most encouraging. His stoical fortitude was indeed remarkable, and was more than sustaining at such a moment.

At last, when we thought we could hold out no longer, above the terrible crackling of the fire and the thuds of falling trees we heard the distant roar of thunder. Rain was soon pouring in torrents on every side.

All night long it rained, and by morning the fire was sufficiently quenched to allow us to return toward our camp. The animals in the river had gone before dawn, their terror of man returning when the greater danger was past.

In our backward trip through the blackened rampicks, still smoldering and steaming in many places—all that remained of the splendid forest through which we had passed the day before,—at wide intervals we came across sized or partly burned carcasses of different animals and birds, which had been unable to reach a place of safety. These were particularly common in the muskeg which I saw the previous day.

When we reached our camp on the West River Itzka was overcome with delight, and embraced his companion in a fervent manner, quite unusual in the red man. He had fully made up his mind that we must have perished, and was already preparing to bear the tragic news of our fate to the nearest Hudson Bay post.

He, too, had had a terrible experience, and, forced to bear it alone, had doubtless felt it more. The West River, however, is so much larger than the Kattawagami that he had suffered less from the heat; and having sunk our canoe and supplies in the river, he, too, had escaped in safety.

In spite of the width of the river, however,—at our camp more than three hundred yards,—the fire had jumped it, and continued its terrible path of destruction still farther east.

We afterward learned that this fire, one of the worst ever known in the north country, had started more than one hundred miles to the west of us, and rapidly gaining headway, had advanced, a mass of flame nearly twenty-five miles wide, till its awful course was stopped by the storm of rain which brought us such welcome relief.

—Youth's Companion.

When Nature is Remiss.  
Nature nods undoubtedly at times, as in the case of the child born without a brain, whose case has been made public this week. Not long ago

an infant was born and lived for three weeks with a hole through its heart. Thousands of us are color blind, others have no musical sense. And there are many Laura Bridgman, many Helen Kellers. The queen of Roumania has or had at her court in personal attendance upon herself the daughter of a blind nobleman. She could neither hear nor speak and had to be taught to communicate by holding the throat of a speaker and imitating the vibration produced by the effort. But what a grudge against nature must such a one as Lyon Playfair discovered ever feel!

Here was a girl who was blind, deaf, dumb and could neither taste nor smell. One might be pardoned for asking if such a life was worth living. Yet there was a beautiful lesson in such an existence, as the broat warm heart of Playfair discovered. He sent her a pretty finger ring, and the poor mite replied in this pitifully pretty letter: "Dear Sir Lyon Playfair: Sir Lyon Playfair sent Edith ring in box. Edith thank Sir Lyon Playfair for ring. Sir Lyon Playfair come to see Edith. Good-by. Edith." During his visit the child had closely examined his hands, wrists, arms and face, her touch being marvellously accurate. A year later he went again, to see her. At first she did not recognize him and no one betrayed his identity. "At length she turned back the cuff of his shirt and touched his wrist. Her face lit up with intense joy. "It is the Englishman who gave me the ring," she rapidly spelled out on her fingers. And in a second she had flung her little arms around his neck and was weeping with delight at the recognition.—St. James' Gazette.

New Geographical Clock.  
An interesting clock was recently completed by Charles D. Davis, of Chicago. Geographical clocks, or clocks which indicate the time in every part of the world, are by no means new, but Mr. Davis' invention is said to possess many novel features.

The dial is totally unlike that of the ordinary time recorder, in that it contains 360 marks where the minute marks are usually placed, these marks representing the 360 degrees on the earth's surface. On the outer circle of the dial, where the twelve hour representations are unusually placed, are twenty-four figures representing the full day. The minutes are denoted by marks on the outer circle, but two dots are required for five minutes, because there are twice as many characters on the face as on the ordinary clock.

The dial is divided in the center from the six mark to the opposite six mark. The twelve hours of the day are distinguished by light spaces and the remaining twelve hours by dark spaces. The hour hand is stationary at the point which is made the central time while the minute hand revolves as on the ordinary clock.

To determine the time it is only necessary to locate the city or country on the red dial and read the time in relation to its as on an ordinary clock.—Jewelers' Circular-Weekly.

A Queen as a Shopper.  
The Queen, the Princess of Wales, Princess Charles of Denmark and Princess Victoria walked from the castle into Windsor yesterday afternoon and did some shopping.

The Princesses filled their pockets with lovely things, the royal party staying in the shops a considerable time. "They give us little trouble as possible," said Mr. Barber, "and it is a real pleasure to wait on them." The Queen and the Princesses would not even trouble the shopkeeper to have some of the things wrapped in paper. They simply put the small purchases into their pockets and asked for the larger things to be sent on to the castle.

Her Majesty and the Princesses did not pay for their purchases in hard cash, but the Queen remarked to one tradesman, "You can trust me!" They seemed to make light of the unpropitious weather and the wet pavements, and tramped along quite gaily, holding an animated conversation and frequently stopping to look at the wares displayed in the shop windows of the High street.

Lawmaker 100 Years Old.  
The 100th anniversary of the birth of Senator David Wark, LL. D., of Fredericktown, N. B., was observed recently. He is believed to be the oldest legislator in the world. In honor of the occasion the mayor and corporation of Fredericktown presented the senator with an address and a luncheon. Many guests, including public men, members of the bar, clergymen and government officials, were guests of the city. Dr. Wark enjoys good health—his only infirmity is a slight deafness—and expects to make the long journey to Ottawa in March, when parliament assembles. He has never missed attending a session of the Senate since he became a member of it in 1876. Senator Wark is a good walker, and he seldom rides from his hotel to the parliament buildings.

The venerable legislator was born in Londonderry, Ireland, of Scotch parents. He entered the New Brunswick legislature in 1842, and since that time has been a member of some legislative body.

Throughout the West Indies and peninsula of Florida the prevailing winds are from due east, which makes the eastern coasts very healthy, while on the west coasts, where these trade winds are not so constant, the climate is less salubrious.

## Simple Fashions

New York City.—Narrow box pleats are much in vogue and are always effective. The novel May Manton blouse illustrated shows them used in groups



BLOUSE WAIST.

and is both eminently simple and smart. The model is made of louisine silk, with trimming of cream Venise lace and French knots embroidered with corticelli silk, and is made over the lining, but washable fabrics and all the soft silks and wools of the season are equally suitable and the lining can always be omitted whenever material renders it undesirable. The ep-

Authorities say that the best preventive of freckles would be an orange colored veil, as the yellow rays are non-actinic. Inasmuch as there are but very few girls who would be willing to wear such a brilliant hued veil, the next best thing would be one of a light tan color. Tan is largely yellow in composition, and it does not allow the freckle making rays to reach the skin. That is why photographers use yellow glass in order to keep out the actinic rays.

### Carbocion Ornaments.

Artistic carbocions of rhinestones, coral, faceted jet, mock turquoise, crystals, malachite and cut steel, with all manner of oriental semi-precious gems, are an important item in millinery; and a single buckle, well selected, is sufficient to trim a rich fur hat or toque, and far more attractive than a lot of flowers or feathers.

### Lounging Robe.

Lounging robes always possess subtle attraction for the truly feminine woman and are looked upon by the wise among the sisterhood as necessary adjuncts to comfort and true economy. The graceful May Manton model shown is both new and desirable and suggests relaxation in its very lines. The model is made of palpable cashmere, with bandings of Persian colors in the more subdued tones, and is exceedingly dainty and charm-

### A Late Design by May Manton.



aulettes are new and give the broad and drooping line that is so generally liked but the waist can be made without them when preferred.

The waist consists of the lining, fronts and back. The fronts are tucked for the full length at the centre, to yoke depth at the shoulders, and the back to form a V. The trimming is lace edging two and a half inches wide, two strips of which are joined to form the epaulettes, but all-over lace or, the material trimmed or embroidered can be substituted. The sleeves are ample and form the fashionable puffs below the elbows.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is three and three-quarter yards twenty-one or twenty-seven inches wide, or two and a quarter yards forty-four inches wide, with three and a half yards of lace two and a half inches wide to trim as illustrated.

### Princess Effects.

Frocks are more and more fashioned in the princess spirit—that is, looking all in one, though more than likely separable into skirt and bodice all the time; and such frocks are of light fabrics, whether of pale or dark color, consequently the blouse—I mean the dressy type of blouse—has lost much of its value, and is much less in demand than it was—the blouse that cost a good many guineas and which was valued because it brought lightness and laciness to the upper part of the figure, although the lower might be encased in a quiet dark skirt. The frock entirely formed of thick chiffon or crepe de chine or fine voile has made the dressy and expensive blouse a superfluity, unless one falls upon a plan of buying one in order to get a skirt made of it of its own fabric, thereby creating the frock of princess effect, in which case the blouse ceases to be a blouse and becomes a bodice.—The Gentlewoman.

### Veils to Prevent Freckles.

The season of tan and freckles is not so many weeks ahead, and the summer girl is already taking precautions to preserve her fair complexion.

The long shoulder line, given by the bands that extend down onto the sleeves, is eminently smart while the points at the elbows are both new and becoming. All simple wool stuffs, India silks and the many washable fabrics of summer are suitable.

The robe is made with tucked fronts and a back that is laid in inverted pleats which are stitched flat for a few inches below the neck. The tucks are stitched with corticelli for a portion of their length only and, with the pleats, provide fullness at the lower portion. The sleeves are in one piece each and are lapped at their edges in place of being seamed.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is nine and three-quarter yards twenty-seven inches wide, nine yards thirty-two inches



LOUNGING ROBE.

wide or six and a half yards forty-four inches wide, with seven and a half yards of banding to trim as illustrated.

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**THINK OVER THIS**