

The Honor of the Big Snows

By James Oliver Curwood

PROLOGUE.

Up in the "Big Snows," near the dome of the earth, lies the scene of this story of real men and real women, who have all of the virtues of their hardening environment and few of the failings of their more civilized relatives. This is a tale for reading when one is tired of the artificialities of civilization—or at any other time when a good story is appreciated. You will find in it romance and adventure and mystery mixed in such skillful manner and in such proportion that no ingredient interferes with another. Yet all go to make fine reading for women who like to hear of brave deeds and sacrifice for love's sake and for men with even a drop of the spirit of adventure in their veins. And one thing more—the author has lived among the people whose lives he describes, and he knows how to tell a story.

CHAPTER VII.

Almost a Woman.

THE next morning Jan struck out over his old trail to the Hasabala. The Crees were gone. He spent a day swinging east and west and found old trails leading into the north. "They have gone up among the Eskimos," he said to himself. "Ah, Kazan, what in the name of the saints is that?" The leading dog dropped upon his haunches with a menacing growl as a lone figure staggered across the snow toward them. It was Croisset. With a groan, he dropped upon the sledge. "I am sick and starving," he wailed. "The fiend himself has got into my cabin, and for three days I've had nothing but snow and a raw whisky jack." "Sick!" cried Jan, drawing a step away from him. "Yes, sick from an empty belly, and this, and this!" He showed a forearm done up in a bloody rag and pointed to his neck, from which the skin was peeling. "I was gone ten days with that red cloth you gave me, and when I came back, if there wasn't the horror itself grinning at me from the top of my own shanty! I tried to get in, but my wife barred the door and said that she would shoot me if I didn't get back into the woods. I tried to steal in at night through a window, and she drenched me in hot water. I built a wigwam at the edge of the forest, and stayed there for five days. Hongree! Blessed saints, I had no matches, no grub; and when I got close enough to yell these things to her she kept her word and plunked me through a crack in the door, so that I lost a pint of blood from this arm." "I'll give you something to eat," laughed Jan, undoing his pack. "How long has the red flag been up?" "I've lost all count of time, but it's twelve days, if an hour, and I swear it's going to take all winter to get it down!" "It's not the plague. Go back and tell your wife so." But Croisset said he would go to Lac Bain. Jan left him beside a good fire and turned into the southwest to burn Langlois and his cabin. Then he continued westward. At the head of the Porcupine he found the remains of three burned wigwams, and from one of them he dug out charred bones. Croisset reached the post forty-eight hours after he had encountered Jan. "The red flag is everywhere!" he cried, catching sight of the signal over



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west of the Hasabala as thick as jays in springtime!"

A Cree from the Gray Otter drove in on his way north. "Six wigwams with dead in them," he reported in his own language to Williams. "A company man, with a one-eyed leader and four trailers, left the Gray Otter to burn them." Williams took down his birch bark moose horn and bellowed a weird signal to Cummins, who opened a crack of his door to listen, with Melisse close beside him.

"Thoreau is in the thick of it to the south," he called. "There's too much of it for him, and I'm going down with the dogs. Croisset will stay in the store for a few days." The days brought quick changes now. One morning the moose horn called Cummins to the door. It was the fifth day after Williams had gone south.

"There was no smoke this morning, and I looked through the window," shouted Croisset. "Mukkee and the old man are both dead. I'm going to burn the cabin." A stifled groan of anguish fell from Cummins' lips as he went like a dazed man to his cot and flung himself face downward upon it. Melisse could see his strong frame shaking as if he were crying like a child, and, twining her arms tightly about his neck, she sobbed out her passionate grief against his rough cheek.

The next morning when Cummins went to awaken her his face went as white as death. Melisse was not asleep. Her eyes were wide open and staring at him, and her soft cheeks burned with the hot glow of fire.

"You are sick, Melisse," he whispered hoarsely. "You are sick!" He fell upon his knees beside her and lifted her face in his hands. The touch of it sent a chill to his heart, such as he had not felt since years ago, in that other room a few steps away.

"I want Jan," she pleaded. "I want Jan to come back to me!" "I will send for him, dear. He will come back soon. I will go out and send Croisset."

He hid his face from her as he dragged himself away. Croisset saw him coming and came out of the store to meet him. A hundred yards away Cummins stopped.

"Croisset, for the love of God, take a team and go after Jan Thoreau," he called. "Tell him that Melisse is dying of the plague. Hurry, hurry!" "Night and day!" shouted Croisset.

Twenty minutes later from the cabin window Cummins saw him start. "Jan will be here very soon, Melisse," he said, running his fingers gently through her hair. Toward evening there came a change. The fever left the child's cheeks. Her eyes closed and she fell asleep. Through the night Cummins sat near the door, but in the gray dawn, overcome by his long vigil, his head dropped upon his breast and he slumbered.

When he awoke the cabin was filled with light. He heard a sound and, startled, sprang to his feet. Melisse was at the stove building a fire! "I'm better this morning, father. Why didn't you sleep until breakfast was ready?" Cummins stared. Then he gave a shout, made a rush for her and, catching her up in his arms, danced about the cabin like a great bear, overturning the chairs and allowing the room to fill with smoke in his wild joy.

"It's what you saw through the window that made you sick, Melisse!" he cried, putting her down at last. "I thought—He paused and added, his voice trembling, 'I thought you were going to be sick for more than one day, my sweet little woman!'"

He opened one of the windows to let in the fresh air of the morning. When Croisset returned he did not find a red flag over Cummins' cabin, nor did he bring word of Jan. For three days he had followed the trails to the south without finding the boy. But he brought back other news. Wil-

lams was sick with the plague in a Cree wigwam on the lower Porcupine. It was the last they ever heard of the factor, except that he died some time in March and was burned by the Crees.

Croisset went back over the Churchill trail and found his wife ready to greet him with open arms. After that he joined Per-ee, who came in from the north, in another search for Jan. They found neither trace nor word of him after passing the Gray Otter, and Cummins gave up hope.

It was not for long that their fears could be kept from Melisse. This first bitter grief that had come into her life fell upon her with a force which alarmed Cummins and cast him into deep gloom. With growing despair Cummins saw his own efforts fail.

As the days passed Melisse mingled more and more with the Indian and half-breed children and spent much of her time at the company's store, listening to the talk of the men, silent, attentive, unresponsive to any efforts they might make to engage her smiles. From her own heart she looked out upon a world that had become a void for her. Jan had been mother, brother and everything that was tender and sweet to her, and he was gone. Mukkee, whom she had loved, was gone. Williams was gone. The world was changed, terribly and suddenly, and it added years to her perspective of things.

Each day, as the weeks went on and the spring sun began to soften the snow, she became a little more like the wild children at Lac Bain and in the forest. They were eating dinner one day in the early spring, with the sunshine flooding in upon them, when a quick, low footfall caused Melisse to lift her eyes in the direction of the open door. A strange figure stood there, with bloodless face, staring eyes and garments hanging in tatters, but its arms were stretched out, as those same arms had been held out to her a thousand times before, and, with the old glad cry, Melisse darted with the swiftness of a sun shadow beyond Cummins, crying:

"Jan, Jan, my Jan!" Words choked in Cummins' throat when he saw the white-faced figure clutching Melisse to its breast. At last he gasped "Jan!" and threw out his arms, so that both were caught in their embrace.

For an instant Jan turned his face up to the light. The other stared and understood.

"You have been sick," he said, "but it has left no marks."

"Thank God!" breathed Jan. Peace followed in the blighted trails of the Red Terror. Again the forest world breathed without fear, but from Hudson's bay to Athabasca and as far south as the thousand waters of the Reindeer country the winds whispered of a terrible grief that would remain until babes were men and men went to their graves.

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not usually the case with half-breed women.

"But it's good blood in her, beautiful blood," vowed Jean proudly whenever the opportunity came. "Her mother was a princess and her father a pure Frenchman whose father's father was a chef de battalion. What better than that, eh? I say, what better could there be than that?"

So, for the first time in her life, Melisse discovered the joys of companionship with those of her own kind.

This new companionship, pleasant as it was, did not come between her and Jan. If anything they were more to each other than ever.

She no longer looked upon Jan as a mere playmate, a being whose diversion was to amuse and to love her. He had become a man. In her eyes he was a hero who had gone forth to fight the death of which she still heard word and whisper all about her. Croisset's wife and lowaka told her that he had done the bravest thing that a man might do on earth.

Together they resumed their studies, devoting hours to them each day, and through all that summer he taught her to play upon his violin. The warm months were a time of idleness at Lac Bain, and Jan made the most of them in his teaching of Melisse. She learned to read the books which he had used at Fort Churchill, and by midsummer she could read those which he had used at York factory. At night they wrote letters to each other and delivered them across the table in the cabin, while Cummins looked on and smoked, laughing happily at what they read aloud to him.

One night, late enough in the season for a fire to be crackling merrily in the stove, Jan was reading one of these letters when Melisse cried:

"Stop, Jan—stop there!" Jan caught himself, and he blushed mightily when he read the next lines: "I think you have beautiful eyes. I love them."

"What is it?" cried Cummins interestedly. "Read on, Jan."

"Don't!" commanded Melisse, springing to her feet and running around the table. "I didn't mean you to read that!"

She snatched the paper from Jan's hand and threw it into the fire. Jan's blood filled with pleasure, and at the bottom of his next letter he wrote back:

"I think you have beautiful hair. I love it."

"That winter Jan was appointed post hunter, and this gave him much time at home, for meat was plentiful along the edge of the Barrens. The two continued at their books until they came to the end of what Jan knew in them. After that, like searchers in strange places, they felt their way onward, slowly and with caution. During the next summer they labored through all the books which were in the little box in the corner of the cabin.

It was Melisse who now played most on the violin. One day she looked curiously into the F-hole of the instrument, and her pretty mouth puckered itself into a round, red "O" of astonishment when Jan quickly snatched the violin from her hands.

"Excuse me, my pretty Melisse," he laughed at her in French. "I am going to play you something new."

That same day he took the little cloth covered roll from the violin and gave it another hiding place.

Every fiber of his being sang in joyful response as he watched Melisse pass from childhood into young girlhood. To him Melisse was growing into everything that was beautiful. She was his world, his life, and at Post Lac Bain there was nothing to come between the two. Jan noticed that in her thirteenth year she could barely stand under his outstretched arm. The next year she had grown so tall that she could not stand there at all. Very soon she would be a woman.

(To Be Continued.)



"Jan, Jan, my Jan!"

millions in that other big world beyond the edge of the wilderness caught only a passing rumor of what had happened.

Lac Bain suffered least of the far northern posts, with the exception of Churchill, where the icy winds, down-pouring from the arctic, had sent the Red Terror shivering to the westward. In the late snows word came that Cummins was to take Williams' place as factor, and Per-ee at once set off for the Pond du Lac to bring back Jean de Gravois as "chief man." Croisset gave up his fox hunting to fill Mukkee's place.

The changes brought new happiness to Melisse. Croisset's wife was a good woman who had spent her girlhood in Montreal, and lowaka, now the mother of a fire-eating little Jean and a handsome daughter, was a soft-robed young Venetian, who had grown sweeter and prettier with her years, which is

TELEGRAPHERS REFUSED INCREASE IN SALARIES

In Consequence of Which a Strike on Five Roads May Be Looked For.

Telegraphers on five roads west of Chicago, being refused an increase in wages, have taken or are taking a strike vote. It is understood the strike vote on the Burlington has been counted. Trainmen in the east are getting ready to move on railroad managements with a request for more money and changes in working schedules. And the legislatures of many states will soon convene.

The result of the strike vote taken by Burlington telegraph operators may be announced after a conference with the management of the Burlington is arranged. The details of the working schedule were agreed upon several weeks ago, and the one question left open was the demand for 10 per cent increase in pay. The road could not see its way clear to grant this request. Long conferences followed the first request for a new schedule and most of the knotty problems relating to working hours were easily agreed upon. More money, however, was a more serious matter.

Railroad managers claim they are being touched on every side by present day conditions. Shippers go to the railway commissions for lower rates and get them. Railroad organizations make concerted demands for more money and the money must come or a strike be faced. Then the shippers and the railroad labor organizations go to the legislatures and ask for new laws that increase the cost of operation or decrease the total revenues.

PRESBYTERIAN AID SOCIETY MEETS AT MRS. WOHLFARTH'S

The Ladies' Aid society of the Presbyterian church held a meeting at the home of Mrs. C. Wohlfarth yesterday, at which time they were entertained in a most delightful manner. An excellent business session was held, at which they expect to hold in the market and a Christmas bazaar, which they expect to hold in the near future. The remainder of the afternoon was devoted to a most enjoyable social time. The hostess served delicious refreshments, which were very much appreciated, and at the hour of 5 the ladies dispersed, having spent a delightful afternoon.

"Tells the Whole Story."

To say that Foley's Honey and Tar Compound is best for children and grown persons and contains no opiates tells only part of the tale. The whole story is that it is the best medicine for coughs, colds, croup, bronchitis and other affections of the throat, chest and lungs. Stops la grippe, coughs and has a healing and soothing effect. Remember the name, Foley's Honey and Tar Compound, and accept no substitutes. For sale by Fricke & Co.

Basket Social at Mynard.

A basket social will be given at the Woodman hall in Mynard, by School District No. 45, on Wednesday evening, November 27. A box of bon-bons will be given to the most popular young lady, to be decided by a vote. All will be welcomed.

Mrs. A. Grove, 1145 Dayton Ave., Wichita, Kas., states: "I suffered with kidney trouble, with a severe pain across my back and felt miserable and all tired out, but after taking Foley Kidney Pills for a few days the pain left my back and I felt full of life and activity. Gladly do I recommend Foley Kidney Pills to all who have kidney trouble." For sale by Fricke & Co.

Dance November 23.

The members of the Holy Rosary church will give a grand ball on Saturday evening, November 23, at the K. S. hall. Admission 50 cents. First-class music. Everybody invited to come and have a good time. 11-13-14d.

Chas. S. Hedge, 146 E. 2nd St., Hastings, Neb., writes: "I have been troubled with severe pains in my back and kidneys, and pains were especially severe mornings. I have used three boxes of your Foley Kidney Pills and the pains have entirely left me. I now feel well as ever." For sale by Fricke & Co.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.

Known All Men by These Presents, that we, Jno. A. Chopieska, Sam G. Smith, D. O. Dwyer, H. M. Soennichsen and John T. Lambert, so associated ourselves together for the purpose of forming and becoming a corporation in the State of Nebraska, for the transaction of the business hereinafter described.

1. The name of the corporation shall be the Chopie Gasoline Engine Company (Limited). The principal place of transacting its business shall be in the city of Plattsmouth, County of Cass, and State of Nebraska.

2. The nature of the business to be transacted by said corporation shall be the manufacture and sale of gasoline engines, other engines, and machinery and the erection and maintenance of such buildings and structures as may be deemed necessary, and to purchase real estate for a site therefor, and to procure any and all necessary property, both real and personal, incidental to or required in the manufacture of gasoline engines.

3. The authorized capital stock of said corporation shall be Two Hundred Thousand Dollars, divided into shares of ten dollars each, to be subscribed and paid for as required by the Board of Directors. One-half of said stock shall be preferred, and which preferred stock shall draw seven per cent, to be paid out of the net earnings of the company, per annum. The other half shall be common stock, on which dividends shall be paid as the Board of Directors might determine. Only the owners of the common stock shall be entitled to participate in the further profits, election of officers and management of the Company. All of said stock shall be non-assessable.

4. The existence of this corporation shall commence on the 5th day of October, 1912, and continue during the period of twenty-five years.

5. The business of said corporation shall be conducted by a Board of Directors not to exceed five in number, to be elected by the stockholders of the common stock. The first election of directors shall take place at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, on the 5th day of October, 1912, and thereafter such election to take place at such time and be conducted in such manner as shall be prescribed by the by-laws of said corporation.

6. The officers of said corporation shall be president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and a general manager, who shall be chosen by the Board of Directors, and shall hold their office for the period of one year and until their successors shall be elected and qualified.

7. The highest amount of indebtedness to which said corporation shall at any time subject itself shall not be more than two-thirds of its issued and paid up capital stock.

8. The manner of holding the meeting of stockholders for the election of officers, and the method of conducting the business of the corporation, shall be as provided in the by-laws adopted by the Board of Directors.

In Witness Whereof, we have hereunto set our hands this 5th day of October, 1912.

Jno. A. Chopieska,
Sam G. Smith,
H. M. Soennichsen,
D. O. Dwyer,
John T. Lambert.

In presence of
Bessie Shea.

STATE OF NEBRASKA,

Cass County, ss.

On this 2nd day of October, 1912, before me, Bessie Shea, a notary public, in and for said county, personally appeared the above named Jno. A. Chopieska, Sam G. Smith, D. O. Dwyer, H. M. Soennichsen and John T. Lambert, who are personally known to me to be the identical persons whose names are affixed to the above articles as parties thereto, and they severally acknowledged their instrument to be their voluntary act and deed.

Witness my hand and notarial seal at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, this 5th day of October, 1912.

(Seal) Bessie Shea,
Notary Public.

My commission expires June 3rd, 1913.

State of Nebraska,
Secretary's Office.

Received and filed for record October 7, 1912, and recorded in Book 20, Miscellaneous Incorporations, at page 528.

Addison Wait,
Secretary of State.
By Geo. W. Marsh, Deputy.

CABBAGE FOR SALE by E. O. Cole. 11-14-2wks-wkly



Jan Burned Langlois and His Cabin.

Mukkee's cabin. "It is to the east and