

The Honor

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 XII.

Jan Returns.

ALL that spring and summer Jan spent in the thick caribou swamps and low ridge mountains along the Barrens. It was two months before he appeared at the post again, and then he remained only long enough to patch himself up and secure fresh supplies. Melisse had suffered quietly during these two months, a grief and loneliness filling her heart which none knew but herself. Even from Iowa she kept her unhappiness a secret, and yet when the gloom had settled heaviest upon her she was still buoyed up by a persistent hope. Until Jan's last visit to Lac Bain this hope never quite went out. The first evening after his arrival from the swamps to the west he came to the cabin. His beard had grown again. His hair was long and shaggy and fell in shining dishevelment upon his shoulders. The sensitive beauty of his great eyes, once responsive to every passing humor in Melisse, flashing fire at her laughter, glowing softly in their devotion, was gone. This time Melisse knew that there was left not even the last comforting spark of hope within her bosom. Jan had gone out of her life forever, leaving to her as a haunting ghost of what they two had once been to each other the old violin on the cabin wall. After he went away again the violin became more and more to her what it had once been to him. She played it as he had played it, sobbing her loneliness and her heart break through its strings. In lone hours clasping it to her breast and speaking to it as Jan had talked to it in years gone by. Once during the autumn Jan came in for supplies and traps and his dogs and sledges. He was planning to spend the winter 200 miles to the west, in the country of the Athabasca. He was at Lac Bain for a week, and during this time a mail runner came in from Fort Churchill. The runner brought a new experience into the life of Melisse—her first letter. It was from young Dixon—twenty or more closely written pages of it, in which he informed her that he was going to spend a part of the approaching winter at Lac Bain. She was reading the last page when Jan came into the cabin. Her cheeks were slightly flushed by this new excitement, which was reflected in her eyes as she looked at Jan. "A letter!" she cried, holding out her two hands filled with the pages. "A letter to me, Jan, all the way from Fort Churchill!" "Who in the world?" he began, smiling at her, and stopped. "It's from Mr. Dixon," she said, the flush deepening in her cheeks. "He's going to spend part of the winter with us." "I'm glad of that, Melisse," said Jan quietly. "I like him and would like to know him better." He did not see her again until six months later, when he came in to the caribou roast with his furs. Then he learned that another letter had come to Melisse and that Dixon had gone to London instead of coming to Lac Bain. The day after the carnival he went back into the country of the Athabasca. Spring did not see him at Lac Bain. Early summer brought no news of him. In the floods Jean went by the waterway to the Athabasca and found Thoreau's cabin abandoned. There had not been life in it for a long time. The Indians said that since the melting snows they had not seen Jan. A halfbreed whom Jean met at Fond du Lac said that he had found the bones of a white man on the Beaver with a Hudson's bay gun and a horn handled knife beside them. Jean came back to Lac Bain heavy at heart. "There is no doubt that he is dead," he told Iowa. "I do not believe that it will hurt very much if you tell Melisse." One day early in September a lone figure came into the post at noon



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Big Snows

Author of "The
Danger Trail"

when the company people were at dinner. He carried a pack, six trails at his heels. It was Jan Thoreau. "I have been down to civilization," was his explanation. "I have returned to spend this winter at Lac Bain." On the first snow came young Dixon from Fort Churchill. Jean de Gravois met him on the trail near Ledge's. "Bless me, if it isn't my old friend Jan!" he cried. "I was just thinking of you, Gravois, and how you trimmed me to a finish two winters ago. I've learned a lot about you people up here in the snows since then, and I'll never do anything like that again. How is Mrs. Gravois and the little Gravois—and Melisse?" he added before Jean had spoken. "All well, M'sieur Dixon," replied Jean. "Only the little Gravois have almost grown into a man and woman." An hour or so later he said to Iowa: "I can't help liking this man Dixon, and yet I don't want to. Why is it, do you suppose?" "Is it because you are afraid that Melisse will like him?" asked his wife, smiling over her shoulder. "Blessed saluts, I believe that it is!" said Jean frankly. "I hate foreigners—and Melisse belongs to Jan." "A woman will not wait always," said Iowa softly. "Jan Thoreau has waited too long!" A week later as they stood together in front of their door they saw Dixon and Melisse walking slowly in the edge of the forest. The woman laughed into Jean's face. "Did I not say that Jan had waited too long?" Jean's face was black with disappointment. He was angered at the coolness with which Jan accepted the situation. Deep down in his soul Jan knew that each day was bringing the end of it: all much nearer for him. He did not tell Melisse that he had returned to Lac Bain to be near her once more, nor did he confide in Jean. Day after day he saw Melisse and the Englishman together, and while they awakened in him none of the fiery jealousy which might have rankled in the bosom of Jean de Gravois, the knowledge that the girl was at last passing from him forever added a deeper grief to that which was already eating at his heart. Dixon made no effort to conceal his feelings. He loved Melisse. Frankly he told this to Jean one day when they were on the Churchill trail. In his honest way he said things which broke down the last of Jean's hereditary prejudices. "I like him," he said to himself, "and yet I would rather see him in the blessed hereafter than have him take Melisse from Jan!" The big snow decided. It came early in December. Dixon had set out alone for Ledge's early in the morning. By noon the sky was a leaden black, and a little later one could not see a dozen paces ahead of him for the snow. The Englishman did not return that day. The next day he was still gone, and Gravois drove along the top of the mountain ridge until he came to the Frenchman's, where he found that Dixon had started for Lac Bain the preceding afternoon. He brought word back to the post. Then he went to Melisse. "It is as good as death to go out in search of him," he said. "We can no longer use the dogs. Snowshoes will sink like leaden bullets by morning, and to go ten miles from the post means that there will be bones to be picked by the foxes when the crust comes!" It was dark when Jan came into the cabin. Melisse started to her feet with a little cry when he entered, covered white with the snow. A light pack was strapped to his back, and he carried his rifle in his hand. "I am going to hunt for him," he said softly. "If he is alive I will bring him back to you."

death for Melisse. And this, after all, was not a very hard fight for him. When he ate the last bit of his bacon he made up his mind what he would do when the end came. In the stock of his rifle he would scratch a few last words to Melisse. He even arranged the words in his brain—four of them—"Melisse, I love you." He repeated them to himself as he staggered on, and that night beside the fire he built he began by carving her name. "Tomorrow," he said softly. "I will do the rest." He was growing very hungry, but he did not touch the flour. For six hours he slept and then drank his fill of hot tea. "We will travel until day, Jan Thoreau," he informed himself, "and then, if nothing turns up, we will build our last camp and eat the flour. It will be the last of us, for there will be no meat above this snow for days." His snowshoes were an impediment now, and he left them behind along with one of his two blankets, which had grown to be like lead upon his shoulders. He counted his cartridges—ten of them. One of these he fired into the air. Was that an echo he heard? A sudden thrill shot through him. He strained his ears to catch a repetition of the sound. In a moment it came again—clearly no echo this time. The shot came from just over the mountain. (To Be Continued.)

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FINE DISPLAY AT EAST-WOOD'S HARDWARE STORE

From Saturday's Daily. The big hardware store of G. P. Eastwood has some very elegant and handsome articles displayed, that embraces some of the finest products that it has been possible to secure for the patrons of this wide-awake firm. They have chafing dishes in every size and made of brass and silver, which would make a gift fit for a queen, while their line of carving sets, crumb trays and serving dishes are complete in every respect and range in prices to suit every pocketbook. The firm has also placed some very attractive baking dishes in stock, which would greatly please the housewife for Christmas. There is on display here a very large line of air rifles to please the young folks and they come in a large number of sizes and consist of 350, 500 and 1,000 shot rifles, which would tickle the kids for Christmas. This firm has spared no money to give their friends the best articles on the market and any one desiring to make a purchase for Christmas would do well to drop in and look over the magnificent stock offered by this firm.

From Europe to America.

The sons and daughters of all European nations coming to these hospitable shores will sooner or later be absorbed by the great American nation. This idea was reproduced by Joseph Triner, manufacturer of the famous Triner's American Elixir of Bitter Wine, on his beautiful Calendar for 1913. It shows ships arriving at the New York harbor with new immigrants. Around the picture are maidens of different nationalities, and in their midst the ultimate result—the American girl. A copy of this Calendar will be mailed to those who will send 10c to Jos. Triner, 1333-39 S. Ashland Ave., Chicago. 12-5-d&w-3t

Could Shout for Joy.

"I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart," wrote C. B. Rader, of Lewisburg, W. Va., "for the wonderful double benefit I got from Electric Bitters, in curing me of both a severe case of stomach trouble and of rheumatism, from which I had been an almost helpless sufferer for ten years. It suited my case as though made just for me." For dyspepsia, indigestion, jaundice, and to rid the system of kidney poisons that cause rheumatism, Electric Bitters have no equal. Try them. Every bottle is guaranteed to satisfy. Only 50 cents at F. G. Fricke & Co.

An Unavoidable Accident.

Gus Wotchel of Greenwood was in the city today attending to some business matters. Mr. Wotchel's sister was driving in her buggy near Greenwood yesterday afternoon and the buggy was accidentally struck by the auto of J. E. McDaniel and the buggy quite badly mashed up. Mr. McDaniel settled the matter by paying the damages, although the accident was unavoidable. After the buggy was struck Marshall Seybert at Louisville was notified by telephone of the number of the machine and at once notified Mr. Wotchel who the owner was.

When ordering flour ask your grocer to send you a sack of Forest Rose Flour—the best flour

Local News

From Saturday's Daily.

Thomas Stokes returned last evening from Omaha, where he had been visiting for some time.

Henry Kaufmann, the gardner, was in town yesterday afternoon transacting some business matters.

Will Jean of the precinct drove in yesterday afternoon to attend to some business matters for a few hours.

L. H. Young of Nehawka was in the city today en route to Omaha, where he is taking treatment in a hospital.

G. P. Meisinger of Cedar Creek came in this morning on No. 4 and attended to business matters for the day.

R. R. Nickels of near Union drove up yesterday to do some trading with the business houses of the city.

William Puls, sr., the good old reliable citizen from Mt. Pleasant precinct, was in the city today attending to business matters.

Mrs. William Ballance was a passenger this morning for Omaha, where she attended to some business matters for the day.

Miss Mary E. Foster departed yesterday afternoon for Louisville, where she is holding a teachers' meeting this afternoon.

T. W. Vallery of the precinct was in the city yesterday afternoon attending to business matters and visiting with his friends.

Charles Miller, the sturdy German farmer from south of this city, was in town yesterday doing some trading with the merchants.

John Kraeger, who is one of the substantial farmers from Mt. Pleasant precinct, was in the city today attending to business matters.

Hon. Fred L. Nutzman and wife of Nehawka were passengers this morning for Omaha, where they spent the day attending to business matters.

J. F. Clugy returned this morning from Huxley, Iowa, where he is engaged in doing some grading for the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railway near that place. The job is quite a large one and it will take some time to complete the work. Mr. Clugy has a number of teams engaged on the job and will return in a few days to that place to attend to them.

Workmen have been engaged for several days in fixing up the driveway on the west side of the government building and it now presents a very handsome appearance. Crushed rock has been placed on the roadway and the men are smoothing the ground of the park so that it can be sown to grass and in the summer it will present a fine sight, as the post-office building is one of the handsomest in the city.

From Friday's Daily. G. Bengen, jr., of near Mynard was in the city today attending to some matters of business with the merchants.

William Cagbill of Wabash was in the city today attending to some business matters at the court house.

Frank Grouf and wife of near Murray were passengers this afternoon for Irwin, Iowa, where they will visit a daughter for a short time.

Sheriff Quinton, Deputy Sheriff Manspeaker and Mrs. Manspeaker were passengers this morning for Lincoln, where they took Mrs. Rosa Wise, who was adjudged insane by the insanity board yesterday.

From Wednesday's Daily. T. W. Vallery and wife and daughter, Miss Margie, returned Monday evening from Creighton, Neb., where they were visiting Mr. and Mrs. Wade Porter and little son, Mrs. Porter is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Vallery. Walt and his wife made the trip to see their new grandson and were very much pleased with the young man. The Porter family are doing very well in their new location and have had a most successful year.

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From Tuesday's Daily.

W. M. Richards of South Bend was in the city today attending to business matters at the court house.

Gus Bein, who is employed at Pender, Neb., came in Sunday for a short visit with his family in this city.

Lig Brown, the genial mayor of Kenosha, drove in this morning and spent the day looking after business matters.

W. G. Meisinger, wife and child, of near Cedar Creek, were in the city today doing some shopping with the merchants.

D. J. Pittman of Murray was in the city yesterday afternoon looking after some matters of business at the court house.

Will Mordock, wife and little babe, who spent Sunday in this city, returned to their home at Nebraska City last evening.

C. M. Robinson, the insurance man, came down from Omaha this afternoon on No. 24 to look after the interests of his company.

County Commissioner Heebner came in last evening from his home at Nehawka to attend the commissioners' meeting today.

County Commissioner C. R. Jordan came in from his home at Alvo last evening to attend the meeting of the county board today.

E. M. Godwin and son, Albert, drove up today from the farm near Murray and attended to some business matters in the county seat.

Miss Dorothy Britt returned this afternoon to her studies at the University School of Music, after spending her vacation here with her mother.

Mrs. Kate Oliver returned home this afternoon from Lincoln and Omaha, where she had been visiting her daughters, Mrs. Hallam and Mrs. Eades.

William and R. C. Bailey, from west of Murray, were in this city today, en route in an automobile to Omaha, where they looked after business matters.

John Cory and wife arrived home last evening from Pender, Neb., where they spent Thanksgiving with their daughter, Mrs. Ed Brantner and family.

Frank Schlotman, a former resident of this county, but at present living at Valparaiso, Neb., who is visiting with friends at Mynard, was in the city this morning in company with R. L. Propst taking in the sights.

Edwin Bates and wife departed this afternoon on No. 33 for Washington, where they expect to make their future home. The Bates family will be greatly missed in this city, where they have a large circle of friends.

Mrs. Alvin Murray came in from Omaha last evening, where she had been visiting her husband at the hospital. Mr. Murray is getting along nicely, although it will be several weeks before he will be able to return home.

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