

THE SKY-SIFTER

THE GREAT CHIEFTAINNESS AND "MEDICINE
WOMAN" OF THE MOHAWKS.

REMARKABLE ADVENTURES

— AND —

EXPERIENCES OF HER WHITE FOSTER
SON AS RELATED BY HIMSELF.

A LIFE FILLED WITH THE
SUPERNATURAL.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN WHICH ARE DESCRIBED MANY
SUPERNATURAL OCCURRENCES, APPARITIONS, HERB-
INDUCED VISIONS, SECOND SIGHT AND HYPNOTIC
TRANCES, WITH WEIRD MYSTIC CEREMONIES BY
INDIAN MAGICIANS AND MEDICINE MEN,
AND CURIOUS RELIGIOUS RITES.

SCENES IN CANADA, IN THE STATES, ON THE GREAT
LAKES, ON THE PLAINS AND IN CALIFORNIA.—A
BOOK OF WONDERS WITH MANY LUDICROUS
SCENES, COMICAL SITUATIONS, AND
HUMOROUS PASSAGES.

By WILLIAM P. BENNETT.





THE "SKY-SIFTER," AND HER SISTER ACTING AS WITCHES.

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PREFACE.

In the following Autobiographical Sketches, I have given place to many events of a supernatural order. In some instances I have attempted explanations, or have cited similar instances from history, while in others I have set down occurrences of the kind just as I have recorded the everyday affairs of my life, for during the years of my youth all seemed the same to me. What appeared supernatural oftentimes to others, seemed to me not different from the things of ordinary life, as it was long before I was able to trace the dividing line between the natural and the supernatural. This was owing to my being differently constituted from others of my kind from birth.

The wonder in me grew from time to time
That I was made to see the things I did—
I could never fathom God's strange design
For in mystery were His ev'ry action hid.

My peculiarity of second-sight, or whatever it may be called, was

So surprising to parents, friends, and all,
That I despondent oft would grow, and feel
That into deep mystery I one day would fall
And with the supernatural alone would deal.

This was a source of trouble and annoyance to me for many years; in fact, until I was taught to place a guard on myself by learning that a certain class of events and appearances, that seemed to me as natural as any others, had no existence for the generality of mankind. In this autobiography I have not given an account of all my supernatural experiences—as they have been innumerable, and many trivial—but have confined myself principally to those which affected my course in life, or which brought about

curious adventures. I have chosen to give those only that would fall readily into place and assist in giving a connected sketch of a certain period of my life.

It will be observed that after a certain age, and after escaping from the influence of the Indian medicine woman in Canada, I have less to say of supernatural things; this is not because I did not still see things of the kind much the same as in childhood, but because I had learned that such appearances were strange and incomprehensible to mankind in general, and that to make mention of them caused me to seem peculiar, if it did not bring me actual trouble. I was obliged to learn to control myself, and did so to such an extent that I was able to calmly converse with a man in his parlor, though I saw the shade of a departed wife or friend appear and stand beside him. I so schooled myself as not to say a word, though on passing into another room I found on the wall the portrait of the person whose astral form I had seen a moment before.

On such occasions I would say to myself: "It is none of my business; the one who has come from the realm of spirits has not done so for the purpose of seeing or being near me." Why it is that I have always been able to see such forms I do not know, unless because I was born more dead than alive, and have never been able to get away from the borders of the spirit world. Perhaps the peculiarity is owing to the magical or mesmeric powers of the Indian medicine woman exerted upon me at and about the time of my birth. However, of all this the reader must decide for himself after perusing my history, written in the plain style of an old California miner.

WILLIAM P. BENNETT.

INTRODUCTORY.

In the following reminiscences I propose to give a brief account of incidents and adventures that have fallen across my line of life, from youth to age, on both the Atlantic and Pacific shores of the American continent. Though peculiarly constituted and often apparently pursued by some evil genius, yet my good angel has always had power to avert the danger that threatened. Spirits of good and spirits of evil have seemed to follow my path all the days of my life, without special effort on my part to cultivate the one, or concilliate the other. From infancy I have been conscious of possessing a peculiar mental gift or power much resembling that which is known as "second-sight," or prevision, so prevalent in Scotland, and also well known in most of the civilized countries of the globe. For a few years I exercised this faculty without knowing that it was not common to the whole human race, and not a few drubbings it cost me.

Though the students of both philosophy and physiology declare that what is known as second-sight is mere delusion or hallucination, yet there is in its favor the evidence of many sensible men, not to say "hard-hearted" old Scotchmen. James Frederick Fennier, the well-known Scotch writer

on metaphysics, relates the following instance of second sight that came under his observation, and a hundred others might be given from various sources : " An officer of the English army connected with my family (says Fennier), was quartered, toward the middle of last century, in the neighborhood of a Scotch gentleman who was gifted with second sight. One day, when the officer, who had made his acquaintance, was reading a play to the ladies, the host, who was pacing the floor, suddenly stopped and appeared like one inspired. He rang the bell and ordered a servant to saddle a horse immediately and at once ride to a neighboring castle, and ask after the health of the lady, and, if the reply was satisfactory, to go on to another house that he named, and inquire after the lady there.

" The officer closed the book, and entreated his host to explain his reason for giving these sudden orders. The old Scotchman hesitated, but presently stated that as he was walking up and down the room the door had opened and admitted a little woman without a head, whose figure resembled the two ladies to whom he had been sent. He said the apparition was a sign of the sudden death of some person of his acquaintance.

" The servant returned some hours later with the information that one of the ladies had died suddenly of apoplexy at the moment of the apparition."

On another occasion, during a stormy night, it happened that the old gentleman was sick in bed, and the officer was reading to him. The old man's fishing-boat was out at sea and he several times expressed

uneasiness for his people. Presently he cried out: "The boat is lost."

"How do you know it?" inquired the Colonel.

"I see," said the invalid, "two boatmen, who carry a third drowned; they stream with water, and now place him close beside your chair."

The officer bounded to his feet, but saw nothing.

At night the fishermen returned with the dead body of their comrade.

John Scheffer, Professor of Law at Upsal, Sweden, in his "History of Lapland," of which there is now an English translation, says that the people of cold countries frequently pass into ecstasies or a trance-like condition in which they have prophetic visions. He asserts that second-sight is common to the Laplanders, Kamtschatdales, and many other northern peoples. Such conditions of the human mind are as common in hot countries as in cold. They are well known to the Arabs of the desert, who are a people much given to a species of reverie called "keff," a state intermediate between sleeping and waking. Paul de Molenès, who lived long among the Orientals, says that at times several will at the same moment pass into that condition of mind when visions appear. At one time he, and all with him, fell into this state. He says: "A sort of invisible mirage exhibited to the whole caravan the image of their absent country. What heavenly influence spread over all our hearts the same emotion, and animated all our minds with the same thoughts, at the same moment? It is a secret of God, and of the desert."

"It would seem," says a French writer (De Bois-mout), "as though ecstasy should be only induced in individuals, and persons in whom imagination has had time for development; but experience shows that this phenomenon exists even in a number of very young children. In the 'Theatre Sacre des Cevennes,' we read that children of eight and six years, and even younger still, fell into ecstasies, and preached and prophesied with others.

"In 1566, a number of children brought up in the hospital of the City of Amsterdam, girls as well as boys, to the number of sixty and seventy, were attacked with what was called an 'extraordinary disease'; they climbed like cats on the walls and roofs. Their aspect was alarming; they spoke foreign languages; said wonderful things, and even gave an account of all that was then passing in the municipal council. It happened that one of these children revealed to Catherine Gesardi, one of the nurses of the hospital, that her son, Jean Nicolai, was preparing his departure for La Haye, and that his errand was for evil. The woman went immediately to the Basilica, which she reached just as the council was about to rise. She found her son there, who was himself a member of the council, and asked him if it was true that he was going to La Haye. Much confused, he confessed that he was, and, on hearing that a child had revealed it, he returned and informed the council, who, finding their project was discovered, abandoned it."

These children ran in groups of ten or twelve, through the public squares. They went to the rector

and reproached him with his most secret actions; also did many surprising things.

Many instances might be given of whole communities falling into much the same state, even quite down to our own day, and in our own country.



1870
The first of the year
The first of the year
The first of the year
The first of the year
The first of the year

THE SKY-SIFTER

—OR—

THE MYSTERIES OF INDIAN LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

MY BIRTH AND EARLY CHILDHOOD.

I was born on the Grand River Indian reservation, Ontario, Canada, September 2, 1818. The Mohawks, one of the leading tribes of the great "League of the Six Nations," was settled here on leaving the State of New York, at the time of the Revolutionary War. They moved to Canada in 1784, and were given all the land on Grand River for six miles on each side, from its source to its mouth. This beautiful region was given the Mohawks by the British government as a reward for their services during the Revolutionary War, they having remained true to the English. Among these Indians, when they first went to Canada, were many noted Sachems and chiefs; indeed, there are still men of note among them, and not a few, both men and women, are highly educated. In 1884 they celebrated the 100th anniversary of their arrival in Canada, both at Grand River and at the Tyendinga Reserve, on the Bay of Quinte, when many fine speeches were made. The chiefs appeared upon the platform in the full glory of their ancient Indian dress,

and the opening ceremony was the smoking of the pipe of peace. Had the Prince of Wales been there he would have been entitled to a seat on the platform, in "war-paint and feathers," for he was made a Chief of the Mohawks in 1860.

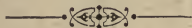
I was not born with a "caul" on my head, nor was any mark indicative of greatness or good fortune discovered on any part of my body; on the contrary, I was more dead than alive when born—I was "black as the ace of spades" in the face, and for hours it was thought I was dead.

When I was three days old an Indian woman, the daughter of a chief and a famous "medicine woman," as sorceress, came and demanded to see me. I had been crying almost incessantly from the time of drawing my first breath. The "chieftainess," as she might be called, for among the Indians the chieftainship descends by and through the woman, performed some ceremony over me like what among the Mormons is called the "laying on of hands," supplemented with various breathings upon my head and into the air toward the four corners of the earth. She then walked out of the house leaving me in a deep sleep. I slept for so many hours after the woman left that my mother thought I was dead, and raised the "death wail." As my mother could not wake me she thought I was either dead or bewitched, for even her own people said the "chieftainess" was a witch and stood in awe of her incantations.

It is stated by several writers of credit that the "powahs," or wizards, of most tribes of North Ameri-

can Indians, understand, and from time immemorial, have practiced, animal magnetism; now, as this chief's daughter was learned in all the secret lore and mysteries of the medicine men and conjurers, I am quite confident that about all—all in fact—she did, was to mesmerize me.

When I was about two years old this Indian woman again came to see me and again left me asleep. My mother thought I was in a natural sleep until the woman had gone, and an attempt was made to arouse me. When she discovered that she could not awaken me she thought I was either about to die, or the woman had bewitched me, but in a few hours I awoke in good health as before.



CHAPTER II.

“THE SKY-SIFTER.”

The Indian woman I have spoken of as having the reputation of being a witch was really a “powahness,” and knew more of the ancient mysteries of her race than any person, man or woman, then in that country. Her height was nearly six feet and she was as straight as a lance. Her features were regular and beautiful, but her countenance was serious to the verge of severity, and when aroused her eyes—always piercing—flamed like living coals. Not one of her people dared to cross or contradict her. When seated in a chair her

hair, which she wore flowing loosely, swept the floor. She was married to a white man—a Scotchman, whose name it is not necessary to give—and ordinarily wore the dress of the whites. In any dress she was a woman of an imposing appearance—one among 10,000—but when she donned her full Indian dress she was grand, almost fearful, for she put on with it the proud look of a line of Sachems and chiefs extending back for hundreds of years, even to Hayenwatha (Hiawatha) himself, as she proudly claimed. In her Indian dress, so noiseless was her step, so supple, swift and graceful all her movements, that on seeing her one's first thoughts were of a panther.

When she was about to go into the forest, to ascend the hills, or go out upon the water to perform her incantations, she always appeared in full Indian costume; then all, both red and white, got out of her way, for all had a wholesome fear of her when she was on the "warpath," as they called it. At such times even the Indians declared that she was going out to "sacrifice to the devil."

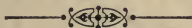
Her Indian name was "Ga-on-ye-was," literally, She Sifts the Skies, but her people usually spoke of her as "The Sky-Sifter." She had two daughters who were about my own age. One of these she called "Ken-yen-neen-tha," The Snow Drift, and the other "Sapana," The Lily, though they also had English names. However, this is the fashion among all the Indians in Canada; indeed, they often give names in their language to such whites as they like, and to many that they hate.

When I was about five years of age, the Sky-Sifter one day stole me away, when I was out playing at the edge of a clearing, and hurrying me away into the woods, went through some kind of ceremony over me, during which she gave me the Indian name of "Oron-ya-deka," Burning Sky. About all I remember of this heathen christening is that the Sky-Sifter made a dense, white smoke, around and through which she led me. She was in full Indian costume, and talked a great deal in a low voice. At the conclusion she made me eat a small cake made of corn, then took her medicine stick and struck me several times on the back and breast. She then led me back to the edge of the clearing, and pointing to my father's house, said: "Go. Say nothing." After this, wherever she met me, she gave me my Indian name of "Oron-ya-deka;" if no one was watching, she also gave me a tap with her medicine stick.

As to names, the Indians have peculiar notions. At birth, the mother, or some member of the family, gives a child what may be called its "baby name." She (or a relative) looks about, and gives the child the name of the first object of a striking nature that attracts her attention. A boy so named is expected by all to take a new name when he "makes his medicine," and is of an age to go on the warpath. Then some great exploit may cause him to take a different name. They are superstitious in regard to names, as in all else, and a dream, or some accident, may cause a brave to change his name. Some have a dozen different names in the course of their lives.

An Indian does not like to give a stranger his real name. He is afraid bad use will be made of it—fears some spell will be worked upon him through his name. Suppose his name to be Sho-kan-a-gea; instead of giving that name, he will give an Indian word signifying deer-slayer, wolf-killer, or beaver-trapper—or he will give some one of the names he has assumed, to hide that which he considers to be his real name. When he becomes a warrior, he takes a name from some exploit, and this name he is willing to have known, but it is hard to get at his secret and sacred name—that through which “bad medicine” may be brought to bear upon him. This is the name which indicates the “gens” to which he belongs—wolf, bear, turtle, snake, or porcupine—and is derived from some characteristic or attribute of his tutelary god or spirit, whose totem is the wolf, bear, turtle, snake, or porcupine. This sacred name he takes when he makes his medicine, therefore it may be called his “medicine name.” Such was the name given me by the Sky-Sifter. A Mohawk Indian hearing me called Oron-ya-deka, would at once know that I belonged to the “Turtles,” as the name is derived from the event of the “burning sky,” in the myth of the exploits of the turtle god, my tutelary deity, as well as of the ancient set apart as my guide and guardian, and whose totem was inscribed on the prayer or medicine-stick which I presently received. Among the Indians of the Six Nations, with the dignity of Sachem came a new name. The old name being shed, no Indian ever again mentioned it. They never name their children after any of their dead great men.

No boy is ever found bearing the name of a great orator or warrior who has gone to the happy hunting-grounds.



CHAPTER III.

MY YOUTHFUL TRIBULATIONS.

My gift—affliction, or whatever it was—of second-sight soon began to get me into trouble. When I was six years of age my mother went to Buffalo, New York, to visit a friend, and took me with her. The lady at whose house we were visiting had lost a little daughter, and one day while I was playing about the floor I began talking. My mother asked who I was talking to. I told her I was talking to a little girl in a red dress. The lady of the house began to cry and left the room, when my mother took me up from the floor, shook me, and boxed my ears, telling me to “stop talking such nonsense.” This was a lesson that I remembered for some years, and when I saw anything strange I said nothing to my mother, but told the Sky-Sifter about it the first time I met her. She was always interested and questioned me very closely. One day when I told her something she said that when I reached the age for it she would show me still greater things, and that I should, after a time, carry a medicine stick.

Once a month, from infancy, I was subject to fits of unconsciousness, falling into a kind of trance and often

falling to the ground. My parents thought I was bewitched, and my father said a spell had been put upon me by the "Cloud-Sifter." When I was quite small, at a time when I was lying in one of my trances, my father became furious. He said the devil was in me and he would freeze him out. He picked me up and threw me out of the house into a big snow drift. I lay in the drift a considerable length of time before my father would allow my mother to bring me back into the house. He said he would "make the devil glad to go back to his own warm quarters." Ten minutes more and my soul, devil and all, would have fled. This occurrence parted my father and mother forever. Though my mother still thought I was either bewitched or "possessed," rather than lose me she was willing to keep me, devil and all.

When I was about ten years of age, and was attending school, I one day saw a strange woman standing behind the school-master. I wondered how she got into the room, as I had not seen the door open. However, I looked upon her as a visitor until I saw that wherever the teacher went the woman moved with him. Presently, when the master came near me, I got up and, whispering, asked him if he did not see the woman standing behind him.

He wheeled about quickly, and, seeing nothing, asked me what I meant by "such a trick."

I said: "A tall woman has been following you all about the house for half an hour." At this all the children of the school began to giggle. They thought I was playing a fine rig on the school-master.

The teacher grew red with rage, and lost no time in giving me a fine dose of "oil of birch."

After giving me about a dozen lashes the master asked: "Do you still see a woman?"

I was crying bitterly, but I raised my head and looked. "Yes, sir," said I, between my sobs, "but she is very white now and her eyes are shut."

The master looked behind again, then stared at me for some moments, when he asked: "Are you sick?"

"No, sir," said I.

"Take your books and go home," said he; "this evening I'll call and see your mother."

I went home, and when I told my mother what had happened she boxed my ears and said it was a plan I had taken to get myself turned out of the school.

What passed between my mother and the school-master I never knew, for I was sent out of the house as soon as he arrived. Two days after news came to the school-master of the death of his sister, who lived about fifty miles away.

As all the children of the school had told at their homes the story of my trick on the school-master and the whipping I had received, the whole matter made a great noise in the neighborhood when news came of the death of the teacher's sister. I heard them say that she died at the very hour I had seen her in the school-house. This puzzled me not a little. I had never seen any one die, but I concluded that she must have died when she turned so white and shut her eyes. I, at that time, thought the woman present in the flesh.

My poor mother was overwhelmed. She knew not

what to think. She wept every time she looked at me for a day or two, and one day a preacher and several persons came and prayed over me.

It was then supposed that the "evil spirit" had been driven out of me, and I was permitted to leave the house (where I had been kept a sort of prisoner for some days) and roam at will.

I had not been playing about the clearing very long before I heard the bleating of a fawn. I stopped and listened. The cries were near at hand in the edge of the forest, and there was in them a sound of great distress. I dashed away at once, thinking a fawn had got fast in the brush and that I might catch it.

After I had entered the wood a distance of fifty yards, I stopped to listen, as the bleatings had ceased. Soon came two or three low sobbing cries, not far away, and I turned and ran in that direction, expecting to find the fawn dying.

Suddenly I was confronted by the Sky-Sifter, who stepped out from behind a mighty oak that lay in my path. I had almost run into her arms, and I stood bewildered before her. She was in her Indian costume and the eagle feather she wore in the beaded band that confined her hair made her look taller, as it seemed to me, than any human being I had ever seen.

"What are you looking for, Oron-ya-deka?" said she, in a low, calm voice.

"For a fawn," said I—"I heard one crying."

"No," said she, "you heard me calling you; so"—and drawing a sort of whistle from the fold of her robe she produced the same plaintive bleating sounds I had

heard. "Wherever you hear that call come and you will find me," said she.

She then told me she had heard all the talk about what had happened at the school-house. It did not surprise her in the least. She questioned me very closely in regard to the appearance of the woman and how long she remained in sight. She told me that what I had seen was not a living woman, which was a surprise to me. She said it was only the shade or image of a woman, and this she explained by showing me my image and her own in a small mirror. She told me how to distinguish between living persons and mere shades. After she had schooled me for a time in this I remembered that the woman I had seen was far from having so substantial an appearance as her brother, the school-master. When I explained the difference as fully as I was able, she said: "Your eyes are good and you shall be a great powahn." She then showed me a sign that she would make when she wanted to see me, how to follow her at a distance, and how to find her. She charged me to speak to no one of having seen her or of our talks, and then sent me home, clipping a lock of hair from my head just as I was leaving. I went slowly away, and when I reached the fence that surrounded our clearing I perched myself upon the top rail to think over all the Cloud-Sifter had told me. Presently I heard what I thought was the drumming of a partridge, and getting a handful of stones I started to hunt the bird.

As I crept along I found that I was going toward the place where I had left the Sky-Sifter. Dropping on my knees and peering beneath the underbrush, I saw a

thick white smoke about the oak and something whirling about in it. My curiosity was excited, and I was about creeping closer when near me I heard a slight jingle of bells. Turning about I saw some low bushes parted as by the hands of a human being, then appeared the head of a wolf with open and snapping mouth.

When I again turned for home I was not long in getting there. I said nothing of the wolf to my mother, as I feared being again forbidden to go out, but when I next saw the Sky-Sifter I told her of the drumming I had heard and the wolf I had seen. "Oron-ya-deka," said she, "when I send you away from me do not return, or some time you may see worse than the wolf." I afterwards made the acquaintance of the "wolf" and found it to be but a demi-quadruped.



CHAPTER IV.

A HISTORICAL CASE.

Many examples of apparitions being seen under circumstances similar to those under which I saw that of the school-master's sister, might be given from the pages of medical writers and others who have made a study of such matters. I give the following from the works of Latour, a French physician and scientist, because from the length of time the vision endured, it resembles my experience in the school-house. In a village near Paris, France, resided a young lady who is men-

tioned only as "Mademoiselle N——." Latour says: "All her family had one Sunday gone to church, leaving her at home alone. Presently a violent storm arose. Mademoiselle N—— went to a window to watch its effects; suddenly the idea of her father being in danger came into her head. She feared an accident had happened him. In order to conquer this feeling she went into a room in which she was accustomed to see him seated in his arm-chair. On entering, she was much surprised at seeing him in his place, and in his accustomed attitude. She immediately approached to inquire how he had come in, and, in addressing him, attempted to place her hand on his shoulder, but she encountered only space. Very much alarmed, she drew back, and, turning her head as she left the room, still saw him in the same attitude. More than half an hour elapsed from the time she first saw the apparition until its departure. During this time Miss N—— had the courage to several times enter the room, and carefully examine the arrangement of objects, and especially the chair and the figure seated in it, believing that as she could feel nothing it must be a mere hallucination or optical illusion."

An hour later a messenger arrived to inform her that her father had been killed by a stroke of lightning that had demolished a portion of the church and injured many persons.

CHAPTER V.

ANOTHER STRANGE EXPERIENCE.

Not very long after I was turned out of school I again got into trouble by speaking of a thing that I supposed was one not in the line of forbidden subjects or the same category as apparitions. The cholera was raging (September, 1832,) at Port Colborne, a town on Lake Erie, about twenty miles from my home, and a man who had at one time lived at my mother's house died of the disease, as was supposed, and he was buried. My mother attended the funeral and when she returned brought home with her the widow.

When they came home I told them the man was not dead, as I had seen him "moving in his box" while they were filling up the grave. As may well be imagined, this gave the widow a great shock and caused a wild renewal of her grief. My mother led me out of the house and gave me a severe switching for talking as I had done. "O, my child," said she, "why did you do it? Why do you say such things?" I told her that while the grave was being filled up and they were all standing around, I had seen the man moving in the "box," and thought they would be glad to know that he was alive. She saw that I was honest, and after gazing at me curiously for some moments, she said, "God help the child!" then turned and went into the house. After three sleepless nights, in which the woman was constantly imagining her husband alive in his grave, the two women returned to Port Colborne to investigate. The grave was opened and the corpse

found face down in the coffin, the nails torn off the fingers, and other signs of a horrible struggle:

Had they instantly returned when I told them the man was alive, it is, and always has been, my belief that his life would have been saved. As this man, during life, was well-known to my Indian Godmother, she may have sent me, in spirit, to look after him.

My condition of mind when seeing such things at a distance is difficult to explain. It is a sort of self-magnetism, or, to speak more accurately, involuntary hypnotism, for I have never made any effort to throw myself into the condition. When looking upon a scene at a distance (as in the case of the man who revived in his coffin) I neither see nor hear anything that may be passing near me; I do not believe I move even so much as my eyelids—I am as one dead for some moments. The intellectual part of my being—vital essence, spirit, soul, or whatever else you may choose to call it—has, for the moment, left its “house of flesh.” In regard to seeing shapes or shades, as in the case of the sister of the school-master, it is different. My soul or spiritual essence is at home. I seem to see with both eyes and brain. There are several nervous conditions of the “human animal” which are either ignored, hastily passed over, or classed with hallucinations and illusions, by most medical writers, because they cannot be explained; these are prevision, clairvoyance, second-sight, animal magnetism, hypnotism, and the like. There are apparently several names for the same little-understood thing, which is so ethereal and elastic as to escape the grasp in the present condition of mental

science. One physician, speaking of these phenomena, honestly says: "There are, however, some of these things which appear to spring from an enlarged faculty of perception, a supernatural intuition."

Sometime the phenomena of the ethereal part of man, of which glimpses are now obtained in animal magnetism, hypnotism, and prevision, will attract the attention of minds capable of their investigation and able to grasp and hold them, notwithstanding their subtleness and elusive nature. Men of the highest intelligence have recognized the truth of cases of prevision, while acknowledging ignorance of the causes. The great Machiavel says: "It is very desirable that the matter should be investigated by men learned in phenomena, both natural and supernatural, an advantage I do not possess. Be that as it may, the facts are undeniable." Le Maistre says: "Man, by attempting at all times, and in all places, to dive into the future, declares that he is not formed for time, for time is a forced thing, that only desires to come to an end." Lord Bacon says: "It is not to be denied, though we are ignorant of the cause, that there are striking examples of prevision (foreknowledge) of the future in dreams, in ecstasies, and at the approach of death." Arctee also says: "Nothing is more surprising than the observations sometimes made by patients, in the midst of their paroxysms, the propositions they advance, and the objects they behold. Their senses are exalted; their minds possess great subtlety and an extraordinary power of penetrating into the future."

CHAPTER VI.

TWO CELEBRATED AND SINGULAR CASES.

Not wishing to appear singular and superstitious in regard to the supernatural occurrences which I have given, and which I have yet to relate, I shall give two famous and well-authenticated cases of what may be termed soul communication. The first is vouched for by the celebrated Abbe de St. Pierre as authentic. Two students, who were great friends, but young and foolish, had much talk of the future state of man. They agreed that the one who died first should revisit the survivor, and, to make the compact which they drew up more solemn, they signed it with their blood.

The name of one of the young men was Bezuel, and that of the other, Desfontaines. Soon after the agreement had been made between the two, Desfontaines left the school and went to the City of Caen. This was in December, 1696.

In July, 1697, Bezuel was at the house of a friend named De Sortville, on whose grounds he was amusing himself at making hay. Suddenly he fell to the ground. Those who lifted him up asked him where he felt pain. He said, "I feel no pain, but I have seen that which I never expected to see."

They placed the young man on a wooden bench in order that he might fully recover. Soon he arose and walked away some distance by himself. Thinking he had wholly recovered, De Sortville returned to his employment. A little groom, however, followed him and heard him asking questions and making answers;

running away, he told his fellow servants that the only thing the matter with Bezuel was that he was drunk.

After a time, Bezuel came back to De Sortville looking greatly distressed. He told him of the foolish compact he had made with his old classmate, Desfontaines. He then said, "As soon as I was seated I no longer saw you nor your servants, but only Desfontaines, who signed for me to come to him. I arose, and, as he stood still, I went to meet him. He took my left arm with his right hand and led me away, as you saw me go. When he halted he turned to me and said, 'I agreed with you that if I died first, I would come and tell you so; I was drowned yesterday at this hour, in the river at Caen, in company with a friend you do not know. It was very warm and I took a notion to bathe, but fainted on entering the water. The Abbe Meniljean, my companion, plunged in to save me; I seized him by the foot, but whether from fear, or as a means of remounting to the surface, he gave me a violent kick in the breast, which drove me again to the bottom of the river, which was very deep in this spot, and I was drowned.'" Bezuel further said, "Desfontaines was larger than in life. I only perceived half his body; he was naked and without a hat. On his forehead, upon his beautiful light hair, was a white paper containing writing which I could not decipher."

News soon came from Caen giving the particulars of the drowning of Desfontaines, just as related. At the moment his shade appeared to Bezuel his body was lying at an undertaker's, covered from the waist to the feet, and on his forehead had been laid a paper con-

taining his name. Such is a condensed account of an occurrence of which several long and minute accounts were written by De Sortville and all who were in any way connected with it.

A somewhat similar case is one related by Baronius of the celebrated apparition of Ficinus to Michel Mercatus. These illustrious friends, after a long conversation on the nature of the soul, agreed that whichever of the two died first, should, if possible, appear to the survivor and inform him of the nature of the other world. Sometime afterwards, while Mercatus was studying philosophy, early in the morning he suddenly heard the sound as of a horse galloping, which stopped at his door, and the voice of his friend Ficinus, who cried: "O! Michel, Michel! All those things are true."

Surprised at these words, Mercatus arose and went to the window. He saw his friend, with his back toward him, mounted on a white horse. Mercatus called to him and followed him with his eyes until he disappeared. He soon received news that Ficinus had died at the City of Florence, at the time of the apparition.



CHAPTER VII.

MORE OF CHILDHOOD DAYS.

After being so punished and scolded, as I have related, for speaking of the man who was buried alive, I was careful not to tell my mother of the things I saw.

I told no one but the Indian medicine woman—the Sky-Sifter. As I grew older I saw that such things greatly distressed my mother; then, our white neighbors also had more to say about my “case,” as they called it, than I liked to hear. They thought me “possessed,” and after praying and psalm singing had proved of no avail, they talked of roasting alive a black cat and a black lamb. At some of the cabins they laid a broom across the door when they saw me coming, their notion being that no witch or wizard dare step over a broomstick. They were quite non-plused when they found that neither brooms nor horseshoes inconvenienced me in the least.

In 1875, when I went back to Canada, my mother told me a thousand things I had said and done as a child, about which I had no recollection; indeed, I remembered only those for which I had received whippings. It appears that I told my mother many things, the significance of which I did not know—things that seemed to me only the ordinary matters of life, but which were to her very startling, particularly when she found that what I told her of had happened at the very moment, in places many miles away. Often, when rolling about on the floor, I would jump up, clap my hands, and tell my mother that this or that person was coming, and presently the person named appeared. I did not know at that time but all persons could see such things as well as myself, provided they cared to pay attention to them.

When I told my mother that I still had my trance-like spells, about the same time each month, and often

saw the shapes or shades of people and places, she said: "Yes, and it will be so all your life. At one time I thought you would outgrow all this, or that it could be driven out of you, but it will end only with your life."

She laid it all at the door of the Sky-Sifter, and told me a thing I had never before heard. She said that one day the Indian woman, in all her savage finery, came to the house when she was alone, and, marching up to her, tapped her on both shoulders with her medicine stick, crying, "White woman, I wish you joy!"

My mother was terribly frightened, but presently asked why she wished her joy. "Because," said the Sky-Sifter, "in a few months you will have a son. I have no son and never shall have one, but am glad you are to have one. I shall like him. Also, you should thank me, as, but for me, your son would have been a daughter. You do not believe this, but I will give you a sign by which you will know what I say is true. Your son will have sick spells every month, as long as he lives, and strange spells they will be, with his double nature."

Having said this, the Sky-Sifter turned and walked out of the house, and did not again make her appearance until after I was born, as already related.

What my mother told me greatly astonished me—in fact, sent cold chills along my spine. In California, I had consulted several physicians about my sick spells. Two of them, who gave great attention to my symptoms, had told me the same thing. They said, "We can do you no good; the fact is, you were cut out for

a woman, but spoiled in the making!" I thought they were merely saying this because of my sickness being governed by a lunar period, but now I saw how I had been "spoiled in the making." There are doctors now living in California who will say that they told me this before I saw my mother in 1875.



CHAPTER VIII.

EXPERIENCES WITH DESIGNING PERSONS.

But I must return to the story of my boyhood days. I have mentioned the horseshoe and broom-handle experiments that were made on me by some of our neighbors. I have now to mention another class of people, and generally men of some means—a few rich men, even. All had, of course, heard of some of the things I had said and done, and several began to see money in getting hold of me. They would get me aside and propose to me to show them hidden treasures, lead, copper and silver mines, and I know not what else. I hardly knew what they meant, and their eagerness and big promises of money startled me. I thought they intended to get me to help them in robberies. Had I been dishonest and cunning I might have reaped a golden harvest from these fellows. I could easily have got out of them both gold and silver, with which to make a start, and "salt" a few places with a stray coin or two, when I would have had them all paying

regular assessments, as I might demand. Another class came bothering me to search for things that had been lost or stolen. I told them I knew nothing about such things, that what I saw came of itself and I had never been shown any money or goods. They would then offer me money to go with them and make a trial of my powers in that line. I always refused, saying I did not want to get money in that way, which was the truth, for at that time I cared nothing about money, and knew little about the value of it. Nearly all went away angry with me, and more than one called me a "little fool."

After I was twelve years of age I was much with my "witch mother," or "witch father," the Sky-Sifter, but I did not then know the pains she had taken to prevent my being born a girl, or that she had at all troubled herself in regard to the shape in which I was to come into the world; yet she strangely fascinated me and had great power over me. When I heard her call I dropped all and hastened to her. It was not always the bleating of a fawn that called me. She was constantly adding to the number of her calls, new ones. As soon as I was perfect in one she gave me another. At times she would give me several at the same time. She could imitate every creature found in the forests of Canada. I could distinguish her call by nothing save the key-note she gave. At the same time she was drilling me in the Indian sign language. She said I must have that, as it was known to all tribes in America. She also left signs in the woods that I could follow. She would often say to me: "Oron-ya-deka, you shall

be a Mohawk in everything but color. I can't change the color of your skin."

The strange thing is that all the time we met in public as strangers, or as persons but slightly acquainted. Often when we met she did not even look at me, but at the same time one of her hands said something to me.



CHAPTER IX.

MAGIC ARTS OF THE SKY-SIFTER.

At times, the Sky-Sifter took me into secret recesses in the heart of the primeval forest, where she performed the rites of a priestess of some aboriginal school of ancient necromancy. I was permitted to witness the kindling of the sacred fire, which was done by rubbing together two sticks; to see the talismans spread about, and was even made to participate in certain parts of the ceremonies. The gums and herbs used by the Indian seeress produced a dense and pungent white smoke, when placed in the fire. Around this fire I was made to march in the thick smoke, the Sky-Sifter guiding me with her medicine stick or magic wand.

The fumes I inhaled always threw me into a sort of trance, on recovering from which I would find myself seated with my back against a tree, and the seeress bathing my face with some kind of aromatic wash.

I liked the exhilarating effect that was produced by the smoke, and always felt well after it. I did not

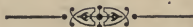
then know the object of these "smoke baths," but am now of the opinion that she put me under the influence of certain herbs in order to question me about persons and things—sending me in the spirit whither she listed.

After I had been restored to my normal state, she would herself pass into the smoke, after throwing fresh herbs and powders into the fire. What she put into the fire did not stupefy her; on the contrary, it greatly exhilarated and exalted her. She chanted a song in a low voice, but in a tone so fierce that it was quite startling; and she was so vehement in her dancing that I could feel the ground quiver, though seated several feet away. With hair—which reached nearly down to her knees—streaming and whipping about as she rapidly whirled around through the medicated vapor that arose from her sacred fire, she seemed a veritable pythoness.

When she had got to the end of her medicine stick (there were cabalistic characters engraved upon it, at which she looked from time to time), and ended her dance, she carefully covered the remains of her fire, and swept dry leaves over the spot. Then she would seat herself, and give me a short lesson in the sign language, or talk to me of Hayenwatha (Hiawatha), or other ancients of her race, when she would send me home.

The precise object of these incantations I never knew, but I am now of the opinion that when she had placed me in a certain condition with her drugs, she found me a good subject, and used me for the purpose

of obtaining the confirmation of things shown her, but in regard to which she had doubts. What strengthens me in this opinion is, that on two or three occasions, after I had come out of the medicated smoke, there remained in my mind vivid pictures of scenes that did not wholly fade away for some hours. One of these—and one that made a strong impression on my mind at the time—showed me a great lake, on which were many canoes filled with Indians. They were approaching a rocky island on which, at the water's edge, stood a woman who was the exact image of the Sky-Sifter herself, dress, long hair, and all else.



CHAPTER X.

THE USE OF HERBS AND DRUGS, AND THEIR EFFECTS.

The medicine men or powans—magicians or cunning men—of all tribes, make great use of herbs, gums, seeds, and the like. It may be thought that such things are not sufficiently potent to produce the effects I have described; but a little study of the subject will show doubters that they have been used for the same purposes in all countries and all ages. The ancient Egyptians used many preparations of the kind, as their “bora,” “bus,” “affion,” “bernari,” and “nepenthe.” The composition of these is now lost, but it is known that all were of a soothing or an exhilarating nature. It is supposed that opium or hashish entered

largely into the composition of most of the preparations. Milton speaks of the nepenthe as follows:

“Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this.”

In preparing candidates for initiation into their sacred mysteries, the ancients nearly always gave them beverages that had the effect of narcotics, and the caves and temples to which persons went to consult the oracles were filled with the smoke of burning resins and herbs.

In Siberia and Kamtschatka, when a native “Schuman” (medicine man) is consulted, he swallows an infusion of a kind of mushroom common there—the “muchamore”—when he goes into a sort of ecstasy which is followed by a deep sleep. While under the influence of the fungus he claims that a spirit (that residing in the mushroom) reveals to him the information desired.

The plants used in many places in ancient times by sibyls, enchanter, and sorcerers, are nearly all poisonous in large doses, and produced either exhilarating or narcotic effects. Among these were henbane, hellebore, nightshade of several varieties, the poppy, Indian hemp, datura; and a score of others, knowledge of some of which is now lost. A. Laguna, in his commentaries on Dioscorides, mentions a kind of solanum, the root of which, taken in wine, a drachm to a dose, fills the imagination with the most delicious illusions. Pliny says: “The potomantes, or thalassegle, grows on the banks of the Indus, and the gelatophellis near Bactria.

Infusions of these two plants, made into a drink, cause delirium; the one causes extraordinary visions, the other excites continual laughter."

Scores of similar plants, still well known (and some but recently discovered), might be mentioned. No mineral preparation known to the chemists is more potent than are many of those that are purely vegetable. In America are found representatives of all the plants known in the Old World, and many others that were unknown to the ancients. In the ages that the red men have inhabited this continent their "wise men" have made many wonderful discoveries, few of which have ever been communicated to the whites.

The ointments used by the so-called witches of Europe, in ancient times, were composed largely of nightshade, henbane, opium, and other soporifics. The person anointed with these fell into a sleep that was full of visions. Llorente, in his "History of the Inquisition," says: "A witch was found, in 1545, in possession of an ointment composed of stupefying drugs. Andre Laguna, physician to Pope Julius III., used it to anoint a woman who was attacked with frenzy and restlessness. She slept for thirty-six hours, and, when they succeeded in waking her, complained that they had brought her back from paradise."

Varron, quoted by St. Augustin, says the Italian sorceresses enticed the too confiding travelers to follow them, and made them eat of a cheese containing a drug, which changed them into beasts of burden. They then loaded them with their baggage, and, at the end of the journey, changed them again into their

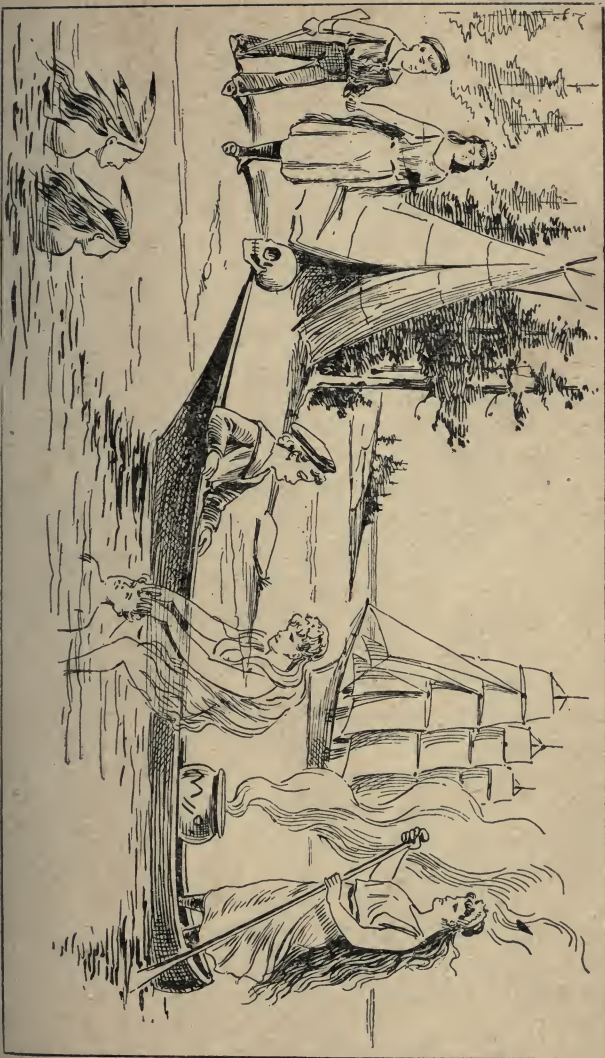
natural forms. St. Augustin says: "Under these figurative expressions, Varron, who surely related his own experience, it is evident that the mind of the traveler was so disturbed by the drug he had taken, that he blindly submitted to its singular influence (and was used as a porter) until the magicians put an end to it by administering an antidote. From whence the Indians derived their custom of consulting the "Great Spirit" on all important occasions it would be hard to discover, but in this they resemble the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is well known that the ancients consulted the will of the Deity on all important occasions of both public and private life, not to satisfy curiosity, but that what they were about to do might have the sanction of the Almighty. They seldom addressed themselves to Zeus, the father of the gods and men, but to one of the lesser gods, or to dead heroes, as Zeus (the Almighty) was supposed to be too far above men to enter into direct communication with them—the lower gods and heroes were asked to intercede for them with Zeus. In the same way the Indians often appeal to the spirits of heroes and the like—as the spirits that are supposed to rule in certain places. They have spirits of the mountains, the waters, the clouds, rocks, and all else, even to trees of various kinds and all plants of note. We are not to smile at this as a piece of Indian simplicity, for is it not well known that in Greece the oracle of Zeus at Dodona was on an eminence where were numerous great oaks and beeches, and that the will of the father of gods was made manifest by the rustling of the leaves of these trees?

CHAPTER XI.

THE SKY-SIFTER'S MAGIC CANOE.

The Sky-Sifter had a beautiful and fantastically-decorated canoe, which no person but herself was ever allowed to touch. It was her medicine canoe, and was "tabooed." No Indian dared touch it. It was the prevailing impression that should any man take it and venture out upon the water in it, he would not come back alive. The Indians did not like to so much as go near the mouth of the little creek in which the canoe was kept. Even the whites called the dainty little craft "the devil's canoe." One of the bravest of our old backwoodsmen, a hunter and trapper, who was often alone in the forests for weeks and months, stoutly asserted that, being near the mouth of the creek one evening just at sunset, he had seen an immense wolf come out of a thicket on the shore, get into the canoe, and paddle out into the river and down toward the lake. The old fellow always said he was ready to swear to this on a "stack of bibles." Several of the Indians had also met a wolf in the "witch canoe," as they were going down to the lake or returning from it in the dusk of the evening. They shook their heads when speaking of the canoe, and said it was "bad medicine."

The Sky-Sifter laughed at these stories as nonsensical, but would not deny them, as it suited her purposes very well to have them believed. When she used this particular canoe, she always arrayed herself in the full costume of a priestess of her tribe. It was only a short distance down to the lake (Erie), out upon the waters



THE INCANTATION ON THE LAKE.

of which she would sail till lost to sight. It was said by the white fishermen, that when she went out that way, a little bunch of mist always came to meet her, after which she was not seen again, though the puff of mist disappeared the next moment.

No one knew when she came back. Her people said she went out to a great council of the spirits of the lake. They liked to see her go out upon the lake, as for a fortnight after they could count upon good weather.

When I was about fourteen years of age she one day told me that it was time for me to go out upon the lake with her. I was to go to her at the mouth of the creek exactly at noon. I never once thought of disobeying the order, and went to the creek at the appointed time.

I found the Sky-Sifter awaiting my arrival. She made me sit facing her in the bow of the canoe. She swiftly paddled down the river, then well out upon the lake, when she set a small white sail on a little mast she had in the bottom of the canoe, when we sailed until the shore was almost lost to sight—that is, all the lowlands.

After looking back toward the shore and sweeping the lake far and near, with her hand shading her eyes, the Sky-Sifter produced from beneath some skins a small earthen pot filled with what appeared to be ground bark and pulverized herbs. With a flint and steel she set fire to the contents of the pot. A dense smoke arose that had a strong resinous smell. In the midst of the cloud of smoke she took in her sail and threw the pot overboard, looking after it and calling as though to persons beneath the waves.

This done, she turned to me and, as we lay rocking on the water, said: "I have brought you out here to see the spirits of the Great Lakes. I have called to them and they will come. I want you to see them, and I want them to see your face, that they may know you and save you if your life shall ever be in danger, when the storm spirit sweeps over the lakes, for you will sail much on these waters."

She then produced her medicine stick and asked me to repeat after her the names of those upon whom she called. As she called over the names she slowly moved her wand back and forth before my eyes, or described a circle about my face with its point. After the names came a low, monotonous chant, in unison with which the medicine stick waved to and fro, or circled. The eyes of the Sky-Sifter grew brighter and brighter, till they at last seemed living coals; also, she appeared to have glided, in some imperceptible way, along the bottom of the canoe, until so near that I could almost feel her breath upon my cheeks.

I began to feel something akin to fear, yet I could not move nor take my eyes off the blazing orbs of the Sky-Sifter. When the chant ceased I did not observe, but the wand seemed still waving before my eyes, when she said, in a whisper: "Oron-ya-deka, they are coming—they are coming—coming—coming. Oron-ya-deka, my child, they are here. Look, child, look; do you not see their faces rising up through the water?"

I looked over the side of the canoe and the water seemed alive with upturned faces. They were the

faces of men, women and children. They were calm, earnest faces—good, kind faces, all.

The Sky-Sifter called several names and spoke long and earnestly to the assembled spirits in a language I had never heard before, yet I understood every word of it. She told them what she had done for me and what she would yet do. She told them I would sail much on their lakes, and begged them to protect me through all storms and wrecks. All smiled and nodded assent.

I was then made to speak on my own behalf to the same effect, and received the same favorable signs. "Look on the other side of the canoe," said the Sky-Sifter.

I looked, and saw innumerable upturned, smiling faces. In my astonishment I said: "Are they all real?"

"See for yourself," said the priestess, and she lifted a child from the water and placed it before me in the canoe. It seemed as real and as much alive as any child; also the mother, who arose waist high above the water when she lifted the little one out of the canoe, seemed a real woman.

A word of adieu was spoken, the medicine stick was waved in the air, and in an instant the thousands of spirit faces disappeared. To my surprise I saw that the sun was almost down, that the sail of the canoe was set, and we were working in toward the land.

As it began to grow dark, we reached the mouth of the Grand River, and the sail was taken in. The Sky-Sifter then took from under her bundle of furs a human skull, in which was a candle. Having fastened the

skull upon the bow of her canoe, and lighted the candle, she said: "No Indian will remain on the water when he sees this lantern abroad."



CHAPTER XII.

WAS IT MESMERISM OR HYPNOTISM ?

At the time I went out upon the lake with the Sky-Sifter, and for many years after, I believed that all I saw there was real, but I am now of the opinion that there was really nothing in the water; that she mesmerized or hypnotized me, and caused me to see whatever she wished. The most learned of the medicine men among the Indians have for ages practiced mesmerism, and doubtless hypnotism, as a variety of the mesmeric process or art, for the two phenomena are so intimately connected and blended as to be almost the same.

In the light of my present knowledge of the two mysterious processes, I believe that the medicine woman combined them in securing control of my mental faculties. Her waving wand and burning eyes were irresistible, and, placed as I was in the narrow canoe, I could not escape. I can also understand, from the time that passed unnoted by me, that I must have been left in the state into which I had been placed for an hour or more, as when I regained my natural senses sail had been made and we were nearing shore.

It would seem that the Indian magicians obtained

their first ideas of mesmerism and hypnotism from the rattlesnake. The waving of the wand from side to side is in imitation of the motion of the snake's head, and the concentration of all their mental powers into the gaze which they fixed upon the subject, causes their eyes to blaze with a fierce and penetrating fire not unlike that seen in the eyes of the snake.

When George Catlin (who spent eight years among the various tribes of North American Indians, painting the portraits of several hundred warriors and chiefs) was in London exhibiting his gallery, in 1844, he had with him twelve Chippewa and fourteen Ioway Indians. While in London the Indians were shown through the Zo-ological Gardens. Among the hundreds of strange beasts, birds, and reptiles they saw there, they found a few old familiar acquaintances from America: as a buffalo, bear, beaver, and a rattlesnake, wolf, and a few others. When they came to the rattlesnake the red men stopped, and each made to it a sacrifice of a small quantity of tobacco. To them the rattlesnake is "medicine," and must not be killed.

Thinking to surprise the Indians, a London doctor who had some skill in mesmerism (in regard to which mysterious force there was at that time a revival of interest) gave an exhibition of his powers for their special benefit at their rooms. The doctor took with him a pale, feeble young girl as a subject. As the little girl was what is known as a "sensitive," the mesmerizer succeeded very well in all his experiments.

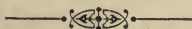
With the Ioway Indians was a noted medicine man and chief named Senontiyah. It was thought that the

experiments in mesmerism would greatly astonish this old man, but he told the white doctor that there was nothing new nor wonderful in what he had done. "All the medicine men," said he, "in the Indian country have known for many years how to do the same thing, and what the white people know of it at this time they must have learned from the Indians; but I see that they don't yet half know how to do it." He further said he had "brought a medicine dress all the way with him for the purpose," and if the doctor would come the next morning he would see him with it on; and further, that he would engage to mesmerize the mesmerizer himself. The white doctor failed to put in an appearance, though the red one was on the spot and ready.

This medicine man was about sixty years of age, and was not only a chief, but also the son of a grand chief. He wore on his breast a large silver medal on which was a portrait in relief of George III., given his father at Montreal for services during the Revolutionary war. With this was a document signed by the Governor-in-Chief of Canada. His opinion and art were consulted on all occasions. A medicine man, in all councils of war or peace, is entitled to a seat among the chiefs, and often his power in the tribe is greater than that of the head chief.

The office of a "medicine man" is almost precisely the same as that of an augur in ancient Rome. The chief duty of the Roman augur was to observe and report supernatural signs. They were also the repositories of all ceremonial laws and all traditions, and as they took note of all dreams, flights of birds, appear-

ances in the heavens, on the earth, or prodigies of any kind, they advised on all religious matters. The word of a single Roman augur had power to bring an army to a stand and postpone an expedition, or to break up a meeting of the Senate. Cicero, who was himself an augur, described the augurship as the highest dignity in the State. All Indian doctors are not "augurs," though all Indian "augurs" are acquainted with plants and roots, and know something of medicine.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE OFFICE OF AN INDIAN MEDICINE MAN.

Such a medicine man as Senontiyah would more properly be called an astrologer, soothsayer, or prophet than a doctor, though he knew the art of medicine. The men known among the Indians as medicine men should be described as magicians or soothsayers—magician, magic, charm, power or talisman is nearly always what is really meant by "medicine." In the early times the fur-traders were nearly all French, and in the French language a doctor or physician is called *medecin*, thus the word began to be used, where the proper term would have been magic and magician. Catlin says that the expressions "mystery" and "mystery man," are much nearer the Indian meaning than is medicine and medicine man. Such a personage accompanies every war party, hunting party, or any

band going on a visit to a distant place; by means of his magic he guards and guides the expedition.

Old Senontiyah gave a proof of his usefulness, and a striking evidence of the potency of his magic, on the voyage to England. When near land, off the English Coast, the vessel, on which were the Indians and many white passengers, was becalmed for several days, greatly to the annoyance of all on board. The sailors were trying to whistle up a wind, the white passengers were swearing, and the Indians, women, and children were straining their eyes toward land, and longing to be upon the shore. The captain of the vessel was exceedingly impatient, and finally addressed Mr. Mellody (a white man who had charge of the band of Indians), saying, "I am told, sir, that you have among your party of Indians a famous medicine man."

"Yes, Captain," said Mr. Mellody.

"Well, sir, here now is a fine opportunity for him to show what there is in his art—let him bring us a wind!"

Mr. Mellody spoke to Doraway, the mulatto interpreter, telling him what the captain had said.

Doraway laid the case before White Cloud, first chief of the Ioway Nation, who at once sent word to the "mystery man" that he must come up on the deck and raise a wind.

Old Senontiyah presently made his appearance on deck in his medicine dress, and, with all due solemnity and deliberation, went to work after the method of his race. He spread his "mystery feast," then addressed his invocation to the spirits of the wind and the waters.

The sailors gathered about, open-mouthed, but the old medicine man heeded no one; he seemed to neither see nor hear, but continued his chant like one in a trance.

In a little while the wind began to blow, the sails were filled, and a fair breeze carried them directly into port. The Indians were delighted with their "medicine man," and all the passengers were gratified. As for the sailors, they were simply dumbfounded; even the captain was seen to eye the old magician curiously whenever he passed near him.

After reaching port, one of the sailors asked Mr. Mellody if there were many Indian medicine men in America. Mr. Mellody said there were hundreds of them among the various tribes. "Well, sir," said the man, "me and my mates we ha' been a-talkin' it over, sir, an' we thinks as there ort to be one of 'em on every ship as sails." As he so spoke, the man was as serious as a deacon. It was evident that the old Indian had completely captured and subjugated all the sailors.

I have made this rather long digression for the purpose of showing from history, and from a document published by the U. S. Government, that the Indians have long known of the mysterious power to which white men have given the names of mesmerism and hypnotism. That the old Ioway mystery man had confidence in his knowledge of this is shown by the fact that he put on his medicine dress, and waited for the white doctor to make his appearance. The secret of this power seems always to have been kept among medicine men of the first rank—those who had taken

the highest degrees. Catlin was made a medicine man and was admitted into the Grand Lodge of the Mandan Nation, but he was not given the highest degree. He was made acquainted with certain "medicine words," "medicine signs," and "medicine grips," but there was one thing in the lodge that he was not allowed to examine, or even approach. It was on a little scaffold by itself, in the centre of the lodge, and was called the "Mystery Thing." Catlin was not allowed to go nearer to this thing than 20 or 30 feet. He started for it several times, but "was always warned back by a 'sh!' from every mouth in the assembly." Not an Indian in the lodge was allowed to go near this central object except the chief medicine man. The thing was on a little frame supported by four sticks as slender as the ramrod of a gun. Catlin tried all the mystery men of the fraternity, so anxious was he to find out what the object was towards which all eyes were constantly turned, but all said it was "a thing that could not be told."

This lodge had a vestibule ten feet in length in which two screen doors had to be passed, at each of which stood two black and frowning sentinels armed with spears. All inside of the lodge was conducted with regard to the north, south, east, and west, and in the ceremonies all went by fours and multiples of four. What Catlin saw was the annual celebration of the subsidence of the flood. The ark, or "big canoe," as the Indians called it, was in the centre of the village, and the rites were partly in the lodge and partly out in the open air at the ark—shifting to and fro. Although women were allowed to go to the ark, lean against it

and weep with the chief medicine man, no one among them was permitted to approach the lodge.

There appears to be something Masonic in many of the ceremonies of the Indians. The Six Nations had their Long House in Mohawk Valley, New York, before moving to Canada, and on Grand River they constructed another. It was in the form of a cross, and built with due regard to the four cardinal points of the compass, with the longest wings running north and south. There was a meaning attached to the four doors. In a speech one of them said, in speaking of the condition of the tribe in New York in 1884: "At the outset of the war of the Revolution, the Mohawks retired to Canada, and the eastern door of the Long House was broken down forever. After the close of that war the main body of the Cayugas also went to Canada. The Onondagas have been reduced to a feeble remnant. The western door is gone," and so on.

In the Six Nations women were appreciated, and certain among them were given a place in the councils. On some occasions, when the sachems have declared war, and covered the council fire, the women have uncovered it, and, backed by the warriors, have forced a reconsideration. It may well be imagined, therefore, that the Sky-Sifter was heard when she spoke. Her "medicine" was feared. All said it was "strong," and among themselves some whispered that it was "too strong." These thought she was too deep in magic. Nothing could be hidden from her.

I was what mesmerists call a "sensitive"—a good

subject—and after our expedition out upon the lake she was soon able, by the force of her will, to cause me to go to meet her whenever and wherever she pleased. I think she was able to hypnotize herself (or to throw herself into a sort of clairvoyant state) with her dances, herbs, and vapors, and thus ascertain some of the things she wished to know, but in order to corroborate these she made use of me. I at last arrived at such a condition that, when in her presence, I did not know whether I was asleep or awake. Harriet Martineau, the well-known authoress, asserts that one of her servants, when in the mesmeric condition, was able to predict future events, and I am firmly of the opinion that it was to this use that I was put, for a long time, by the Sky-Sifter.



CHAPTER XIV.

I AM SENT OUT TO "MAKE MY MEDICINE."

In speaking of my childhood I stated that I was born on the Grand River Reservation; I omitted in that place saying further that I was born on the territory or lands set apart to the Sky-Sifter, but such was the case, my parents being tenants of the famous Indian sibyl. As I was born on her lands she perhaps looked upon me as being a part of the increase thereof—as her vassal. At all events, when I was wanted to do any little job up at the "big house," for either the master

or mistress, my mother could not well refuse to let me go thither; also, I was frequently sent to towns and settlements at a distance, being absent from home at times for several days. As I always returned unharmed, my mother made little objection to my being sent on such errands, as I grew older and more experienced in traveling.

One day when I met the Sky-Sifter she informed me that she had called me for the purpose of informing me that, as I was now nearly fifteen years of age, the time had come when I must go forth and procure my "medicine," i. e., my life talisman or charm. I had previously been well instructed in regard to this, and knew what I had to do.

It was necessary for me to go away to some secret place in the depth of the forest, and there spend three, four, or five days in fasting and prayer to the Great Spirit, sleeping on the ground of nights, and paying particular attention to my dreams. The first living creature, animal, bird, or reptile of which I dreamed, would then be my medicine or talisman.

The medicine woman said she would arrange with my mother by saying that I was going to a distance on certain business that would detain me some days. All was thus settled, and, in two days thereafter, I plunged into the heart of the forest. I felt no fear, and went forward without thought of danger from wild animals. The course seemed as though marked out for me. As vista after vista opened out before me, the trees formed a sort of lane, that looked so familiar that I was impressed with a feeling of having, at some previous

time, or in some previous state, traveled the same road.

At last I came to a little glade, near a small rill that came from a spring that flowed from beneath a reef of sandstone. At the head of the glade, near the foot of an oak, I saw a small, circular mound, that I knew to be a Mohawk grave, for they bury their dead in a sitting posture, and raise above the round hole in which the body is placed such a mound. On the oak I found a tribal and a family "totem;" also near the spring several totems had been cut into the rock.

I knew as soon as I saw the place that it was here that I was to halt, fast and pray. The grave did not in the least disturb me; indeed, it seemed to me that the spirit of the brave, whose bones there lay buried, would protect me during the hours of night; therefore, as it grew dark, I seated myself at the foot of the great oak.

Presently I saw the new moon, as it came up and faintly shimmered upon the foliage in the openings among the boughs of the great trees. I hailed this as a good omen, and in a moment it occurred to me that the time of my "making my medicine" had been carefully considered by my Indian foster-mother, as I knew that she constantly studied the sun, moon and stars.

That night I did not close my eyes in sleep. I had never before passed a night in the midst of a forest and knew nothing of the sounds to be heard in such a place. The woods seemed more filled with life than during the daylight hours. Great horned owls hooted, calling and answering one another; little screech owls

screamed, bats squeaked, as also did the flying squirrels that sailed from tree to tree, and occasionally I heard the barking of a red fox. Mice and various other little animals ran to and fro in the dry leaves all about me; though I could not see them, I knew by the rustling of the leaves that they were small creatures. Weasels, martins, and similar animals pattered about, and at times I heard heavier beasts—such as raccoons, skunks, and foxes—trotting near. Several times a screech owl darted down at my head, snapping its bill wickedly. I hoped that that bird would not prove to be my “medicine.” About daylight a deer whistled near me and then dashed away.

My second day passed slowly. I became very thirsty toward night, but dared not drink, as to do so was strictly forbidden. Thus the bright spring breaking out from beneath the ledge of sandstone, in which I had at first taken pleasure, now became to me a temptation and a torture. My second night passed much the same as the first, though I fell into a doze a little before daylight.

I was awakened by the rays of the morning sun streaming into my face. Much to my regret I could not remember having dreamt of anything, or having dreamt at all. I was very hungry and thirsty—so thirsty that all day I wandered about in the edge of the forest, fearing to go near the spring or the little brook. It was the longest day I had ever known.

At night I threw myself down by the root of the old oak, completely exhausted and tortured with thirst. I must have soon fallen asleep, as I remembered nothing

of the usual night noises. I dreamed of going to the spring and throwing myself down beside it, determined to drink my fill at all hazards. But just as I was about to plunge my face into the crystal basin, a little turtle arose from amid the sand that eddied about the opening, whence the water bubbled up in the bottom, and floated on the surface, just under my nose. I went to the opposite side of the spring and again attempted to quench my thirst, but again the turtle prevented me. I tried to push the little creature aside, when it immediately became so large that it covered the whole spring, all its feet spread out on the ground and its head as high as my face, as I rose to my knees.

This action on the part of the turtle so startled me that I awoke. On finding that I had been dreaming, I soon recovered from my fright. It was still night, and being weak and weary, I again fell asleep. Again I dreamed of water. I seemed to be in my mother's house. I had in my hands a huge wooden bowl of water and was lifting it to my mouth, when it became a great sprawling, struggling turtle.

Again I awoke. It was not yet day, but the moon gave a dim light, and a ray that found its way through the foliage fell on the top of the Indian grave. Into the little patch of light slowly came the head of a wolf. Though I was a good deal frightened, I took up a stout club which I had lying by my side. As I raised the club from the ground, the head of the wolf vanished, and a grinning skull appeared in its place. It remained but a moment and then disappeared. At first I thought the skull came up out of the grave, but remembering

the skull I had seen the Sky-Sifter use on her canoe, I thought she might be in the dark of the shadows that lay behind the mound, and I called her in a low voice. Instantly there arose before me a yelping so fierce that there seemed to be a pack of half a dozen wolves just back of the mound.

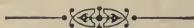
The moment the yelping ceased, an owl hooted on my right, and was answered by one on my left. I could hear sounds as of animals running and wings flapping. These noises moved toward the spring, where there was soon such a pouring and dashing of water that it was as though a torrent were tumbling over the ledge of sandstone.

When this noise ceased all remained quiet, but I was frightened out of all thought of sleep, and presently the red light of dawn appeared in the east. I was heartily glad to know that it would soon be daylight, and that I might then leave the forest, as I had twice been shown that my "totem" was to be the turtle.

When it was broad daylight, I went to the spring where I had heard a small Niagara pouring. It seemed as before; not a sign could I find of the great disturbance I had heard only a few hours before, but on a little grassy bank alongside the spring I found a thing that puzzled me. It was a mark showing where some person had lain down. It showed the head, body, arms, and legs, very distinctly, the grass being dead and burnt to a crisp. Moccasin tracks led up from and back to the spring, and in these every blade of grass was burned. I had heard of such things being seen in

several places on Grand River, and as everybody said they showed where the devil had been prowling, I supposed that I had found his den in the spring beneath the ledge of rocks.

I next went to the grave, and looked carefully about its base for moccasin tracks. I wished to know whether the Sky-Sifter had been there with her skull. I found no traces of any human being, but in the loose mould, near the top of the mound, I distinctly saw the imprints of the fore paws of a wolf. Baffled at every point, burning with thirst and perishing from hunger, I did not care to remain longer in the place, for I had a journey of several hours before me and was weak as an infant. Could I have quenched my thirst at the spring it would have given me some strength, but I had been sternly forbidden to break my fast until I had returned from the forest.



CHAPTER XV.

AT THE WIGWAM OF THE SKY-SIFTER.

The Sky-Sifter did not always live at the "great house" with the other members of her family. Two miles away, at the foot of a hill, near the banks of a small creek (the same at the mouth of which she kept her medicine canoe) she had a large and handsome wigwam, such as the Indians inhabited in the olden times. In this wigwam she would at times live alone

for a week or longer, and it was toward it that I bent my steps on leaving the little glade in which I had kept my fast.

I arrived at the hut about the middle of the afternoon, and found my Indian foster-mother waiting for me, with the refreshments my exhausted body required. The broths and all else were prepared in the ancient style. The food, and a sort of tea of herbs, which she made me drink before eating, renewed my strength as if by magic.

Not until after I had done eating did she question me in regard to my fast in the forest. When I had told her of my dream and all else, she seemed well pleased. She said the Great Spirit had given me for my medicine the turtle, and it was good; as the turtle lives both on land and in the water my medicine would protect me wherever I went. She appeared to attach little importance to what I told her of the head of the wolf and the skull, merely saying: "Such things are seen." In regard to the image of a man on the grass, she said it was the "white man's devil;" that as I was about to become a Mohawk and pass under the protection of the Great Spirit, he feared he would lose me, therefore was out on the watch for me; and had I gone to the spring and taken even a drop of water into my mouth I would have been lost, for I could not have formed my medicine, and could not have been cared for and protected by the turtle, a servant of the Great Spirit. The noise I had heard in the water was made when the turtle forced the evil spirit to go back into his hole under the rocks. All this I then believed.

After she had made this explanation, the Sky-Sifter informed me that my next duty was to get a turtle, to be worn as my medicine. She told me to get the smallest one I could find, as I must carry it all my life, and a small one was quite as potent as one of the largest size. I was to sleep one night and then go in search of my talisman. She made me sleep in the wigwam, saying she would make a medicine fire outside and pray to the Great Spirit on my behalf. Before leaving the hut she gave me a sort of spicy tea to drink, saying she wished me to have a sound sleep.

At daylight she aroused me, prepared a good breakfast in Indian style, then sent me away in search of my talisman, which she said I must find for myself; she going to tell my mother that she had heard from me and I was well.

I found a turtle in a search of an hour or two that was less than two inches in diameter. It was a little beauty, being handsomely colored and marked. My foster-mother approved of it, and took charge of it to so prepare it that it would endure for a life-time.

I was then sent to the hut of an old Indian woman who lived by herself some miles up the river, the Sky-Sifter giving me a piece of birch bark, on which were painted several hieroglyphics, which I was to present to the old woman on my arrival.

The old hag scowled upon me very fiercely when I entered her hut, but after I had given her the strip of bark, her expression softened, and she gazed at me curiously for some moments, when she said, in a friendly tone: "Ka jee"(come here).

I approached her, when she said: "Dati yoat hay its?" (how do you do?)

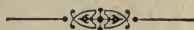
I answered, "Array as yuh" (very well).

"Was na,ra huh?" (are you tired?)

"Grons a runk na ra huh" (I am not tired).

"Wa gwast!" (good) cried the old woman. I was about to take my departure after this brief talk, but the old creature told me I was to remain with her until further orders.

The face of the old woman was a mass of wrinkles. She appeared to be nearly 100 years old, yet she moved about quite nimbly. At night she gave me a mess of "succotash," and then sent me to bed on a pile of old blankets in a corner of the hut. The old woman then drew her bed across the door and lay down, probably taking this precaution to prevent me from taking French leave during the night.



CHAPTER XVI.

A MEDICINE FEAST.

In the morning the old woman gave me another dose of "succotash" in which was stewed up a quantity of fish of very ancient flavor. She then grasped her staff and took me for a ramble in the forest. In order to amuse me—the old creature was of a cheerful disposition—she showed me a number of graves, and all her discourse was of "Katic-kuh Raxhu" (the Evil Spirit) and of the "Oono-wak" (ghosts).

When I asked her about "Ye-wun-ni-yoh" (the Good Spirit) she said he was all good, but the main thing was to keep on the right side of old "Katic-kuh Raxhu." She also had much to say of the great chief Thayendanega (Chief Brant), and Deseronto, who led the Six Nations from New York to Canada. Of Red Jacket she said she would not talk, as he had killed himself with fire-water.

All day, the old woman led me from grave to grave, talking to me of Hiawatha, the League of the Iroquois, and other old-time matters, she meantime pulling the weeds and grass from the mounds.

Toward sunset we returned to the hut and had a "succotash" supper. Supper ended, the old woman took up her staff and motioned me out. In a few minutes she followed, and, facing the west, stood watching the sun, then setting. The moment the orb disappeared behind a hill, that lay in that direction of the lake, she said: "Now follow me."

She at once struck into the thickest part of the forest and walked rapidly for one who looked so old. Presently she halted and hooted like an owl. She was answered by a like hoot, and soon we were joined by an old man in a medicine dress, who fell in behind me without a word. These signals were made and answered until four other old men, all in medicine array, had joined us.

We all moved on in silence till we came to a circular opening in a spot where there were many ancient trees. In the centre of the opening we found several fantastically-arrayed Indians seated on the ground in a circle.

All were in the dark. After some low talk the old men began to gently tap their medicine drums. The taps were answered in various directions in the surrounding forest, and at the same time two men began rubbing a stick of hard wood, held vertically upon a stick of soft wood, that lay flat on the ground. As the two men, squatted on the ground, pushed the stick back and forth, a third man, with both hands on its top, bore down upon it. Soon there was a smell of smoke; the men rubbed faster and faster, following the more rapid tapping of the drums. At last some sparks of fire were seen. Then the sound of rattles chimed in with the drums for a moment, when all suddenly ceased.

The old woman who had guided me to the spot then crouched near the men who were rubbing and began to sprinkle something upon the sparks of fire that greatly increased their number and size. As she did so the two men shoved the stick to and fro more slowly, and with long, sweeping strokes. As each stroke was made one of the men counted it, and the other gave the appropriate answer, as follows:

- “Unji” (one).
- “Hiday” (sun).
- “Nekty” (two).
- “Aut-sun-ye-haw” (moon).
- “Ausuh” (three).
- “Ojisnok” (stars).
- “Hun-tak” (four).
- “Aut-sun-ye” (night).
- “Wisk” (five).
- “Yorhu-uh” (day).

“Ooy-ak” (six).

“Yor-wetsa-yuh” (dark).

“Jarnak” (seven).

“Yoo-ho-ok” (light).

At the word “light” something was thrown upon the sparks that caused a flame to shoot up to a height of nearly two feet. At once the drums and rattles again began to sound as dry sticks were heaped on the fire, ceasing as soon as it was kindled.

For the medicine feast, or sacrifice (Yun-nu Wonus), only new fire—that made by rubbing wood on wood—can be used. When sufficient wood had been added to the fire, the old men formed a circle about it and the medicine pipe was produced. The leading man lighted the pipe at the sacred fire, and, inhaling a quantity of smoke, blew it upward, then toward the four quarters of the earth. The others blew the smoke upward, and then, with the stem of the pipe, pointed to the four cardinal points of the compass. When the pipe came to me I did as I had seen the others do. The smoke had more the flavor of herbs than of tobacco.

Two or three old squaws, who came from somewhere in the woods, now moved forward and took some of the sacred fire. A medicine man passed his hands over it and blew upon it, when the old women went aside a short distance, kindled a large fire, and began to prepare the feast. This consisted wholly of Indian dishes. They had venison, and even jerked buffalo meat “brought from the country beyond the Great Lakes,” as they told me. The meat of no animal brought to the country by the whites was used.

But, before the feast began, there were many ceremonies about the small fire. I was made to march round the fire in turn with each medicine man, the drums tapping, and certain words chanted, among which I heard my Indian name, Oron-ya-deka, frequently pronounced.

All this time I was a good deal abashed and uneasy on account of seeing nothing of the Sky-Sifter; I feared that she knew nothing about what these strange Indians were doing with me. Still I thought the old woman, who had conducted me to the secret place in the forest, must have been acting under the orders of my foster-mother.

When the various dishes had been prepared by the old women, they brought a portion of everything to the chief medicine man to be consumed in the small fire, as an offering to the Great Spirit. With the food so sacrificed there was thrown upon the fire the usual offering, in the shape of herbs and resinous gums. These sent up a volume of thick vapor, which spread on all sides, and through which the forms of the dancing medicine men could be but indistinctly seen. Much to my satisfaction I presently recognized the Sky-Sifter among the dancers. She was in her medicine dress, and stood a full head taller than any of the men.

When the offering to the Great Spirit had been consumed, the medicine feast began. All partook of the food in silence, for an Indian does no talking when eating. As he always prepares for a feast of any kind by fasting for a day or two, he is very much in earnest when he begins eating.

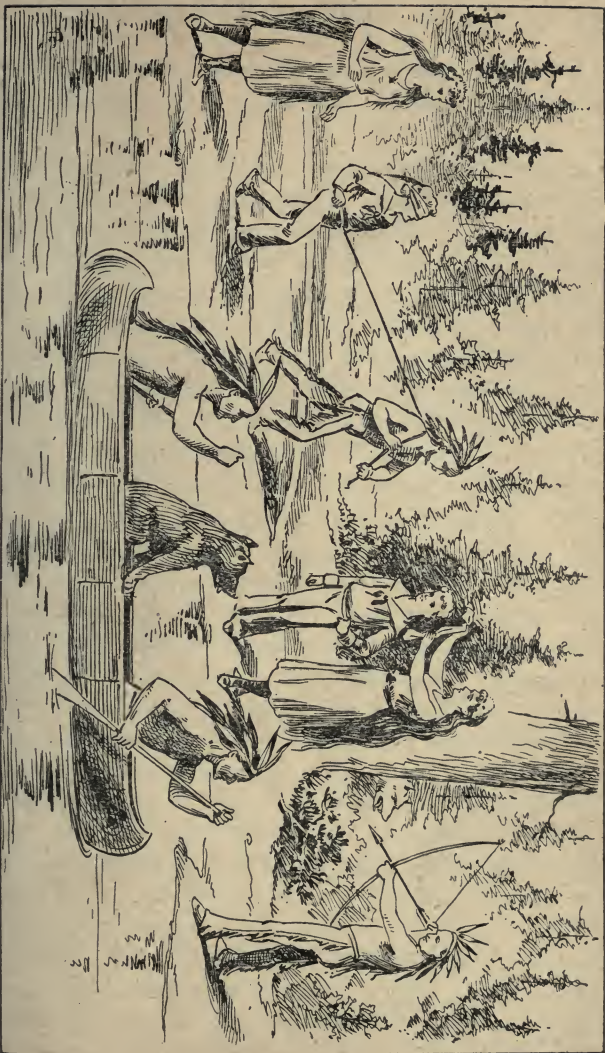
After the medicine feast I was saluted as a brother, and was told that I had been formally adopted into the tribe.

My foster-mother then blew a signal on her medicine whistle, and a moment after I saw, to my utter astonishment, another Sky-Sifter come out of the forest. When they stood together I could not tell which was the one I had before known. I was told that I was equally known to and equally acquainted with both—that they were twin sisters with but a single soul.

The one that came last brought a handsomely-decorated medicine bag, made out of the skin of the head of a white wolf, in which was placed the little turtle that was my “totem” or talisman. This they made me put on, out of sight, beneath my vest. I was warned not to lose my “totem,” or part with it, except with my life, as I could never “make my medicine” a second time; in case I had the misfortune to lose it I would be in disgrace, and would be “a man without medicine” until I could kill an enemy and possess myself of his medicine, when I would be reinstated. I was given many lessons about my medicine, among which about all I now remember is that if my medicine grew weak and did not avert misfortunes, I must pray to the Great Spirit to make it strong.

I was next told that having been adopted and made a brother, it was lawful for me to take my first lessons as a medicine or mystery man. After much drumming and chanting, with frequent “laying on of hands,” I was given a mystery drink. I must then have been uncon-

THE BOY RECEIVING THE MYSTERIES OF THE MEDICINE LODGE.



scious for a time, for the next I remember was of seeing standing before me a man wearing the head of a wolf.

The two Sky-Sifters told me that I had been on a long journey and had brought back much news; that all the medicine men were satisfied with me. I was told that the personage before me, with the head of a wolf, was a medicine man from beyond the Great Lakes—"the one who never dies." It was said that he visited all the tribes in turn, and had been known to them for ages. The man reported to be immortal—or at least an Indian Wandering Jew—then lifted off the head of the wolf, into which his own head was fitted, and I saw before me, not an old man, as I expected, but a man who seemed in the very prime of life. This high medicine man gave me a medicine stick, on the four sides of which were carved and burned in the "totems" of the heroes of ages before the time of Hiawatha, to whom I was to address my prayers, just as good Catholics pray to their saints. I was then shown several medicine grips and medicine signs, in a language given with the hands, and known only to medicine men.

I had then, in one night, been made a Mohawk, and had taken my first degree as a medicine man. Before going farther, it would be necessary for me to learn all the totems on my medicine stick. These the Sky-Sifters were to teach me.

Small articles belonging to the trade of my new business were given me by all the medicine men when we separated, one of the Sky-Sifters taking me to the

river and embarking me in the medicine canoe in which I had been out upon the lake, and the other going away with the magician in the wolf skin.

As has already been stated, the Indians got the word "medicine" from the early French fur traders, in whose language "medecin" means physician. "Medicine" is the word the Indians use in speaking to white men, but each tribe has in its language a word of its own for medicine man. This word, literally translated, does not mean doctor or physician, but invariably signifies a magician, mystery man, or conjurer. The word also conveys to the Indian mind the idea of prophet and priest, for the medicine man is the head of the religion followed by the tribe. He conducts all religious ceremonies. The medicine men rank high in all tribes, and are greatly respected by all their people. In all councils, they have a seat with the chiefs; indeed, they always rank as chiefs, and very frequently are acting chiefs.

The medicine men are the oracles of the tribe. A medicine man accompanies every war party. He watches the flight of birds, the movements of animals, the appearance of the heavens, and the force and direction of the wind, and by his interpretation of the visible signs of nature (and by dreams) the party is guided. Thus, if the totem of the chief heading the war party be the wolf, or if the party should be composed of men of a wolf gens, the medicine man would halt the party should a wolf cross its line of march; but should

the wolf move ahead in the line of march it would be hailed as a good omen, and all would feel confident of victory.

The medicine man carries a medicine bag the same as an ordinary Indian, and when things go wrong he halts and sacrifices to his medicine in order to propitiate the spirits or tutelary deity it represents; then all nature is carefully scanned for a good omen. In this respect the business of the Indian medicine man is precisely the same as that of the ancient Roman augur, who, by watching the flight of birds, and all omens appearing in the heavens or on the earth, encouraged or discouraged the army to which he was attached.

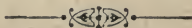
The medicine bag is nearly always made of the skin of some small animal or bird, fancifully trimmed with beads and ribbons, and contains a variety of articles supposed to act as charms and to tend to bring good luck; the same as the rabbit foot of the negro, except that each article represents some spirit or venerated ancient. The bag and its contents constitutes what in Africa would be called a "fetich." When out of luck, the Indian immediately imagines he has done something to offend his "medicine," and offers sacrifices and puts up prayers to propitiate it, or, rather, the deity and spirits represented by the contents of the bag—the totem and other charms.

An Indian can "make his medicine" but once in the regular way. If he loses it in battle or in any other way he is "a man without medicine," and is under a cloud to a certain extent. The only way in which he can set himself right in his tribe is to kill an enemy and take

his medicine. An Indian always captures the medicine of the enemy he kills, if he has time, and it thus happens that a great brave often has several medicine bags.

Things, as well as men, are constantly spoken of as being "medicine," *i. e.*, mystery, or magic things. Anything that is beyond an Indian's comprehension, whatever appears to be mysterious or supernatural—is spoken of by him as being medicine—it is either good, bad, or big medicine, according to the impression it makes on the man's mind. The compass, the watch, telescope, thermometer, gun, pistol, and a thousand other things, were "medicine" (mysteries) to the Indians when they first saw them.

Though there are many Indian medicine men who do not pretend to a knowledge of the medicinal virtues of plants and roots, there are others who are quite skillful in the use of these natural remedies. When these fail—whether administered by the squaws or medicine men—it is thought an evil spirit has taken possession of the patient. As a last resort, the medicine man, in his capacity of conjuror, is then called in, he being supposed to have power to cast out evil spirits. It is then that is heard the drumming and howling so often mentioned by persons traveling in regions inhabited by wild Indian tribes.



CHAPTER XVII.

A MEDICINE TRICK.

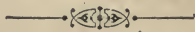
As we were going down the river, the Sky-Sifter told me that all the Indians I had seen were old persons who could be trusted, and that even the women had taken several medicine degrees. "It is the younger Indians who are at war against me," said she. "A little below here we will stop, and I will show you how I will make one of them very uneasy—I have a stone heating for him."

Presently, we ran to the shore, and, tying the canoe, the Sky-Sifter asked me to follow her. We moved quietly toward the dwelling of an Indian who was living a good deal in white style. As we passed along, the Sky-Sifter stopped at a small pit in the ground, in which was a fire made of charcoal—a fire that showed neither smoke nor flame. From this she took out, with a pair of Indian tongs, a flat stone about a foot long and ten inches wide. The stone was red-hot. Having secured it, we went to the door yard of the Indian, when the Sky-Sifter made on the grass the image of a man, such as I had seen at the spring in the forest. Then, with the end of the stone, she made moccasin tracks leading to the door of the house. This done, we left the place, covered the charcoal fire, and threw the stone into the river.

All this time, not a word was spoken. After we were again afloat in the canoe, the Sky-Sifter said: "What I have now done is not 'medicine;' it is only a little

trick to make the people of that house very uneasy. They are not so white yet but they will be greatly troubled, for they will think the white man's devil is in their house. Now that you are a medicine man, or are to be one, you must keep this trick to yourself, as it has its uses, at times, among certain people."

When I asked why she made such a mark at the spring, she said she did it that she might watch my face when I saw it, and also to keep the Indians of the neighborhood away from the spot. She then proceeded to say, that although the Indian in whose door-yard we had left the devil's image, pretended to be a Christian, he was a hypocrite; that, though he no longer wore his medicine bag, he had it buried in a certain place, and visited it regularly, making offerings to his totem, and saying prayers. "To-morrow, he will come to me about this image," said she, "and I will send him to the old woman at whose hut you slept last night. She is poor, and he is able to pay her well for what she will do."



CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TWO SKY-SIFTERS.

Leaving the canoe in its usual place at the mouth of the creek, we went to the wigwam. I was given some lessons in medicine signs, and then left to sleep, the

Sky-Sifter telling me, as she passed out of the hut, that I would see her in the morning.

In the morning she woke me, prepared an Indian breakfast, and then, in a mysterious way, gave me to understand that she had great designs for me in regard to the nature of which I would be informed in due time. She then said it was time for me to know something of some other matters. With no further introduction, she next proceeded to tell me that while I supposed that I was acquainted with but one foster-mother, I had all along seen two; sometimes it was herself; again, it was her sister. At times she was on Grand River, and at times on, and beyond, the Great Lakes. Said she, "You will never know which of us two you are speaking with—never have known and never can know. We are one. The man who thinks he is my husband knows less of me than is known to you, nor does he know more of my sister. He sometimes sees me, and sometimes sees my sister, in his house, but he knows not who is his wife. Nor do his daughters, Ken-yen-neen-tha (the Snow Drift) and Sapana (the Lily), know when they see their mother. They sometimes see me, sometimes that other, who is the same as myself; even then, they have not seen the mother that bore them, though they have seen those to whom they owe their existence, their coming into the world, and half their nature and character. Among the Mohawks are some who say my medicine is too strong. They are plotting to destroy me. They will be deceived. After they believe they have destroyed *one* Sky-Sifter, they shall see *two* in broad daylight."

After telling me that it was in the wigwam that the attempt on her life would be made, she said: "My medicine is too strong, and I know all. I need not be here when they come, but I wish to be present—here, in a certain shape."

I asked if she was sure that some of her people would try to kill her.

She said: "Yes, I am sure; it has been shown me by the Great Spirit, and by others besides my sister, who is both myself and my other self. You last night spoke of it before all at the medicine feast. The man who never dies heard you, and he said: 'It is true.'"

"I speak of it?" cried I.

"Yes, you," said the Sky-Sifter; "you are great medicine at times. Yes, last night, when you knew not that you were speaking, you spoke of everything that is to be done. After that time my home will be beyond the Great Lakes. Do you remember that you once saw a great lake on which were Indians in canoes, and also saw standing on the shore of a rocky island me or my other self?"

"Was it you that I saw?" I asked.

"You will never know," said the woman, "but I have been there. I know the place. I have also been at Butte de Mort (The Hill of Death) and have worked my medicine on the graves of the ancients. It is a place of bones, and few dare stand on that mound. I have been at the Great Pipestone Quarry, where all the children of the Great Spirit meet in peace. I have seen Nid du Tonnerre (Thunder's Nest), and I have planted my arrow on the Medicine Rock, making

the leap that few braves care to undertake. What I have seen and done has been seen and done by my other self, my sister, for, though two, we are one. Shall, then, a few bad Mohawks succeed in what they plot? I do not fear their fire. I have been too long with the man who never dies."

The Sky-Sifter (I shall speak of both the sibyls as one, for they were always as one to me) then gave me some money for my mother and sent me home, first giving me various instructions. All I had to tell my mother was that the business on which I had been was private, and that I had been well treated. The money I carried her was very liberal pay for the time I had been away.



CHAPTER XIX.

THE "THUNDER'S NEST;" "HILL OF DEATH;" MAGIC PLANTS.

Much of what the Sky-Sifter had told me was, at the time, very little understood by me, nor did I then know anything of the places she mentioned in the country beyond the lakes. I have since learned that "Butte de Mort," or the Hill of Death, is a great artificial mound on Fox River, Wisconsin, under which are said to lie the bodies of warriors killed in ancient battles—battles fought long before Columbus discovered America. On the top of the mound are thousands of buffalo and

human skulls, arranged in circles. Butte de Mort is an object of superstitious awe to all Indians.

As to the "Nid du Tonnerre," or Thunder's Nest, Catlin says: "The Thunder's Nest is on a high mound at Coteau des Prairies, where is situated the great Pipestone Quarry. In a bunch of bushes on the top of this mound a very small bird sits upon her eggs during fair weather, and the skies are rent with bolts of thunder at the approach of a storm, which is occasioned by the hatching out of her brood. This bird is eternal and is incapable of reproducing her own species; she has often been seen by the medicine men, and is about as large as the end of the little finger. Her mate is a serpent, whose fiery tongue, darting down from the clouds, destroys the young ones as soon as they are hatched, and the fiery noise darts through the skies."

Of the Medicine Rock the same authority says: "It stands like an immense column, thirty-five feet in height, and highly polished on the sides and top. It requires a daring effort to leap on to its top from the main wall and back again, and many a heart has sighed for the honor of the feat without daring to make the attempt. Some few have tried it, with success, and left their arrows standing in the crevice, but others have fallen from the slippery surface on which they could not hold, and suffered instant death on the craggy rocks below. Those who succeed in performing the feat boast of it all their lives."

At the time of the deluge two old women went under this rock and have remained there ever since. Those who intend to take away any of the stone for use in the

manufacture of pipes, must deposit offerings to the two old women, who lie under this pillar of rock. The "totems" of all tribes of Indians are found cut deep in the face of the perpendicular rock, forming the ledge of the Pipestone Quarry. It has been visited by the Indians of all parts of North America for thousands of years.

As regards the Sky-Sifter telling me that on the night of the medicine feast I had exposed, before all present, the plot formed against her, though I did not then understand the matter, I am now confident that what I said was through the action of the drink that was given me. The Indian medicine men have experimented with every known herb, and their greatest discoveries are carefully guarded—are known only to those among them who are of the highest rank.

In proof of what I have advanced, I will say that no longer ago than 1888, according to *La Luz*, a Mexican newspaper, the deputy of Oaxaca, Mr. Prefect Carrera, took to the City of Mexico a plant that grows in Mixteca, which the Indians call the "herb of prophecy." It is taken in various doses, and in a few moments a sleep is produced similar in all respects to, and, it is said, identical with, the hypnotic state. The patient answers all questions that are put to him, and is completely insensible. The pathologic state induced on whomsoever partakes of the herb, brings with it a kind of prophetic gift or second-sight. On returning to himself, he remembers nothing of what he has said or done.

As showing that the Indian medicine men are well

acquainted with all manner of plants, I shall here give place to an incident which is good evidence that they are always on the alert for new species. While the Ioways were exhibiting in London they were invited to visit a lady who owned a fine place called Ealing Park, a few miles from the city. While there the young men of the tribe played a game of ball. During the game the ball was lost. The old medicine man, Senon-tiyah, in looking for the ball, came upon a beautiful conservatory and strolled into it. He did not dare to remain long, but after the party had returned to London the old man could think of nothing but the new plants he had seen. He said that in just casting a look around he thought there were plants there that he had not yet been able to find in his own country, and which he stood much in need of. He thought, from what he had seen, that the lady must be a "great root doctor."



CHAPTER XX.

THE GHOST OF A MURDERED MAN.

Some months after the ceremonies of the "medicine feast" a very strange thing happened me, and one that caused a good deal of wonder and excitement at the time in the lower settlement of the Grand River. I was walking along a footpath, or trail, that led through a piece of woods, with a neighbor, when I said to him—

I being behind in the trail:—"Who is the old man ahead of us?"

"I see nobody," said the neighbor. "Where is the man you see?"

"Just ahead, in the trail," said I. "It's strange you don't see him."

"How near is he? I can see no one."

"Not three rods ahead of us—if you can't see him you must be blind," said I.

The neighbor halted, and, turning about, looked me in the face and laughed; then said: "What trick are you trying to play?"

I was astonished. "No trick at all," said I. "Why, do you pretend you can't see the man?"

"Do you see him now?" said the neighbor.

"Certainly," said I. "He has stopped, and is looking back at us. Don't speak so loud, he must hear us."

"What is he like?" said the neighbor, with an incredulous smile.

"An old, gray-haired man," said I, "with a fur cap on his head. In one hand he has a broad-ax, and in the other a square and something that looks like a chalk line rolled up on a stick."

"Is he still standing in the path?"

"Yes, and now he is lifting his cap—there is blood on his forehead."

"What nonsense is this?" said the neighbor, "when there is not a soul in sight."

"He is going out of the trail," whispered I; "he is very pale and is going to faint."

“Which way is he going?”

“This way,” said I, and I walked slowly after the man, the neighbor following. After moving slowly three or four rods from the trail, the old man stopped and, to my great terror, steadily settled down into the ground and disappeared. This brought me to a halt.

“What is the matter now?” said the neighbor; “you are white as a sheet.”

I told the man what I had seen. He asked me to point out the exact spot where the old man had disappeared. I did so, and he took his knife and cutting two or three sticks thrust them into the ground to mark the place. All this happened in broad daylight and about noon. As we walked on through the bit of woods the neighbor said he had heard of some of my tricks, and that I was trying to play myself off for a sort of witch. “You may fool some of the old women,” said he, “but it will not be so easy to pull the wool over my eyes.”

I told him I had not tried to fool him; that I thought the man was the same as any other old man till I saw him go into the ground.

“We’ll see about that,” said he.

On passing out of the woods we came to the farm of an old man named Musante. When we came to the farm my companion called old man Musante out to his gate and told him what I had said. The old man listened attentively and finally asked my age. I told him, when he turned to the man who was with me and said: “This is a strange business. The boy has given a good description of old man Hickman, who disappeared

mysteriously about seventeen years ago. The last seen of him was in the piece of woods you passed through, where he was hewing timbers for a barn. He was a quarrelsome old fellow and had trouble with both Indians and whites."

"I have heard something of the old man's disappearance," said my companion—"it was about ten years before I came to the Grand River country; but I heard he was seen not long after at Buffalo, on a schooner that was just starting up the lake."

"Yes, Dan Crowley, one of his neighbors, came home from Buffalo with that story. He ought to have known Hickman, for the pair were always fighting about line fences, stock, or some such thing."

"Where is Crowley?" asked my companion.

"Oh, he left a year or two after; sold out and went West—God knows where, perhaps to Texas," said Musante.

I was then closely questioned by Musante in regard to the appearance of the man I supposed I had seen, and I again went over the description.

"How was he dressed?" asked Musante. "What kind of a coat did he wear?"

"No coat," said I; "he had thrown over his shoulders a sort of red woolen jacket or shirt, the sleeves of which were tied together in front across his breast."

"Old Hickman to a dot!" cried Musante, slapping his thigh.

My doubting neighbor was astonished at hearing this, but said he would not believe that I had seen a

man, or the ghost of one, where he could see nothing, unless old Hickman's bones were found in the spot where he had planted the sticks. In short, it was resolved to explore at once.

Musante called his sons and sent them to bring in some of the nearest neighbors, and in less than an hour eight or ten men and boys were ready for the search, armed with a mattock and two or three spades.

The marked spot was soon found and two men began digging. They were not digging in exactly the right place and I showed them where to turn over the soil. One of the men who had a spade asked how I knew so well where the hole was to be dug. "Because," said I, "I can see him."

The spade fell from the man's hands and he gazed at me with open mouth.

"Dig where he tells you," said Musante; "it's a thing I can't understand, but the boy has got old man Hickman down to a dot. But that he is too young I'd believe he killed the old fellow himself."

At a depth of about two feet a man probed the ground with a ramrod and said he struck something solid. In going another foot bones began to be found, and soon the whole skeleton of a man was laid bare. In the hole was found an iron square, a broad-ax, and the remains of a chalk-line; also white hair and bits of a fur cap. There were also found the remains of clothing, and the knotted sleeves of a woolen jumper were particularly well preserved. In the skull over the right eye was found a bullet hole.

As may be imagined, this discovery made a great

noise in the neighborhood. All agreed that Hickman had been waylaid and shot, while returning from his work, by Dan Crowley, who had pretended that he had seen him in Buffalo. An attempt was made to trace Crowley, but all track of him was lost at Toledo.

The affair gave me such notoriety that I several times resolved to leave the country—to run away. But for my mother I would have done so. I was more than ever worried by men who wanted me to find treasures and other things for them. I kept out of sight as much as possible. The Sky-Sifter was delighted with what had happened. I was much with her, for I could not help myself; when I felt that she was waiting for me at a certain place, I was obliged to go to her. I now think she knew of this murder, and, by her hypnotic power, made me see what she herself had seen years before. It may be that it was to test my fitness for her use, that she caused me to discover the grave of the murdered man. Just what she found out through me, I do not know, but on one occasion, when I found myself coming out of a sleep, she said, as though talking to herself: “Yes, it is so; it is yet distant, but they will try it,” referring, I suppose, to the attempt that was to be made on her life.

The man who was with me at the time I saw the apparition of the murdered man in the path, in a little time became a source of great annoyance to me—a regular nuisance, in fact. He was always coming to talk with me about the “appearance,” as he called it. From being a doubter, he became a sort of doting follower of, and believer in, me and my “gift.” It was in

vain that I told him that I knew no more about the matter than he himself, that I thought the old man as much alive as myself, until I saw him go into the ground. The man wanted me to advise him about every act in life, and would have done anything I told him. I could only tell him never to do what seemed to be wrong.



CHAPTER XXI.

SOME HISTORICAL APPARITIONS.

In history are noted many apparently well authenticated cases similar, in every respect, to that of the apparition appearing to me in the forest, at an hour when nothing supernatural is supposed to be abroad. The following, from "The Philosophy of Mystery," by Walter C. Dendy, is, however, still more remarkable. Briefly told, the story is as follows: "The Baron de Geramb, on returning from the Port to Cadiz, in company with some Spanish ladies, heard a voice call to him in French, '*Save me! help, help!*' He paid but little attention to it at the time. On the following day he saw, on the shore, a dead body laid on a black plank, lighted by torches placed at each side, which he gave orders to have covered. A tempest having arisen during the evening, a secret impulse attracted him to the shore. Greatly to his surprise, he saw arise from the spot where the corpse had lain, a shapeless

phantom, shrouded in the large black garment that he had sent. The spectre began to take prodigious strides, taking a globular form, and describing circles ; it bounded off, and appeared at a distance in gigantic proportions.

“The Baron followed it across the streets of Cadiz. The noise it made in its course resembled the shivering of autumn leaves. A door was violently opened; the phantom dashed like lightning into the house, and sunk to the cellar. Heavy wailings were heard. The Baron descended, and found the corpse naked and livid, over which hung an aged man heaving sighs of misery and despair. In an obscure corner of this cellar was the phantom, whirling as in its course thither, but it soon changed to a bright cloud. This was again metamorphosed into the form of a pale young man, imitating the undulating movement of a wave.

“The Baron then heard a sound as of the chanting of anthems, and a bright young girl in white glided in and knelt beside the dead. He was so overcome that he stole away from the place, having spoken to no one and not knowing how much of what he saw was real and how much supernatural.”

A case more nearly parallel, however, to mine, is the following: We read in a letter from Pliny, Consul of Sara, that there was a house in Athens haunted by a spirit that dragged chains after it. Athenodorus, the philosopher, hired the house, determined to lay the spirit. At the approach of night he ordered a bed to be prepared, and, having received a lamp, his pencil, and tablets, he sent away his slaves. The early part of

the night passed in the most perfect quiet, but at length the sound of chains was heard. Instead of raising his eyes and dropping his pencil, he continued his studies more intensely. The noise increased, until at length it sounded at his very door.

Athenodorus looked up and beheld the spectre, such as it had been represented; it stood opposite him, making signs with its fingers. He begged it to wait awhile, and turned again to his papers; but the phantom, again clanking its chains, renewed its signals. Athenodorus arose, and, taking the light, followed it. The spectre advanced slowly, as if encumbered by its chains, and arrived in the courtyard of the house, where it suddenly disappeared. The philosopher marked the spot with grass and leaves. On the following day he informed the magistrates of the event, and desired that the place should be searched. His advice was followed, and the skeleton of a man in chains was discovered. The bones were collected and publicly burned (as was then the practice in that country), and the spirit, from that time, no longer haunted the house.



CHAPTER XXII.

THE DISASTROUS RESULT OF MY FIRST MEDICINE TRICK.

When I was about eighteen years of age the Sky-Sifter told me that she wanted me to marry her daughter Sapana (The Lily), saying she would give me one thou-

sand acres of land and six hundred ponies. I told her I was too young to marry, and would have to obtain the consent of my mother. She would not hear of my speaking to my mother. I must make up my mind at once, as something was soon to happen. I asked for time in which to consider a matter of such grave importance, and, thinking to put her off, said I had no place to live in—no house. She said she had thought of that, and the thousand acres of land would include the house and farm where my mother lived. She overruled every objection I made, until it occurred to me to take her on her own ground and tell her I must consult my “medicine.” This beat her. It was a thing to which she could not object, so she told me to perform the necessary rites as soon as possible, and sent me away.

Although her daughter, her sister’s daughter, or whoever she was, was very beautiful, with hair two yards in length and so light-skinned that she would have passed anywhere for a white woman—a brunette—I had never in my life thought of her for a wife; indeed, marriage at that time had never once entered my head. Instead, I was always planning to get away and go upon the lakes as a sailor. This being the case, I was in no hurry to “consult my medicine,” as may well be imagined. When the Sky-Sifter dismissed me I determined to keep out of her sight and not go near her, however often I might feel her calling me. I had a rifle and knew well how to use it; therefore, I determined to take to the woods for a time and live Indian fashion. Telling my mother that I was going to a distant settlement

to stop with some friends and spend a few days in hunting, I set out.

I went but a mile or two from home when I looked up a good camping place, halted, and began to hunt squirrels and other small game. It was in the latter part of summer, and for bread I made raids on the cornfields, where I found plenty of roasting ears.

It was a kind of wild life that suited me, and I enjoyed myself heartily. In the neighborhood were three or four Indian families that I did not like, and the Evil Spirit put it into my head to worry them. I found an old charcoal pit, and, having made my preparations, I had in one night stones heating for all of them. Near all their houses I left on the grass images and tracks of the devil.

The next day I got up among the thick foliage of a tree near the main road, and soon saw that there was a grand commotion among the Indians. Gangs of them were running from house to house, and some of the women were raising a wail that would have done no discredit to a pack of coyotes.

I laughed till I almost fell out of my tree. "Oh, ho!" said I, "my old woman of the lone hut will do a fine stroke of business to-day. She will have a full day's work at driving out devils!"

On descending from my lookout station I went to my camp and made a hearty meal, as I had shot two or three fine young squirrels during my walk down to the road. Having on hand a supply of meat, I concluded to scout down to the edge of the clearing and see if all was quiet at my mother's house. I climbed up a small

tree by the clearing, and, at the first glance, came near tumbling to the ground. About a dozen Indians were there, and my mother, who stood in front of the cabin, was gesticulating wildly.

As I was still gazing in terror, I saw a wooden shutter that was in the gable end of the cabin open, and an Indian thrust out his head and make some signs to those below. They were searching the loft, my sleeping place when at home.

It did not need anyone to tell me what was on foot; I knew they were searching for me. My mother would tell them I was at the other settlement, but they would not believe her. They would no doubt imagine that I had taken to the woods, and would search closely in the neighborhood of the clearing. I then thought seriously of a warning some white friends had given me, which was that the Indians had said my "medicine was too strong;" that I was a "worse witch than the Sky-Sifter." My finding the remains of old Hickman had particularly impressed them; in fact, it had quite settled my case with them, as they saw that even the white men said that the discovery was made by supernatural power.

I ran swiftly to my camp, and, collecting the supply of food I had left there, struck out into the thickest part of the forest. I did not feel safe until I had traveled nearly three miles and was hidden in a dense thicket. There I lay till toward night. I began to feel very hungry, but dared not make a fire, as the smoke would betray my hiding place. "If I had some charcoal," thought I, "I would be all right

and would be able to roast my squirrels and corn."

I presently thought of the Indian substitute for charcoal on occasions when a smokeless fire was needed, and, creeping abroad, I soon collected a quantity of coals from half burnt logs and trees, gouging them off with my hunting knife. With my knife and a sharpened stick I then dug a pit about two feet deep, in which I kindled a fire and roasted my corn and meat.

After my meal I became thirsty, and, venturing out in search of water, found near at hand a small creek. Being as well situated as I could hope to be, anywhere in the forest, I determined to remain there that night, and strike out next morning through the woods to the nearest white settlement, and thence make across the lake to Buffalo, to the house of my mother's friend.

This being settled, I had only to ask the protection of the Great Spirit. As this must be done—or would be best done—through the intervention of my "totem," I took off my medicine bag, and, placing it on a scaffold of four sticks, planted in due form with regard to the points of the compass, as well as I could by the setting sun, I then made my sacrifice of meat and corn, taking all risks from the smell and the thin line of smoke that, for a minute or two, arose from the coals. I very earnestly prayed to the Great Spirit, and appealed not only to my own totem to intercede for me, but also to those of all the wise and good ancients in regular order, as they were inscribed on the four sides of my medicine stick.

At that time I best knew how to address myself to

the Almighty after the manner of his red children, and I still see very little difference ; it is the same God under a different name, and most peoples have a name for the Supreme Being that is different from that used by the English. Nor can I see any harm in either the sacrifice or the totems, the latter being addressed in the same way as are the saints among the Catholics. Even my special totem was not a mere turtle. Through it I fell under the special protection of an ancient whose totem was the same, and for that reason was engraved on my prayer or medicine stick.

After I had made my offerings, said my prayers to the Great Spirit, and asked the aid of all my saints, I felt quite secure and was thoroughly comforted. Almost immediately after I had concluded my devotions, a small flock of wild turkeys passed near me in a leisurely way, feeding as they moved along. This told me that no Indians were near.



CHAPTER XXIII.

MY FOSTER MOTHER APPEARS.

When it grew dark I curled up in a pile of dry leaves that I had collected, and prepared to go to sleep, thinking of the route I would take in the morning. I had fallen into a dreamy, half-asleep state when I was aroused by hearing near at hand the sharp barking of a wolf. In an instant my hand was on my rifle

and I was sitting up. Sitting with the cocked gun ready in my hands, I strained my ears but could hear no movement near or far.

I thought I must have been dreaming and was about lying down again when I heard called in a low tone, "Oron-ya-deka!" It was the voice of the Sky-Sifter, and looking up I could make out her towering form just at my feet.

"Oron-ya-deka," repeated she, "arise! the time has come. Arise! Oron-ya-deka, and follow me."

I at once got upon my feet, when, taking me by the hand, she led me out of the thicket. We moved in silence to the little creek and down it until we came to an open spot that was dimly lighted by the stars. In this she halted and said: "What did you in the thicket?"

"I sacrificed to the Great Spirit and prayed to make my medicine good and my heart strong," said I.

"That is true," said she, "and it was well. Why did you ask for a strong heart to-night?" I told her all and excused my conduct by saying that I had thought only of frightening people I did not like and making some work for the old woman of the hut.

"You have but hastened that which was to be," said she.

I expressed my sorrow.

"Say no more, it was to be. But do you know you are in danger? You must not go back to your mother's house. It has been searched for you and it will be watched."

"I know it," said I.

“Ah!” said she in surprise—“you know it? Your medicine is still good.”

I told her how I knew of the search. “Your medicine is strong, or you would not have gone to watch.”

I said: “I believe the Good Spirit guided me.”

“To-day,” said she, “but who was with you last night?”

“The Evil Spirit,” said I.

“Yes, and you know why—you know how he got power over you for a time. It is bad when the tongue and heart are apart.”

I was silent. I had lied to her and she knew it.

“Son,” said she, “let all again be peace between us. I asked too much of you at your age. I was wrong, but I knew what was coming and the time was short. The time is now here. You hastened it, but it was by a foolish trick I taught you. Now we both see that it is not good to have to do with the Evil Spirit, even in jest. I am glad that to-day you sacrificed and prayed to the Good Spirit.”

“You will not die,” said I, much moved by her kindness. “No, you will not die, I have seen you. When they think you are dead you will stand with me and look down on them from the hilltop.”

“I believe you, Oron-ya-deka; your medicine is good,” said she; then raising her medicine whistle to her lips, she sounded a low note. Immediately there came from the edge of the wood the sharp bark of a wolf.

In a moment thereafter, the man I had seen at my medicine feast in the mask and dress of a wolf—

"the one who never dies"—made his appearance. He and the Sky-Sifter exchanged a few words in a low tone, when he came to me, and, giving me a medicine grip, turned and disappeared in the forest.

The Sky-Sifter then told me that the little creek near us was the one on which stood her wigwam. She said that those who intended to burn her as a witch would come at midnight. She further said: "I was watched this evening by two spies. They saw me go into my house and ever since one has been on guard to make sure that I do not get out, while the other has gone to lead on my enemies. All this because I strove to hold them to the religion of their fathers—to keep alive in them Mohawk hearts, whatever they might be outwardly."

We then moved cautiously down the creek till near the wigwam, when we turned and ascended the little hill at the base of which the bark-covered habitation stood. The hill was covered with a thick growth of bushes and small saplings.

After a time the Sky-Sifter halted and listened intently. She then, with some small thing, made a noise like the screeching of a bat. Immediately there were answering squeaks near at hand. She then charged me not to move from the spot, nor utter a sound, no matter how horrid the yells and shrieks I might hear, until she again made her appearance by my side. I promised strict obedience, and in a moment thereafter I saw the Sky-Sifter sink down and disappear into the ground.



THE "SKY-SIFTER'S" WIGWAM ON FIRE.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SKY-SIFTER IN THE BURNING WIGWAM.

For some time all remained silent as death. Below where I stood I could distinctly see the outlines of the wigwam, only about two or three rods away. Presently I saw a flash of light, and, peering down through the thick foliage of the bushes, I could see that the torch had been applied to the hut. A quantity of very inflammable material had been heaped against the door, to prevent escape in that direction. Dusky forms were moving silently about, all within a short distance of the flames. Evidently they were anxiously waiting to see some sign of life within the wigwam. They did not have long to wait. Soon the door of the wigwam was partly opened, then quickly closed. A suppressed yell of mingled triumph and derision burst from the throats of the Indians scattered about the burning structure. They had caught a glimpse of the Sky-Sifter. Being assured that she was within, they felt secure of their prey.

Nearly all one side of the hut was on fire, and there was no escape by the door. The Sky-Sifter tore away some bark at the opposite side, and I could hear her talking loudly and rapidly; she was appealing to the rabble to spare her life, to allow her to give herself up, and stand trial for any wrong she had done. She was answered with jeers, and on all sides arose cries of "Let her burn!" "Burn the witch!"

The Sky-Sifter showed her face for an instant at two or three openings, when her enemies cried: "Back,

or we shoot!" As the flames enwrapped the hut shrieks of agony were heard to mingle with the crackling of the fire. These terrible cries were answered by the taunting and exultant shouts and yells of the savages dancing about in the light of the fire, all brandishing guns or clubs and wildly gesticulating.

The shrieks of the Sky-Sifter fast grew weaker, and at last ceased with a long-drawn, stifled wail. At this time the whole interior of the wigwam was an oven of fire, and soon the roof and one side fell in. Still the Indian witch-burners howled and danced about the place.

The wild shrieks and awful moans that had been issuing from the flaming hut had filled me with horror. Notwithstanding that I had been forbidden to move or make the least noise, thinking I was listening to the dying cries of my foster-mother, I determined to avenge her by putting a bullet through at least one of her murderers. I began to maneuver to get a fair shot, and at last one of them halted and stood in a good light. In a moment my rifle was cocked and at my shoulder. Just as I was pressing the trigger I felt a touch on the shoulder. Turning, I found the Sky-Sifter by my side, erect and grand as ever in her life, and with not so much as a hair nor a feather singed.

She smiled grimly when she saw what I had been about to do, then making a sign of silence drew me some paces up the side of the little hill, when we turned and looked down upon the fire and the Indians who still circled and jabbered about the ruins, all the walls of the wigwam being down, forming a mass of

poles, beams, and bark that burned with an intense heat.

The Sky-Sifter's face for a moment lighted up with a triumphant smile, as she looked down upon the ruins of her wigwam and the enemies who supposed they had heard her "death-wail." It was only a passing gleam, then her face resumed its usual calm. Placing a finger on her lips and signing to me to follow, she led the way over the crest of the ridge into the darkness.

When we had advanced a few rods we came to a little opening where there was some light from the heavens. In this spot we halted, and my guide took up a blade of grass and, placing it in her mouth, imitated exactly the call of a katydid. In a moment the signal was answered, then came forth to us from the forest shadows a second Sky-Sifter, the exact counterpart of the one standing by my side. As she came up to us she said: "It is finished."

"It is finished," echoed the being by my side.

When the newcomer turned to me and said: "So, Oron-ya-deka, thinking my enemies had taken my life, you determined to avenge me?"

I was confused and only said: "You or your sister."

"We are the same," said both women as with one voice. Then the newcomer said: "It would not have been well, and soon you will find that we are better guarded."

"Better guarded?" said I, not well knowing what was meant.

"Yes," said one of the sister sibyls; "yes, better

guarded. At the sound of a whistle all dancing about that poor hut would have fallen to the ground, dead men."

I could only wonder at this and hold my peace.

I was then told that word had been sent to my mother that I was safe, and that I was to remain in the forest until after the funeral.

"The funeral?" cried I, unable to conceal my astonishment; "whose funeral?"

"Ours," said both my foster-mothers, in a breath.

"But you are not dead!" cried I.

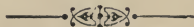
"You may mistake there," was the answer.

"Our body," said they, "lies yonder in those smouldering ruins. In the morning our husband will recover our poor remains, and there will then be a great funeral. The men who fired the hut will be there—not a Mohawk will dare remain away. We shall have at our funeral a few real, and many pretended, mourners."

As all this was bewildering to me, I remained silent.

Plucking a blade of grass, one of the sisters again imitated the call of the katydid.

Instantly, there was in the shadows of the forest a squeaking, as of bats or flying-squirrels, and in a moment "the man who never dies" made his appearance in his wolf dress and mask.



CHAPTER XXV.

A NIGHT IN A CAVERN.

The Wolf-Man came directly to me and, taking my hand, gave me a medicine grip. The two Sky-Sifters then made the sign of silence, and side by side moved backward into the shades of the forest.

“You will see her again,” said the Wolf-Man, observing that I stood mutely gazing toward where my foster-mothers had disappeared.

“Her!” said I. “Which one?”

“Both,” said my companion, “or one, as you please. Yet they are only one, though at times they allow their two bodies to be seen together. You see no difference whether one body is before you or both. It is great medicine and only happens once in a thousand years. It is a great soul that fills the two bodies. It is the only soul permitted to have two bodies. I have known it in all the bodies it has inhabited from the beginning. It is my sister. I have not two sisters; my only sister is the soul that inhabits the two bodies you see. In the beginning there was given my soul as a habitation, a body that never dies, and to my sister soul two bodies that die at the end of each thousand years. Then it appears again, and I know by certain signs in what part of the world it is. I now have the appearance of an Indian; next I may again take on the appearance of an African—as I have often done before—that of a Caucasian, or a Mongolian—it all depends upon my sister soul. It is a great mystery, and why it is so you will not know in this life. I have

told you these things because you are a near relation of mine," and he touched my forehead and face.

"Your relation ! Me ?" cried I in astonishment, as the man still fondly stroked my face.

"Yes, my nephew. You are as much the son of my sister as are the two girls you will see weeping at her funeral are her daughters. I believe you know that but for her you would have been born a girl. The man who thinks he is the husband of my sister, knows nothing about her. He knows another body that has, at times, worn the appearance of my sister. That body he will recover from the ruins of the hut, and bury as the remains of his wife ; and so they are, but still they are those of the old woman in whose lone hut you stopped one night—the night before your medicine feast. She did not always look as you saw her. Perhaps at the very time you thought her body was stretched across the door of the hut in which you slept, she was in the house where live the two girls you call the daughters of the Sky-Sifter, and was being treated by them as their mother ; which she really was, to a certain extent, while they are only daughters of the Sky-Sifter by proxy. You may think it cruel to allow her to be burned to death in the hut, but it was her choice, and one she made nearly a hundred years ago, when she was ninety years old, and dying. She was then offered renewed life, provided she would undertake and do what she has done. You may now suppose that three Sky-Sifters might have appeared before you as readily as two, but it could not have been. When the old woman you saw in the hut appeared as

the Sky-Sifter, one of the others was seen as the "old woman of the hut." It was one of the bodies of my sister that lay across the door of the hut nearly the whole of the night you were there—it was a real Sky-Sifter. Several changes were made while you stopped at that hut. It was a Sky-Sifter that guided you to the secret meeting-place—the place of the medicine feast in the forest. It is a great mystery. Now look about you."

Instantly lights flashed before me of such dazzling brightness that I was blinded and forced to close my eyes. When I regained my powers of vision I found myself not in the forest, as I had all the time supposed, but in a great cavern lighted by many resinous torches. The light of the torches was reflected and re-reflected by a thousand glittering stalactites that hung down from the roof and the celled sides of the cavern. The cavern was of great height and length; ranged along the two side walls were a great number of Indians of both sexes in strange and brilliantly ornamented dresses—many with towering plumes of feathers upon their heads.

My uncle, the Wolf-Man, took off his mask and asked me to look at his face. I saw before me a man with a full brown beard, brown wavy hair, brownish-bronze complexion, and bright hazel eyes.

"In me, as I now stand before you," said he, "you see blended all the colors, complexions, and characteristics of all the human beings in whose shape I have ever existed—of the whole human race, indeed. As you now see me, so in time will be the whole human race. When that time arrives, human beings will no

longer pass through the change now known as death : all will be as I am, ever-living. You see many people here. Some of these *have been*, and some *are*, even as you *are*. Few that you see before you are immortals in the perfect sense, though the original bodies of some have been dust for a thousand years, and the bodies they afterwards occupied for various lengths of time are also dust. Most of those before you must again have their souls lodged in dwellings of flesh—they must be born again, and again ‘become little children.’ This may astonish you, but it is true. The people of the world are constantly growing in knowledge, and at each new birth the soul is brought under better influences. Finally, all attain to the perfection that places them among the real immortals. Ages from now will come the time when man will not require to die and be born again. All will then be of one hue and one form, and all will be perfect in every virtue. Then will man at last be permitted to partake of the fruit of the tree that stood ‘in the midst of the garden’—the tree of everlasting life—and the cherubims and the flaming sword that have guarded that fruit from the beginning, will leave the way free to all the race of Adam.”

As the “man who never dies” thus spoke, the Sky-Sifters made their appearance. Between them moved a young woman, attired after the manner of the Mohawks when dressed in their own old-time costume. I glanced inquiringly from her face to that of my companion and guide. He divined my thoughts and said : “The person you see with the Sky-Sifters is the old woman of the lone hut, she whose body was destroyed

to-night in the wigwam. You see her now as she was in her best days in her first life, though more beautiful, for in her spirit form she has been freed from all blemishes incident to the mere fleshly body. She now knows a degree of happiness undreamed of in her former state."

"The Sky-Sifters, too," said I, "seem brighter and happier than I have ever before seen them."

"They are more radiant," said my guide, "for the reason that that portion of their spirit which formerly animated the old woman of the lone hut has again returned to them. How that can be is also a mystery that you cannot comprehend in your present state of existence. I may tell you, for it is recorded in the Holy Book, that in the days of old, when man was created on the earth, many immortals, 'sons of God,' visited this world, and, assuming human forms, took wives among the daughters of men. The children born to the immortals by the mortals became mighty men, and there are still those on the earth among men who have in them a faint spark of this immortal race, and through it they are endowed with so much of the gift of prevision as to give them glimpses into futurity. As for myself and my sister soul, we are of that time when immortals were on the earth, but are not of those who intermarried with human beings, as there were other conditions under which we might remain on this planet, as it became necessary for us to do, for certain reasons not to be named. I am here under one set of conditions, and my sister soul under another. Throughout this planet you see that the male and female principle

exists in all things that have life of any kind, even to vegetable growths. Though the Great Spirit is usually spoken of as one, the oldest Hebrew name for the Supreme Ruler is most correct. It is Elohim, which means, not one alone, but two Great Spirits, or two in one, and you may guess from what I have said what these are. Were there only one the name would be Eloah. Man was created in the likeness of God, male and female. As the first mortals were male and female of one flesh, so their immortal part was of one spirit, but male and female. From this you may guess my nature and that of my sister soul, a soul that for a mysterious reason animates two bodies. More I may not tell. As I said before, some that you see here are even as you are; others have been as you are, but have advanced some steps. Those who are as you are know no more than you of these things, but of the woman whose body only this night perished in the wigwam it may be said, that already her knowledge as far surpasses yours as mine surpasses that of a new-born babe."

Much more to the same effect was told me, as that there were forms present seen by the highest of the medicine men which were invisible to me, and others that could be looked upon by no mortal eyes. We then moved on, and I found that as yet we were in a mere hall or ante-chamber. The chamber seemed of immense length, and now thousands of forms were moving through it, all gazing forward earnestly. With these we mingled and advanced.

At last we came to an immense screen or curtain of

rock on which were inscribed as in fire the totems of all the race of red men. This crossed the ante-chamber, yet left broad ways on either side. Toward that on the right moved all who were going forward, while by that on the left came those forms that were returning.

Taking my hand my guide said : " We will now pass behind the veil."

Turning my eyes upon him I found that his usual dress was gone and he appeared robed in glistening white. Instinctively I then dropped my gaze to my own person and saw that I was attired in a sort of tunic of red. I was surprised and doubtless looked it, as my companion said : "That is your color; the blood of a mortal still flows in your veins."

I then observed that the robes worn by the forms about me were of various hues. Few were red and as few a perfect glistening white. Some were purple, others blue, and a few golden, but the many were of the greyish-white hue of mist.

Not explaining the meaning of these colors my guide said: " Behind the veil you will see the forms of those two through whom life in human form was first introduced upon this earth and from whom all the race have the life that is in them. They represent on earth the eternal life and the twin principles of life that dwell in that central place whence radiates all else in the universe."

Thus saying he led me behind the veil to the right, when there burst upon my eyes a blaze of light that seemed to fill a space as great as the dome of the

whole heavens. Far away before me I saw two central points from which all this light was radiated. The points seemed within the breasts of two majestic robed forms, but even the light of the shapes being as great as the blaze of the noonday sun, I could distinguish no more. As we advanced the intensity of the light seemed to so grow as to pervade the whole atmosphere, then on a sudden all became as black as night.

“Either all is utter darkness,” said I to my guide, “or I have been struck with blindness.”

“Neither,” said he, “but the light here is so much greater than human eyes can endure that it has the same effect as total darkness. There are sounds so great that the human ear cannot hear them, as well as sounds too faint for the human ear, and it is the same for the eye as regards light and darkness.”

As we moved on there arose great murmurings that increased till they resounded like the roar of a mighty waterfall, when there would be a deep and sudden silence. Breezes swept to and fro and on these were borne whisperings. Cold hands touched my face and at times I heard my Indian name called in tones that seemed to shake the earth, rolling and reverberating like peals of thunder. At each such call I felt my hand taken and placed upon some living object. The first of these I recognized as a turtle, the next was a wolf, then a serpent, and other creatures that I knew to be totems of those near to me through my adoption by the Sky-Sifter. At each such introduction Ga-on-ye-was, the Indian name of the Sky-Sifter, would be called, and she would make

some response in a language I did not understand. Others also spoke, but their voices seemed far away and mingled with the sound of rustling leaves or running water. Then I heard pronounced in a loud, clear voice quite near me the word "Light!"

Instantly all was light. I gazed about me in a bewildered way, for I saw at a glance that I was not in a cavern, but a forest, and the light about me was that of coming day. Beside me was seated my uncle, the Wolf-Man, and at our feet was the little rill from the spring that flowed from under the ledge of sandstone. I was in the lone spot to which I was sent to dream my medicine dream. I was sure of this when, on turning, I saw the great oak and the Indian grave near its foot.

The Wolf-Man said: "My child, we have wandered far beneath the earth and seen many mysteries."

"How came we here?" said I. The Wolf-Man pointed to the spring and said: "You see the door through which we passed out but now. That is a mystery-fountain which becomes but air to those who have the right to pass through it. It was placed there to guard the door that leads to a sacred region below. On the face of this sandstone ridge you see the totems of many who have passed through the great halls below; all were great medicine men in their day."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FUNERAL OF THE SKY-SIFTER.

Commanding me to follow him, the Wolf-Man led the way to a small hut hidden on a little willow-covered island in the midst of a large swamp. Not a living thing was visible in or about the hut, which was a temporary structure of bark and boughs, but within it, suspended from its roof, we found a small Indian basket filled with food.

After we had eaten, my uncle, the Wolf-Man, informed me that we must attend the funeral of the supposed Sky-Sifter, which was to take place about noon, on a small island in the creek at the mouth of which my foster-mother always kept her medicine canoe. I knew the spot well. The Sky-Sifter had taken me to it, and had shown me on it, at the highest part of the island, a small, level patch of ground, around which were planted certain bushes and shrubs, parts of which were used in various ceremonies. She told me that one day I would see her buried there; that her husband had promised to make her grave at the place marked out for it. The island had an area of only about an acre, and presented much the appearance of an artificial mound. It stood only a short distance above the mouth of the creek, and on either side arose the river bluffs to the height of one hundred and fifty feet above the water, and about one hundred feet above the top of the island. These bluffs were timber-crowned to within a few feet of their faces, which descended almost perpendicularly to the creek. It was a picturesque spot, and the notch

in the shore line, with the mound in its centre, was a landmark well known to all who sailed the river, and by some of the whites was called the "Witch's Cove."

After we left the little hut in the swamp, the Wolf-Man led the way to higher ground, and, after walking for an hour, we came to a place where were several old bark huts. In and about these we found a number of Indians, both men and women. Medicine signs were exchanged, when some of the men advanced and gave me the grips I had been taught. I soon recognized several who had been present at my medicine feast and initiation, though now they were attired in the ordinary dress of the Indians of the reservation.

After some talk we were led by these men to a hut that stood apart. There the Wolf-Man transformed himself into an ordinary Mohawk, as regards dress, and after my dress had been somewhat altered, an old man painted my face and hands. He was an artist in his way, for when he had completed his work he held before me a small round mirror. I was astonished. I saw before me a young Mohawk, and nothing else—my face was strange to me as though I had never before seen it.

When we returned to the other huts, the people there evidently thought me much improved in appearance. It was "Wa gwast! Wa gwast!" (good, good) on every side.

I was much surprised to find that these people, nearly all of whom were quite old, had with them, made up in bundles, all their earthly possessions. The dress of the Wolf-Man, and also part of my dress, were

rolled up to be carried along with the goods of the others. My uncle then gave orders for all to be carried to a place on the river not far from the little island where the funeral was to take place.

When the people had moved off, my relative and guide made me a signal to follow, and then moved away in a different direction from that taken by the Indians with the bundles. In about half an hour we came to the bluff bank of the river. My uncle produced a sound like that made by a tree-frog, and an Indian in strange paint and dress soon came up the bank. Some words were exchanged, and we passed on some distance when the same signal brought another strange Indian up from some hiding-place at the brink of the river. This was repeated several times, the Indian called up returning after receiving some instructions in a language of which I could not understand a word.

At last, after looking at the sun, the Wolf-Man turned to me and said: "Come, my child, it is time."

We then moved directly toward the place where the funeral was to take place and soon came in sight of the mound-like island. We found it thronged with Indians, with some still arriving and crossing on a temporary bridge that had been laid across the little stream to the island. We crossed with others without attracting attention, and ascending the mound mingled with the throng.

A score or two of white men were in attendance among the Indians, and half as many white women. These stood about the Sky-Sifter's husband and his

two daughters. A white minister was also in attendance. The husband seemed quite grief-stricken. He had always been very proud of his wife and, truly loving her, had allowed her to have her own way in all things. Being a Scotchman, and a firm believer in the gift of second-sight, he found no fault with his wife's mysterious comings, goings, and ceremonies. The daughters were calm and almost as imposing in appearance as the Sky-Sifter herself. Both had the same long hair and the same dark and piercing eyes; indeed, they looked like a pair of white Sky-Sifters.

The funeral rites were simple, the Indians present participating no further than to make a few small offerings at the grave. The white minister read the burial service and ventured a few timid remarks that were intended for the benefit of the Indians, and which contained a faint hint in regard to the danger of meddling with forbidden things and seeking unholy knowledge.

Not a medicine man went near the grave, though several were present. They would take another time for what they had to do. All the Indians who participated in the burning of the wigwam were, no doubt, present, in order to ward off suspicion, for all could but feel that a day of reckoning must soon come.

The ceremonies at the grave being finished, the people were about turning away when were heard the sounds of the measured strokes of a drum. As the dull, heavy boom rolled through the air all eyes were lifted to the face of the bluff. There on the verge of the acclivity stood, in her most brilliant, mystic

dress, the towering form of the Sky-Sifter, slowly tapping her gaily decorated medicine drum. Her figure was so strongly brought out by the dark green of the foliage behind her that she seemed only a few feet away, and was really distant less than one hundred yards.

The silence of death fell on all present. Terror the most abject was visible in the face of every Indian present. Could they have blanched, every face would have been white as marble. All seemed bereft of their senses, and, like wooden images, stood with open mouths and protruding eyeballs. Before them, more majestic and defiant than ever, stood the being whose charred remains they supposed they had just seen laid in the grave. Glancing at the faces of the two young women known as the daughters of the Sky-Sifter, I saw their lips curled in a triumphant smile, while a proud gleam of satisfaction shot from their eyes upon those they knew to be their enemies. Not till then did I suppose that they had been given a hint of what was to occur. They doubtless thought they saw the spirit of their mother about to take its departure to the land of the Great Spirit. In the husband's face was joy and faith.

All this passed as in a moment, then came answering drum taps from the opposite bluff, and, turning their eyes in that direction, all saw a second Sky-Sifter, towering as grandly from the soles of her feet to the topmost feather in her cap as stood the first. As the throng turned their eyes from one bluff and one figure to the other, the drum taps increased in rapidity, until

the separate strokes could not be distinguished, and a heavy roar filled all the space between the bluffs, and so pervaded the atmosphere that the leaves on the trees quivered and the very breezes were stilled.

At this startling sight, the superstitious Indians lost all control of their wits. They were dumb with terror at the appearance of the first Sky-Sifter, but when a second was seen, their fright was so great as to arouse them from their stupor and impel them to seek safety in instant flight. Howling as though already in the clutches of the Evil Spirit, the whole mass of people surged, rolled, and tumbled down the mound. They did not stop to look for the little bridge that had been thrown across the stream, but dashed through mud and water in a hundred places, then, streaming along the margin of the river, they rounded the bluff and disappeared. White men—preacher and all—fled as wildly, if not as rapidly, as did the Indians, for from the moment the stampede began there were heard from the forests on the bluffs, and from the woods on all sides, a thousand strange, shrill warwhoops, of a kind never before sounded in that Eastern region.

In the commotion of the confused flight of the multitude, the two Sky-Sifters had disappeared, no one knew where or how. The wild warwhoops ceased, and, looking about me, I found the husband of the Sky-Sifter, his daughters, myself, and the "one who never dies," sole occupants of the summit of the mound. The husband had in his face a wild look of joy. "She was the truest, noblest woman that ever lived!" cried he. "Let no man say her medicine was

not good—let no man say it was too strong!” and turning toward myself and “uncle,” he glared upon us like a tiger.

His daughters ran to his side and took his hands. He burst into tears and fell upon his knees beside the newly filled grave. His daughters knelt on either side of him.

I felt a touch on the shoulder, and turning toward my red uncle, whose existence I had for the moment forgotten, he signed to me to come away, and together we hastily descended the hill, crossed the brook, and plunged into the nearest fringe of woods.

“A good man, a good man is my brother-in-law—my brother-in-law by proxy!” said my uncle by adoption, speaking as though to himself. As I did not disagree with him I allowed my silence to speak my assent.

As we advanced among the trees, my companion uttered a low, clucking sound, and at various points several medicine men and other friends appeared, received instructions and retired—I should, perhaps, say vanished, as some of them seemed to walk straight into the trunks of trees, within three paces of us, and fade from sight, while others dropped down to the ground and apparently became a part of it. On the other hand, as the clucking was repeated, old chunks of logs got up, stood on end and became men, then fell over after a word or two and were again logs.

I found by this that though our people had fled with the throng, it was with an object, and that they had turned aside before going far. We also met not a few

strange Indians, as I knew by their dress and paint. My uncle was not communicative, and I dared not venture to ask questions, nevertheless I began to be consumed with curiosity as to the meaning of so much masquerading in the woods; I was anxious to know what it was all to lead up to, and about how much longer I would be required to participate in it. My plan, before it begun, had been to get out of that section and get upon the lakes, as soon as possible, as a sailor.

After traveling for an hour or two in a circuitous direction, we came to a temporary camp, the huts in which were constructed of green boughs. Here were encamped the people of the huts at which we had changed our style of dress. We found our bundles and resumed our usual dress, my uncle again appearing as the "medicine wolf." I was glad to again find myself in possession of my rifle, for, boy-like, I had feared that some Indian would run away with it.

These people, or at least the majority of them, had been at the funeral, and one of them brought me a book which he said he had picked up at the foot of the island mound. Upon looking at it I found it was the one from which the minister had read the burial service. The Indians wondered much that the "white doctor" had thrown away his "medicine." They thought that act would end his career, as he could not dream again to get new "medicine."

As all the people of this camp had been through the "medicine lodge," I found that they knew as much as I did about the real nature of the scene we had wit-

nessed at the funeral, and some of them probably knew more than I, having taken much higher degrees. I really knew no more than the squaws who were permitted to participate in the open-air rites. Though they knew that the Sky-Sifters were twin-sisters who had in some way obtained all the secrets of even the highest degrees, I was told by the "one who never dies," that they knew nothing of the real nature of the great sibyl whose soul inhabited two bodies, and he cautioned me against saying anything about that, or about the old woman of the lone hut. To these Indians, where the charred body came from that was found in the ruins of the wigwam, was still a mystery. I found that they supposed that she merely made it appear that there was a body; they said it was nothing, and that, in case the grave were opened, it would be found empty.



CHAPTER XXVII.

AN EXODUS OF MEDICINE PEOPLE.

My uncle presently left me, telling me that business required his presence elsewhere, and requesting me to remain with the people of the camp till they received the signal to move, when I was to accompany them. The sun was low in the west when the Wolf-Man glided out of the camp.

I could make nothing of all these mysterious movements. What we were next to do troubled me not a

little. By listening to the people, and talking with them as though I knew all about the business, I found that such of them as had possessed land had disposed of it, and that they were about to bid farewell to the reservation and to Canada. They said the Indians of the reservation no longer followed the ways of the ancient and true religions, and that the Great Spirit desired all true believers to separate themselves from the apostates. Where they were going I could not learn from them, as all they could or would tell me on that head was that they were about to leave for the "land of the gitche Manitou."

A little after sundown the forest seemed to become alive with all manner of beasts and birds. They were calling and answering on all sides. I knew, from past experience, that a movement of some kind was on foot among the Indians. At last was heard the distant howl of a wolf. One of our party imitated the bark of an Indian dog in reply, and instantly all took up their bundles.

In Indian file, we began our march toward the river, distant less than half a mile, an old chief and medicine man leading the way.

Upon arriving at the edge of the river we found, drawn up along the shore, a line of about a dozen large canoes. With them were as many Indians, all Mohawks and relatives and friends of those of my party. We embarked at once and paddled down the river. There seemed an unusual commotion among the water-fowl. I wondered at this until I heard the loud quacking of a duck from one of our canoes.

I was not surprised when I saw, by the dim light of the stars, the leading canoe turn and head directly for the Witch's Cove—the mouth of the creek at which my foster-mother kept her medicine canoe. I knew that the Sky-Sifters were abroad. Though I had not seen them after their appearance on the bluffs, I was sure that they were at no great distance from that point, and in constant communication with the people.

At the cove we found over fifty canoes, most of them of great size. On the shore were a great number of people. They seemed to be talking in many languages, and I found that many were armed with rifles. This seemed strange to me, as, among the Mohawks, I had not seen a gun of any kind. I began to fear that there was to be a massacre of the Indians who had participated in the burning of the wigwam.

My uncle, the Wolf-Man, was present and in command of the whole fleet, as I could see by all taking orders from him. I asked him whence came so many canoes, and he told me that many of them had been lying concealed at various points along the river for several days, while others had that evening been brought down the stream by their owners.

“This is a night,” said he, “that will long be remembered on this river.”

Again I began to fear bloodshed and wished myself safely out of the country. I wanted to get to Buffalo, or some other large town across the lake, where I could ship aboard some vessel. I feared I was to be carried away as a sort of prisoner, and made to follow the business of a medicine man—a business to which

I had already been apprenticed in spite of myself.

At last there was a great hum of voices and a moment after the two Sky-Sifters made their appearance, both still in full medicine dress. All the people were ordered to embark. One of the Sky-Sifters took me aboard the medicine canoe in which I had once sailed out into the lake.

I asked: "Is this Ga-on-ye-was?"

The answer was: "We are both Ga-on-ye-was-uh—both sifters of the sky."

"Am I to go to the gitche Manitou?" I asked.

"No, child, it is not in your heart," was the answer.

An order was next given to "light up." As all our previous movements had been so secret this surprised me. I soon saw, however, that the lights to be used were skull lanterns. These were principally masks in imitation of skulls. After such a light had been placed at the bow of each canoe, all the craft were placed in line and we started up the river in Indian file. Most of the houses of the Indian settlers were on the banks of the river.

The Wolf-Man took the lead in a medicine canoe that was the counterpart of the one in which I was seated, and with him was a Sky-Sifter and an old medicine man as a paddler. The paddler was seated but the others stood erect. I was given a paddle and was seated, but the Sky-Sifter with me stood up in the bow of the canoe. The Wolf-Man, the two sibyls, and most of the medicine men had drums. All begun beating these as the line of canoes started, and at the first taps, to my great surprise, I saw both of the Sky-

Sifters and the "one who never dies" become brilliantly illuminated, from head to foot, as though covered with liquid phosphorus or some such preparation. We took a course near the right bank of the river, and as we passed up the great noise of the drums brought the Indian families from their dwellings to the bank of the stream, but no sooner did they catch sight of the Sky-Sifters and the long line of skull lanterns than they fled, uttering the wildest howls of terror.

When the procession had moved up the river about three miles it turned and passed down near the opposite shore, creating everywhere the utmost consternation. When we were again opposite the Witch's Cove the line of canoes took to the middle of the river and moved slowly down toward the lake. While thus proceeding we encountered, at different times, several canoes containing belated Indian fishermen coming in from the lake.

The terror exhibited by these men was quite ludicrous. On coming in sight of the portentous procession they wheeled and paddled wildly for the shore, where, hauling up their canoes, they plunged howling into the heart of the forest. Our ghostly flotilla completely cleared the river of all incoming craft, whether manned by Indians or white men.

On reaching the mouth of the river all our canoes were hauled up on a stretch of sandy beach about one hundred yards from the lake, where we encamped to wait for daylight before going out upon the lake. The skull lanterns were now placed on the sterns of the canoes in such a way as to face the river, and were there

allowed to burn out; before they did so, however, they gave a great fright to several Indian canoemen.

This old religion, observed by the old people among the Mohawks, was the religion not only of that tribe but also of the Senecas, Oneidas, Cayugas, and all the tribes of the Six Nations. It was, indeed, the religion of all the Indians of North America, there being only variations of forms of worship, and some difference in the ceremonies among tribes widely separated. On this point Catlin (who spent forty-two years of his life among the Indians and who visited every leading tribe in America) is very explicit. He says: "All the Indian tribes, as I have observed before, are religious—are worshipful—and many of them go to almost incredible lengths in worshipping the Great Spirit, denying and humbling themselves before Him for the same purpose and in the same hope as we do—perhaps in a more rational and acceptable way."

As regards the old religious belief of the Mohawks and other tribes of the Six Nations, they have been well set forth by Red Jacket, the famous Seneca chief and orator. In the summer of 1805, the principal chiefs of the Six Nations assembled at Buffalo Creek, New York, at the particular request of Rev. Mr. Crane, a missionary from the State of Massachusetts. Mr. Crane made a long speech begging the Indians to permit missionaries to settle among them. The Indians consulted for about two hours after Mr. Crane had finished his address asking them to allow the Boston Society to settle white preachers among them. They finally selected Red Jacket to make a reply for them.

After an eloquent opening Red Jacket gave the following statement of the religious views of the Six Nations. He said : " We also have a religion which was given to our forefathers, and has been handed down to us, their children. We worship in that way. It teaches us to be thankful for all the favors we receive; to love each other, and to be united. We never quarrel about religion.

" The Great Spirit has made us all, but he has made a difference between his white and his red children. He has given us different complexions and different customs. To you he has given the arts. To these he has not opened our eyes. We know these things to be true; since he has made so great a difference between us in other things, why may we not conclude that he has given us a different religion, according to our understanding? The Great Spirit does right; He knows what is best for His children; we are satisfied.

" We are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors; we are acquainted with them; we will wait a little while, and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it does them good, makes them honest and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will then consider again of what you have said.

" Brother, you have now heard our answer to your talk, and this is all we have to say at present. As we are going to part, we will come and take you by the hand, and hope the Great Spirit will protect you on your journey, and return you safe to your friends."

As the Indians began to approach the missionary to

shake hands, he arose hastily from his seat, crying out that he could not take them by the hand, that there was no fellowship between the religion of God and the works of the devil."

The Indians smiled and retired in a peaceful manner. It is not a difficult matter to decide which of the parties showed more need of true religion.

At a council afterwards, in answer to another proposition to establish a mission among his people, Red Jacket said: "Your talk is fair and good; but I propose this: Go, try your hand in the town of Buffalo for one year; they need missionaries, if you can do what you say. If in that time you shall have done them any good, and made them any better, then we will let you come among our people."

On another occasion, in speaking of the preachers who were trying to obtain a footing on the reservation, Red Jacket said: "These men know we do not understand their religion; we cannot read their book. They tell us different stories about what it contains, and we believe they make the book talk to suit themselves. If we had no money, no land, and no country to be cheated out of, these black coats would not trouble themselves about our good hereafter. The Great Spirit will not punish us for what we do not know. He will do justice to His red children. These black coats talk to the Great Spirit and ask for light, that we may see as they do, when they are blind themselves, and quarrel about the light which guides them. These things we do not understand; and the light they give

us makes the straight and plain path trod by our fathers dark and dreary."

To show that tribes west of the Mississippi River held the same views, I will quote a few sentences from the reply of an Ioway war chief called Neu-mon-ya (the Walking Rain) to a preacher in London, who was anxious to send missionaries to the Ioway tribe, and who had harangued a party of Ioway chiefs and braves visiting the English metropolis to that effect. The chief, Walking Rain, among a great many other things equally to the point, said: "My friends, you have told us that the Son of the Great Spirit was on earth, and that He was killed by white men, and that the Great Spirit sent Him here to get killed. Now, we cannot understand all this. This may be necessary for white people, but the red men, we think, have not yet got to be so wicked as to require that. If it was necessary that the Son of the Great Spirit should be killed for white people, it may be necessary for them to believe all this; but for us, we cannot understand it.

"My friends, you speak of the Good Book that you have in your hand; we have many of these in our village; we are told that all your words about the Son of the Great Spirit are printed in that book, and if we learn to read it, it will make good people of us. I would now ask why it don't make good people of the pale-faces living all around us? They can all read the Good Book, and they can understand all the black coats say, and still we find they are not so honest and so good a people as ours. This we are sure of. Such is the case in the country about us, but here we have

no doubt but the white people who have so many to preach and so many books to read are all honest and good. In our country the white people have two faces and their tongues branch in different ways. We know that this displeases the Great Spirit, and we do not wish to teach it to our children."

Here the preacher asked the chief if he thought they did all they ought to do to serve the Great Spirit?

Walking Rain said in reply: "My friends, I don't know that we do all that the Great Spirit wishes us to do; there are some Indians, I know, who do not; there are some bad Indians as well as bad white men; I think it is very difficult to tell how much the Great Spirit wishes us to do. We believe the Great Spirit requires us to pray to Him, which we do, and to thank Him for everything we have that is good. We know that He requires us to speak the truth, to feed the poor, and to love our friends. We don't know of anything more that He demands. He may demand more from white people, but we don't know that."

Afterwards these Ioway Indians went to Edinburgh. There two preachers came to talk with them, proposing to send them missionaries to teach and Christianize them. Again Walking Rain replied. He said: "Now, my friends, I will tell you that when we first came over to this country we thought that where you had so many preachers, and so many to read and explain the Good Book, we should find the white people all good and sober people; but, as we travel about, we find that this was all a mistake. When we first came over, we thought that the white man's religion would make all people

good, and we then would have been glad to talk with you, but we cannot say that we like to do it any more."

Being urged to talk, the Chief proceeded as follows: "My friends, I am willing to talk with you if it can do any good to the hundreds and thousands of poor and hungry people that we see in your streets every day when we ride out. We see hundreds of little children with their naked feet in the snow, and we pity them, for we know they are hungry, and we give them money every time we pass by them. In four days we have given twenty dollars to hungry children; we give our money to children only. We are told that the fathers of these children are in the houses where they sell fire-water, and are drunk, and in their words they every moment abuse and insult the Great Spirit. You talk about sending black coats among the Indians; now, we have no such poor children among us; we have no such drunkards, or people who abuse the Great Spirit. Indians dare not do so. They pray to the Great Spirit, and he is kind to them. Now, we think it would be better for your teachers all to stay at home, and go to work right here in your own streets, where all your good work is wanted. This is my advice. I would rather not say any more."

The foregoing will give a fair idea of what the old Indian religion was. Now, in many tribes, they have been brought to embrace, after a fashion, what the whites tell them is the true and a much better kind of religion.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

INDIANS OF THE GREAT LAKES—THE TALISMAN.

Fires were lighted on the beach, after the lanterns had gone out, and food was then cooked for all who wished to eat. About the fires I saw a great number of strange Indians, all of whom were armed to the teeth. Being seated near one of the Sky-Sifters, I asked who they were, for I again feared being carried away.

“These,” said she, “are all my friends. They are warriors from several tribes who live near and beyond the great lakes. They are Chippewas, Ottowas, Sioux, Mandans, Winnebogas, Arapahas, and some others; all braves and many chiefs and medicine men. you once saw some of these same men in canoes on a lake and saw me standing on the shore of the Sacred Isle—the isle of the Manitou. On that island is still seen the big stone wigwam in which lived the gitche Manitou when on this earth—when he formed the Great Lakes and all that is in and about them. The Manitou is not the Great Spirit, but he is very great.”

“Why did all these great braves come here?” I asked.

“They came to conduct me and the true believers, whose hearts have always been with me, to the land of the Manitou. Did I not tell you the night before last that I—that we—were well guarded? We told you that had we sounded our whistle all the Mohawks would have been dead men. It was true, for the rifles of these men were leveled on every Mohawk present.

Fortunately my medicine was strong and all terminated as had been written in the stars, shown by the mirror of the waters, and whispered by the winds."

"Do I go out on the lake with the canoes in the morning?" I asked.

"Yes, child," said she kindly, "you sail till noon in my canoe, then will come the vessel of a white man, and we part. I once had thought to settle you in the country we are now leaving before going to dwell with the still true ones down by the setting sun, but your heart was not in it, and since my brother, the "one who never dies," and whose medicine is as that of the Manitou, has shown me your course, though not all your fortune, for that depends upon the will of the Great Spirit and the intercession of the great ones to whom you have been told to look in time of need."

While we were thus conversing a medicine fire had been lighted and a circle of medicine men formed to petition the Great Spirit for fair breezes in going back to the lake. As greatest of the wise men, the brother of the Sky-Sifters officiated as master of ceremonies. At certain points we all arose and joined this circle for a few moments, and again all joined at its conclusion.

When it was ended the Sky-Sifter produced a small object in which shone all the colors of the rainbow, and from which seemed to dart red, green, and blue fires. It was carved in the form of a turtle. My foster-mother said that in it were contained fire, water, air, and all the elements, and that it was the best gift any mortal could possess; that with it always about me

and a good heart toward my fellow men and the Great Spirit, I would always be fortunate, as it was the greatest talisman to be found in all the land of the Manitou.

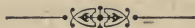
When this image was thus produced the eyes of all present turned wistfully upon it. It was first handed to the Wolf-Man, who took the medicine pipe and blessed it, blowing smoke upward and to the four quarters of the earth. All the others took it and pressed it to their eyes and then to their foreheads. When it had thus gone round, it was returned to the Sky-Sifter, who caused me to open my vest, take out my medicine bag and open it. The little glittering image was then wrapped in some folds of buckskin and deposited with my turtle totem in the medicine bag.

All the strange Indians then, one after another, came forward and gave me a new medicine grip, that of the gitche Manitou, and greeted me as the "keeper of the great turtle talisman."

The Sky-Sifter then told me that the talisman was given her by a son of the Inti (the sun) at a time when she was known to the Peruvians as Mama Ocllo and her brother was called Manco Capac. She further told me that she had been with her brother on the occasion of his visit, in ancient times, to the Issedones, the Arimaspi, the Gryphins, and the Hyperboreans at a time when he was known to men as Aristeas. She also told me that her brother was at Antwerp and Brussels at various times from the thirteenth century to about 1774, where he was known as John Buttadaens; afterwards he went to Venice and there lived under the

name of Signor Gualdi for a time, also was known there under the name of Salathiel ben Sadi. She mentioned so many other names that her brother had borne and so many places in which he had lived in Asia, Africa, and the islands of the South Pacific Ocean, that I at last ventured to ask if he was not sometimes known as the "Wandering Jew."

"No," said she; "that infamous and ever-wretched creature is, in age, a mere infant compared with my brother, the 'one who never dies;' in knowledge he is also an infant, and as a traveler he has been nowhere."



CHAPTER XXIX.

THE CANOE FLEET ON THE LAKE.

This conversation was cut short by a commotion among the people, who pointed toward the east where the red streaks of dawn began to appear. Orders were given to cook a certain amount of provisions to be taken aboard the canoes, and also for the use of all who wished to breakfast before going into the canoes.

After breakfast we prepared to go out upon the lake. Four canoes were firmly lashed together; two side by side, another forward between the ends of these, and the fourth aft with its bow between the sterns of the middle canoes. Spars held all these in position, and, thus united, the four canoes possessed sufficient stability

to permit of a tall mast and a large square sail being hoisted.

All the large canoes were thus arranged, but about a dozen of the smaller ones were taken in tow, though the two medicine canoes dashed forward independently, taking the lead of the fleet. I was taken into one of these with one of the Sky-Sifters, while in the other sailed the Wolf-Man (now in the dress of a head chief), and "the other half" of my companion.

The breeze was such as had been prayed for, and all the omens seen in sky and water were favorable. I found that it was the plan of the Indians to keep within a few miles of shore, landing and camping of nights, except when they had to pass a town or settlement where they did not wish to be seen by the whites.

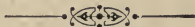
The little medicine canoes danced over the waves like egg shells. Though the sails they carried were not large, they easily kept the lead of the fleet. Once, when a little squall was seen approaching, the Sky-Sifter took a large fish from beneath a mat and suspended it at the bow of the canoe. As the water about the little craft at once became calm, this was to me a great mystery at the time, but now I know that what was put over the bow was merely the skin of a fish filled with oil. When the wind began to die out, and a calm was threatened, the sibyl took up a string and untied a knot.

Toward noon my foster-mother told me she could see the vessel coming which was to take me to Buffalo. Though I could see nothing, I believed what she said. An hour after, the topsails of a vessel appeared at the

edge of the horizon. The hull of the craft presently appeared, as she was on a tack that brought her toward us.

As I had gone through all the parting ceremonies with my Indian friends before leaving the shore, we had now only to sail up to the approaching schooner when she drew near. I was taken aboard as a person who was expected.

At parting my foster-mother manifested no emotion. About her last words to me were to guard my talisman, and to show it should I ever be in trouble with the red men of any western tribe, "for," said she, "your course lies toward the setting sun." On reaching the deck of the little schooner I turned and waved my hat to those passing on the fleet of canoes. In return, they made signs which were equivalent to commending me to the protection of the Great Spirit. As for the Sky-Sifters, and my uncle in the spirit, or by proxy, they made me the sign of the Manitou, in addition to the other.



CHAPTER XXX.

ABOARD A SCHOONER—A MYSTIFIED CAPTAIN.

When I had ceased to strain my eyes in gazing after my Indian friends, with whom my heart went in spite of all late resolves to become a sailor, I saw that I was an object of curiosity to all on board the vessel. I could see that the sailors were dying to get hold of me

and question me in regard to my being found in such strange company.

The Captain—Captain Walker—gazed at me as though I had been the ghost of his father. He asked me to go into the cabin with him. After he had closed and locked the cabin door he threw himself upon a lounge and motioned me to a chair near him.

“Who was that woman?” said he.

“The woman who brought me to the schooner in the canoe?” said I.

“Yes. Who is she?” cried he.

I said: “She is a great medicine woman and, I believe, the daughter of some very powerful chief.”

“Is she human?” cried the Captain. “Can you tell me that?”

At this abrupt question I was a good deal startled and, glancing back to what I had lately seen and heard of my foster-mother, I hesitated.

“Is she human?” cried the Captain almost fiercely. “Is the woman a human being? That is what I want to know,” and the Captain mopped his forehead with a big silk handkerchief.

“I—I believe she is—that is to a certain extent,” stammered I.

“To a certain extent!” cried the Captain, “that is a strange answer.”

“It is the best I can give,” said I. “She is a very wise woman—her medicine is very strong.”

“Strong! I should say so.”

I stared at the man in astonishment for a moment, then said: “I do not understand you, sir.”

Without paying any attention the Captain said: "Do you know that I saw that woman last night?"

I said: "No, sir."

"She was here last night—here in this very cabin. She told me what tack I would be on about noon and told me to stand on that tack till she came to me in her canoe and put her son aboard my schooner. Was that woman your mother? No, you are white. What did she mean? You are not her son?"

Again I was taken aback and stammered: "No—well, yes—that is, to some extent."

"To some extent? Are you crazy? What do you mean by saying you are her son to some extent?"

"Well, sir, I mean," said I, "that I am her foster-son."

"Oh, ah! Her foster-son," said the captain; "that may be. Excuse me, I thought you were making game of me, and this is no joking business. Why, sir, I saw that woman last night—and the like of her I never saw before—saw her as distinctly as I now see you. Saw her three times. The first time here in this cabin when she gave me my sailing directions, so to speak. The other times I saw her when I was on deck. Yes, sir, when I was on deck. I had come up out of the cabin because I did not like to remain there after what had occurred. I was leaning over the weather-side wondering whether I had not, after all, only dreamt of seeing the woman, when she arose out of the water within a yard of me and said: 'Do not forget.' My hair stood on end."

"And again you saw her?" said I.

“Yes, again. Two hours later she looked over the bow at me and said: ‘Remember!’ ”

“And you did remember,” said I.

“Yes; I slept no more. I did nothing else but remember until I had you safe aboard. Why, sir, I would have stood on that tack until I had run five miles up into the country had I not found you before. My first mate thought I had lost my senses, I stood so long on that tack. But I must say that the ghost of your mother—your mother, herself—whichever it was—did not deceive me. I kept looking at my watch, and just before noon I sighted you.”

The Captain asked me a thousand questions about the strange being he had seen, declaring that she was not common flesh and blood. Said he: “I saw her just as distinctly last night as to-day, and to-day, when she spoke, I recognized her voice in a moment.”

Captain Walker said—when I told him my penniless situation: “Don’t speak of it, sir. You are a passenger—a cabin passenger. If you had a bushel of money I wouldn’t touch a cent. I would as soon charge the devil’s grandson. Excuse me, I only mean that after what has happened, you have only to ask for what you want—even the schooner herself, if you promise not to sink her till I get ashore.”

The Captain then made me promise to say nothing of what had passed between us to anyone on board, as he had not told them of the nocturnal visits of my foster-mother. So the men were merely told that some Indians, who were going up the lake from the Canada

side, had brought me out to catch some craft that was sailing down toward Buffalo.

As we sailed down the lake the Captain lost no opportunity of getting me into the cabin with him for a talk. He was shrewd enough to see, whatever I told him, that there was always yet a great deal back of what I communicated. Then, as I had never once thought of what I ought to speak of, and what keep to myself, I was constantly saying things that added oil to the fire of his curiosity. Thus, when he asked me the name of my foster-mother, I at once said: "Ga-on-ye-was, she that sifts the skies."

"Then she must understand astrology. Does she study the stars?"

"O, yes, they both do, almost every night."

"What do you mean by both?"

"Why, there are two of her," said I. "I forgot to say that there are two that are the same." Then I was obliged to go into a long, and not very satisfactory, explanation. Thus it went on, and by the time we arrived at Buffalo, Captain Walker had heard so much of the "one who never dies," and of the two sisters with but a single soul, that he did not want me to leave his vessel. I had sense enough to keep back my initiation into the order of "mystery-men," and most of the strange scenes I had witnessed, yet I had told him enough to cause him to believe that could he keep me with him, good fortune would always attend both himself and the "Nancy," his little schooner.

CHAPTER XXXI.

I PLAY MEDICINE MAN AND RAISE A WIND.

A circumstance that occurred on the down trip probably also had great influence with the Captain in my favor. There fell a calm that looked very discouraging. The old hands aboard the vessel, men who had been many years on the lake, predicted that the calm would continue until about daylight the next morning, and it was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. Captain Walker agreed with the old "tar," who thus spoke his mind and that of his mates. The men did not even think it worth while to try to "whistle up a breeze;" they declared that the sky and all else was against a breeze coming before the next morning. Observing that the Captain seemed much vexed at the delay that threatened, I went to his side when he was alone, and told him that if he would let me have the cabin to myself for a time, I would try to bring him a breeze, as I had knowledge of things that might, for all I knew, be useful in such an emergency.

Captain Walker had not sailed the lakes for years with old shell-backs from every sea without absorbing many of their notions and superstitions. "Good, my lad," cried he, his face brightening; "take possession of the cabin, lock yourself in, and remain as long as you wish. If you bring me a breeze you shall dance a jig with the prettiest girl in Buffalo when we make port."

I simply said: "I'll try, sir."

The Captain handed me the key of the cabin, and

entering it I locked the door behind me. I knew of no special charm for bringing up a breeze. What I intended doing was merely to produce and set up my medicine bag, totems, and talismans, then ask the aid of the Great Spirit through the demi-gods and heroes whose totems were inscribed on my medicine wand. I would then tie several knots in a buckskin string and trust to the spirits of the air for a wind.

On taking off my coat and vest, the better to come at the medicine bag and other things of the kind secreted about my person, to my great surprise a knotted buckskin string, such as I had intended making, fell at my feet. It seemed to drop from the ceiling. On looking at it I concluded it must be the same that I had seen in the canoe of the Sky-Sifter, but how it came into my possession I could not imagine, unless my foster-mother had foreseen this very use for it and had adroitly slipped it inside of my vest. With this magic string in my hands I felt as powerful as the Sky-Sifter herself, or even as strong as my uncle, the "one who never dies."

However, I concluded that I must myself do something to deepen the mystery and add to my importance. Among the little traps given me at various times was a small, round mirror, paints for the face, and several small stencils made of fawn-skin parchment. With these I painted on my forehead the image of a black wolf, and upon each cheek my special totem, the turtle, in vermilion.

Thus decorated, I secured my mystic apparatus beneath my clothing, and, assuming a grave air, returned

to the deck, determined to be as bold and 'positive as though I held all the winds of the heavens in the hollow of my hand.

The men were at first astonished at my appearance, for, in addition to my paint, I had slipped upon my head a light buckskin fillet that contained a number of tall eagle feathers. Next, the "old salts" began grinning, and seemed to be preparing to give me a taste of their wit, but the Captain gave them a frown and cried: "Avast that! The lad has promised to give us a wind. He knows a few things that will beat all the whistling you ever did in all your lives."

I looked as serious as though going to the funeral of my grandfather.

"He has been among the Indians and learned the secrets of their big medicine men," continued the Captain, "and, in fact, is a young medicine man himself. We do not want to be here all day and all night. Give the lad a chance."

At this the old tars, who had been holding their huge paws before their faces to conceal their grins, sobered down. But they—true to their nature—would not give up without making manifest, in some way, their own particular notions in regard to the matter; therefore, they, as a parting shot, scanned the sky and the water, and shook their heads in a way not to be misunderstood.

But their curiosity was aroused, and they were sufficiently tinged with superstition to wish to learn whatever new charm there might be for conjuring up a breeze.

"Well, lad, what about the breeze we want," said Captain Walker.

"You shall have it at once, Captain," said I, "and shall choose it for yourself. Face the quarter from which you wish it to come."

The Captain faced the northwest.

"Now," said I, handing him the magic string, "think what kind of a breeze you want, and, when I give you the word, untie one of the knots in that string."

At this an old tar grunted and clapped his hand over his mouth to hide a grin. I at once called him out from among his mates. Said I: "You, sir, will oblige me by slowly counting three."

The old fellow looked sheepish, but came forward when the Captain beckoned him to do so. "Now count," said I.

"One," said the old fellow.

"Unj!" cried I, in a voice so loud and fierce as to cause the old salt to start and change color.

"Count!" cried I, seeing that he hesitated.

"Two," faltered he.

"Nekty!" shouted I.

"Three," mumbled he.

"Nu-suh!" roared I. "Captain, untie the knot."

The Captain untied one of the knots.

"That is all," said I.

"And that will bring a breeze?" asked the Captain, returning the string, which still contained many knots.

"Just the kind of breeze you wished for," said I, as bold as old Æolus. "Look!" and I pointed to the

northwest, where a great black ripple was seen on the water.

“Blast my eyes!” cried an old salt, “’ere she comes!”

The old fellow who had counted in English while I counted in Tuscarora, turned white as a sheet. Evidently he felt that he was himself developing fearful supernatural powers.

Captain Walker looked little less concerned ; nevertheless, he at once gave the orders necessary to taking full advantage of the breeze, which was one so lively that it made the little schooner dance.

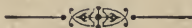
The breeze held as fine and fair as we could wish till we were snug in port at Buffalo, when it went out as suddenly as a puff of breath that blows out a candle. This was instantly observed by all the sailors, as the calm left vessels standing stock-still in all directions and positions. I could see not a few queer glances directed toward me, as the men collected in knots. They began to think the Indian woman had brought the devil aboard the schooner. I could see that the old fellow who had counted for me was looking wise, and, by the cock of his head, he showed that already he was taking to himself no little credit for what had happened. That evening, before leaving the vessel to go up into the city, he took me aside : “I’ve got,” said he, “six months’ pay laid by, and it’s all yours, lad, if you’ll show me how to tie them knots and larn me them awful words what you said.”

I asked him if he thought he had an immortal soul.

He said he believed he had. "Then," cried I fiercely, "keep it!"

I afterward found out that he told some of the men he could "bring up a breeze as well as the best of 'em," if he "was a mind to sell his soul to the devil."

Captain Walker—probably in view of his vision of the Sky-Sifter—did not in the least doubt the magic power of the string. He asked me not to part with it without first consulting him, and insisted on my making my home aboard his schooner until I could find the house of my mother's old friend, whose name I remembered. I remained only one night with the Captain, for the next day after our arrival in Buffalo I found the house of my mother's old friend, though since my first visit she had changed her place of residence, a great rise of property having tempted her to sell and buy a new place in the eastern suburbs, where I found her very comfortably situated.



CHAPTER XXXII.

I "ADOPT" A RICH AUNT AND PRINCELY AIRS.

I was well received by the friend (and distant relative) of my mother. She was now old and gray-haired. She was a widow at the time of my first visit and had not married again. Her new place contained several acres and was becoming so valuable that she was contemplating another removal to the extreme front of the

suburbs. I found that she was the wealthy woman of the neighborhood. She had her gardener and several servants, male and female.

Mrs. Bardsley—so was this widow called—remembered my visit with my mother and was good enough to say that she looked upon me as a relative. I found that she was almost alone in the world as regarded kinfolk. She said she believed there were still alive in England persons of her blood, but for many years she had heard nothing of any of them. I was given a snug room in her house and treated like a young lord. She was greatly interested in my adventures, some of which I related to her, being careful not to say much of the supernatural powers of my Indian friends at first, but she wormed more and more of this out of me as our acquaintance grew and our friendship increased. Even on the second day, when I told her that I wished to pay a visit to my friend Captain Walker before he sailed up the lake, she seemed unwilling to see me leave the house. She exacted from me a promise that I would not go up the lake with the Captain, however strongly he might insist upon my making a trip. "In time," said she, "if you still wish to sail the lakes, you may have a schooner of your own—who knows?" concluded she, with a smile that seemed to say that when the time came there would be a schooner ready for me.

Captain Walker was very glad to see me. He said he had found out Mrs. Bardsley's place of residence, and had I not put in an appearance he would have been out after me. He then asked how I had been

received. "Like a prince," said I. "I hear that she is awful rich," said the Captain.

"I believe she is," said I.

"Anyway related to you?" asked the Captain.

"Well, yes, sir," said I, with a sort of careless smile; "I suppose I ought to call her aunt, but up on Grand River, Canada, where I have lived all my life, no soul except my mother is related to me, and not being used to relations I am apt to forget about the handles that go with their names, such as aunt, uncle, cousin, and so on."

"Your Aunt Bardsley is awful rich," repeated the Captain. "I had intended to offer you good terms—big terms—to go with me on the "Nancy," for I like you. However, I will not advise you against your bread and butter, my lad—stick to your aunt, young fellow—stick to her, lad," and the kind-hearted Captain gave me a hearty slap on the shoulder.

I soon discovered that a thing very near the good Captain's heart was the "magic string." He began to talk about calms and baffling winds on the lake, how delays devoured profits, and the like. I saw the drift of this and said: "Captain, you have been like a brother to me; you shall take with you what will cause your "Nancy" to beat every craft on the lake."

Captain Walker grasped my hand. "Bless you, lad," cried he, "let me take it. You will not need it—you must raise no breezes in the house of your rich aunt, you know."

I then took the Captain into the cabin, where I gave him instructions in regard to the use of the magic

string. I told him that the string being now made there was no use for either paint or feathers, but the magic words I had used were all-important. I wrote them down and taught him their proper pronunciation. I told him he must make the same old tar who had counted for me count for him, leaving it to his first mate to untie the knot. The drill being over, I shouldered my rifle, which I had left on the schooner, and took my departure.

Mrs. Bardsley was glad to see me come back. She was also glad to see my rifle. She said it was good to know that there was a gun in the house, and some one who knew how to use it. This gave me an idea of great iron-hooped chests of gold somewhere about the house, and I ventured to call the old lady aunt Alice. She was leaving the room at the moment. Quickly turning, she gazed at me as though astonished; then her face lighted up; and, coming back to me, she said: "My child, let it be so. Ever hereafter call me aunt Alice," and the good old lady kissed me on the forehead and left the room.

"Ah, my totem, my talisman!" cried I, when she was gone. "Not three days in Buffalo, and already I have found, and am under the wing of, a rich aunt. My medicine is strong!" This caused me to remember that I had been neglectful of my religious duties for a time; I then had no other religion than that in regard to which the reader has been informed—I was a worshiper of the Great Spirit.

My room was on the second floor of my aunt's elegant mansion. It was large, and handsomely furnished.

The room was in the northwest corner of the house. One window gave me a view of the rising, and two a view of the setting, sun. That this was so gave me much greater pleasure than I found in all the fine furniture. There were religious reasons why I should thus be able to see both the rising and the setting of the sun.

Throwing open the windows on the west, I saw that the sun, in an Indian-summer haze, was nearing the horizon. I locked and bolted my door, then, producing my medicine bag, totem, talisman, and the other things used in my worship, I arranged them, and, telling over the totems inscribed on my medicine wand, recited to and through the Good Ancients' prayers for the continued favor and protection of the Great Spirit.

I had never much more than glanced at the rainbow-hued turtle totem which was the parting gift of the Sky-Sifter. At the conclusion of my devotions, when I was about putting it away, it gleamed so gloriously in the light of the setting sun that I paused and examined it more carefully. I had never before seen anything like it, except where the sunlight had fallen upon clear ice that had been shivered by a heavy blow. In such material was carved the turtle, rising from an oval of the same. I now observed, for the first time, that a rim of metal, apparently pure gold, surrounded the oval. Turning it over, I discovered that the back was an oval mirror of the most perfect depth and clearness, though it seemed to be made of some kind of metal—certainly was not glass.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

I DISCOVER THE MAGIC OF THE TALISMAN.

I was delighted. "Oh, my good and kind foster-mother—Oh, Ga-on-ye-was, what a gift!" cried I. "Oh, my good Ga-on-ye-was, Sifter of the Skies, where are you now?" and tears coursed down my cheeks.

I was holding the mirror before me and gazing into its wonderful depth. The instant I spoke I saw the summit of a mound circled about with skulls, both human and buffalo, and in the centre of the mound stood the Sky-Sifter, tall and grand, in the light of the setting sun.

"Buttē de Mort—the Hill of Death!" cried I. The Sky-Sifter was facing the setting sun; a medicine fire burned at her feet, and in her hand she held and waved her medicine wand, now toward the setting orb that seemed a globe of red fire, and again, aloft, toward the heavens.

"Where is the other?" thought I. At once I saw on the top of a high hill, near a clump of bushes, the same figure in the same attitude of prayer. "Nid du Tonnerre—The Thunder's Nest!" said I. My heart was filled with great happiness. I thanked the Great Spirit that all was well with them.

I then thought of the "one who never dies"—the Wolf-Man—and, at once, I saw him surrounded by a circle of Indians seated in a medicine lodge. He was standing near a fire, in the centre of the lodge, conducting the mysteries.

I next thought of my mother. Before me stood the cabin in which I was born, and, as I looked, my mother came to the door, placed a hand above her eyes, and gazed toward the sun, but half of whose ruddy face was now visible. Then she turned and looked down the highroad, and it seemed to me I could hear her sigh—"Ah, me, where is my boy?"

"Mother!" cried I. She started, looked behind her, and then went and peered around the corners of the cabin. I could see no more for the time being, as tears dimmed my eyes.

Burnishing the face of the mirror, as though that had been in fault, I looked again, but it happened that Mrs. Bardsley—the woman I, without good reason, had called my aunt—came into my thoughts. Instantly I saw her in a room in the lower part of the house. She was standing before a little red dress and some other articles of a child's clothing which she had spread out on a bed before her. Near her stood the tall, misty figure of a young girl, dressed in flowing robes of white material. This figure came and went in a pulsing way, being at times very distinct, and again, seeming to almost fade away. "It is the face of the little girl I saw when I was here with my mother," said I.

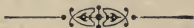
I thought of Captain Walker, and at once I saw him. He was not on board the "Nancy," but was seated in a room in a cottage where children were playing about, and, in the dim light of a single candle, held up and closely scrutinized a bit of string in which were tied several knots. I laughed, and said: "A good breeze in every knot, Captain!" So he seemed to

think, for he smiled as he folded up the "magic string," and carefully placed it in a large pocket-book.

How long I would have continued to gaze into the magic mirror I know not, had not a servant knocked at my door to call me to dinner. Seated in the fine dining-room in my rough backwoods dress, I felt much out of place, but my new-found aunt, or, rather, the old lady I had adopted as aunt, seemed not to notice the coarseness of my clothing. She appeared to be only interested in my history, and, as with Captain Walker, in seeking to avoid giving direct answers to her questions, I stumbled into things that greatly excited her curiosity. In this way she found out something of the life of my foster-mother, and of her departure to the country about, and beyond, the Great Lakes, though I merely said she went away because of the persecutions of bad men who thought her "medicine too strong." Here, again, I found I had said too much, for the good old lady at once began probing me as to the nature of what I called "medicine." I said it was mostly worship of the Great Spirit. Then she asked how that could harm any one. In effect, I told her that there were persons who thought she was too much favored by the Great Spirit, also by various supernatural beings and powers, and had too much knowledge of all that was passing in the world, and even among themselves, therefore, they were not only jealous of her, but also feared and hated her.

"And what do you think of her and her medicine?" she asked.

“She is good,” said I, “and all she does is good,” and so it went on, all the evening.



CHAPTER XXXIV.

FINE FEATHERS MAKE FINE BIRDS.

The next day a tailor called and took my measure, and soon I was the best and most fashionably dressed young man in Buffalo. I had a fine gold watch and chain, and then I was taken out in the carriage, a pompous-looking coachman driving. We went to many fine stores, at all of which I was introduced as Mrs. Bardsley's nephew. She told me I must everywhere, and on all occasions, address her as aunt Alice, and aunt Alice it was thenceforward.

I was drilled and brushed up in society manners, and presently we began calling at the houses of many rich families. It soon came to my ears that I was looked upon by all who knew me as the favorite nephew and heir of the rich old widow. I said nothing to the contrary, for I really did not know the degree of relationship that existed between my mother and Mrs. Bardsley; it might be much closer than I had ever suspected, and the prompt and warm welcome I had received set me to wondering, even caused me to surmise that after all they might be sisters, or half-sisters, at least.

It was from the servants about the house, both men and maids, that I first found out that I was the “favor-

ite nephew and heir." I soon saw signs of it in the attentions I received at the business houses we visited, and also noted, with some satisfaction, that not a few young ladies were "making eyes" at, and "setting their caps" for me. I was floating on the top of the wave. The old lady seemed unwilling to allow me out of her sight, even for an hour or two. It was with difficulty that I obtained permission to go out to see Captain Walker when he returned to the port; indeed, he had made two or three trips up the lake and back before I was allowed to visit him. Aunt Alice said there was time enough to think of going on to the lake, and finally, that she had in mind for me better things than the lake or any vessel. In short, I must give up all thought of the life of a sailor. I was to listen to nothing Captain Walker might say looking to life on the lake. After giving my solemn promise, I was permitted to visit the Captain, I having informed the old lady that he had just arrived in port. How did I know he had just arrived?

This question almost caught me. Well, I suspected he had arrived—it was time for him; I would go and see. The old lady eyed me sharply, but I got away.

Captain Walker did not at first recognize me in my fine and fashionable apparel. He said: "Good morning, sir," in a very deferential tone of voice.

"How about the winds, Captain Walker?" said I. "Did the magic string bring you fair breezes?"

"Why, my lad! What! Oh, your aunt! It is fine to have a rich and loving aunt, my boy. Little did I think when I took you aboard that I was bringing to

Buffalo the heir of the richest woman in the city. I—" "But the winds, Captain?" cried I, interrupting him. "Did not the 'Nancy' always have fair breezes in her sails?"

"Ah, lad, you have made my fortune!" cried the Captain. "Sit down"—we were in the cabin—"sit down, till I tell you all about the trips I have made since I last saw you." The Captain then told me that the "Nancy" had beaten every craft on the lake. In everything he had been fortunate. "I have only to make a wish and untie a knot," said he, "and along comes my breeze. The men say it was the devil that came aboard and gave me the string. They are sure that I have sold my soul to the devil. One of my men says he could have had the charm on the same terms, but he refused the tempter with scorn. That is the old fellow who does the counting. He and the others have held several pow-wows in regard to the matter, but have concluded not to quit the 'Nancy,' for the reason, I hear, that 'the devil always takes care of his own.' Now, no vessel is so safe for them as the 'Nancy.'"

The Captain showed me that only three knots were left in the magic string, and requested a fresh supply. I told him that all the old ones must first be used, and that a new set could only be made with great ceremony, and with the aid of certain potent charms and talismans that I did not always carry about me. He seemed much disappointed. I told him to make another trip, only using the remaining knots in case of great need, and when he again came into port I would renew the

knots. He assented to this, but looked so dissatisfied that I found it unpleasant to prolong my visit. I could see that he was beginning to count his gains, and that thoughts of monopolizing the best trade of the lake had already taken root in his heart.

When I went on deck some of the men were lounging about, and among them the old salt who imagined that the Captain had sold his soul to me. He rubbed his eyes with the knuckles of both his fists, and stared at me with goggling eyes. A sudden change that came over his countenance—the blanching cheek and dropping jaw—told me that the man had penetrated my disguise of fine clothes. “Blarst my h’eyes !” he blurted to a shipmate, “that’s ’im.”

In his excitement he had spoken louder than he intended. Quickly turning, I said to the man : “ Did you speak ? ” “ N—no,” stammered he, “ that is, sir, only to my mate.” As I turned and walked away all eyes on the deck followed me to the wharf, and no doubt until I had passed out of sight. They thought that the devil, in innocent and gentlemanly guise, had been aboard to look after the Captain’s soul.



CHAPTER XXXV.

MY TALISMAN BRINGS ME TROUBLE.

My adopted aunt was glad to learn that Captain Walker had said nothing to me about going upon the lake. She was still curious about my Indian foster-mother, and about the "wise men," as she called them, of whom I had told her something. At last she one day, after much hesitation, broached a subject that had doubtless all along been uppermost in her thoughts. She asked me if I remembered seeing in her house a little girl in red, when I visited her as a child with my mother. I told her I remembered seeing the child. She next asked if I had seen her since my return. I thoughtlessly answered, "Yes; but she does not look the same. She is now tall, and is dressed in white." At once she was on her feet. "Where can I see her? How can I see her?" she cried.

I said nothing. The woman looked so wild that I began to be frightened.

"Will you let me see her?" she cried. Taking the totem from my breast, I held the mirror before her eyes, and said, "Look!"

She gazed a moment, turned pale, and uttering a loud cry fell to the floor.

I ran out and called her maid, the cook, and all about the house to her assistance, when I betook myself to my room, where I groaned and gnashed my teeth at my folly in having allowed the old lady to see and look into the mirror.

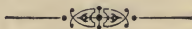
In about an hour a servant rapped at my door and

told me that my "aunt" wished to see me. The moment I entered the old lady's sitting-room, she cried : "Oh, my child ! my child ! Let me see my child again."

I was obliged to produce the mirror. She took it—almost snatched it—from my hands, and retired to a seat in a corner of the room. What she saw I do not know, for she gazed steadfastly on it in silence.

After waiting about an hour, seeing that my adopted aunt still remained absorbed, motionless and silent, I advanced to her side, and saying I must go to my room, asked her to return me my mirror. To my surprise, she cried : "It is not for you. It is my child—it is for me. Mine—mine !" and she tried to hide it in her bosom. I told her that it was the last gift of my foster-mother, and I would not and dare not part with it. She offered me immense sums for it ; finally said she would give all she possessed in the world for it ; that she must and would have it. I told her that the whole world would not buy it. As she again tried to thrust it into her bosom, I was obliged to forcibly take it out of her hands, whereupon she set up such a shrieking about her child, that she was being "robbed of her child," and I know not what all besides, that the whole household came rushing to the room, and in the confusion I escaped to my own apartment. I was in a terrible fright, as I feared I had driven the old lady into a fit of insanity, from which she would never recover. The room seemed to almost suffocate me ; my brain was in such a whirl that I could not bring my mind to bear on the situation in which I found myself so sud-

denly placed. I must get out into the open air. As I was gliding out of the house, I unexpectedly encountered two or three of its female inmates on the stairs and in the halls. All were moving about on tip-toes, all gave me sour looks, and I heard muttered behind my back uncomplimentary remarks, coupled with such words as "impostor," "wizard," and "devil."



CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE DEVIL ABROAD IN BUFFALO.

I had thrown about my shoulders a long black hooded cloak that I found hanging in the room I occupied, foolishly thinking that in it I might pass out without being recognized. But it seemed that all knew the old cloak. It was probably one that had belonged to the departed Mr. Bardsley. In the grounds I ran upon the gardener who gave me a very black look. He seemed out of breath, and had probably been out in search of a doctor.

I determined to leave the grounds, where I had intended walking, and go forth into the bustle of the streets. I had on my head a small, light cap of black cloth. Stepping beneath a tree, where I would not be perceived, for it was growing quite dark, I turned the visor of my cap behind, and drew over my head the hood of the great cloak. I then fastened it, from the

throat to the waist, with its huge old-fashioned clasps, and sallied forth.

My mind was too busy with what had occurred in the house to once think of the strange appearance I presented on the street; besides, I did not then know how outlandishly ancient the garment really was in which I had desperately arrayed myself. I took no thought of the direction I was traveling, therefore, it must have been pure instinct that turned my steps to the water-front. At all events, it was not until I found myself stepping aboard the "Nancy"—she happening to be in port—that the confused whirl of events at the house of my "aunt" left my head.

Before me stood staring the old sailor who had refused me his soul. "Hello, tarry!" cried I, "how have the winds been?"

"Avast!" snorted the old fellow, and, making a dash, he dived into the forecastle.

At first I was astonished at the actions of the man, but when I bethought myself of the rig I was in I was amused, and burst into a regular horse laugh. The laugh so shook me up that it did much toward restoring my wandering wits. Feeling that I did not, just at that time, care to see Captain Walker, whom I had somewhat neglected, I turned on my heel and left the place.

Being now sufficiently aroused to note what was passing, I observed that I was attracting much more attention than was agreeable. Every person I met stared at me, and several stopped and followed me with their eyes. To escape this curious scrutiny, I at last left the

sidewalk of the thronged street along which I was moving, and entered the first open door that presented itself. This happened to be the door of a small jewelry store, in which were two men. One of these—a man apparently about fifty years of age—was writing at a desk in the back part of the store; the other, a much younger man, stood behind the counter bowing and looking at me inquiringly. His face said: “Well, sir, I am ready to take your order.”

I had no order to give, and thought of turning and passing out with the excuse that I had entered the wrong shop, but, glancing behind me, I saw several faces peering curiously in at the open door. Again I turned toward the man behind the counter. As I did not speak the man said: “Well, sir, can I sell you something this evening?”

I had no money, therefore never once thought of asking to look at some article, finding fault with the price, and then leaving the store at my leisure. On the contrary, my talisman came into my mind, and, sliding my hand into my breast, I drew it forth. Satan, or one of his imps, must have prompted the action. Handing the flashing totem to the young man, I asked him what it was worth.

The man's eyes sparkled and expanded at his first glance. As he turned it this way and that, in the gaslight, I could see his astonishment and excitement growing. His hands shook, and he seemed trembling in every joint. At last he gasped: “My dear sir, it is priceless. It is the finest and largest opal I have ever seen or heard of. But that I see it, I could not

have believed that such a gem existed anywhere in the world. Then the workmanship is peculiar; the carving of the turtle is wonderful !”

Then he turned it over to look at the back. Fool that I was, I had never thought of his doing that.

He gazed a moment, his face paling and his eyes goggling. “My God ! My God !” cried he, and dropping the talisman upon the top of the show-case, he fell heavily to the floor.

As I clutched the talisman and thrust it into a pocket beneath my cloak, I saw the old man in the back part of the store leave his desk and run forward. Glancing toward the door, I saw by the composure of the gaping faces there that not one among them had observed what had occurred. I passed out through the very middle of the crowd and, as they turned to look after me, I said sternly: “Go inside and see what has happened !”

Instinctively they obeyed me and, gliding swiftly along, I soon had the good fortune to arrive at a dark alley. Darting into the darkest spot I could see, I stripped off my cloak and, folding it, took it across my left arm, turned my cap, and boldly walked back into the street I had just left, presenting the appearance of a young gentleman who had just arrived in the city on some vessel.

As I stood in the street for a moment, considering in what direction to turn, two or three men rushed out of the jewelry store shouting—“Police ! Police !”

“Ah,” said I, “I effected my transformation none too soon.”

Seeing a crowd collected at the door of the jewelry store, I asked if any one had been killed.

“Dunno, sir; a feller inside has been callin’ for the perlice. Two perlicemen inside now, sir.”

Going closer to the door I heard a man inside crying: “Take me—take me to the jail. My time has come! I killed her—I killed the woman whose body was found in the lake! I will confess all! Take me to the judge—take me to a priest. Yes, a priest—a priest! The devil has been after me!”

I could see that the man who was thus accusing himself was the one to whom I had shown my talisman, for he was now in front of the counter with the policemen.

“Do I understand you to say, sir, that you murdered the woman whose body was found in the edge of the lake last week?” asked one of the policemen.

“Yes, sir—yes, I killed her. I’ll tell all about it now. But, for the love of God, get me a priest!”

The old man who had been writing at the desk cried: “It is not so. My son does not know what he is saying. Some rascal disguised as a monk came in here a few minutes ago and frightened him out of his wits. Showed him some awful thing that caused him to faint and fall to the floor.”

“Yes, it was an awful thing! O, Father, it was Satan who was here, and while pretending to show me an opal, such as has never been seen on earth, he showed me a picture of myself doing the murder. I must save my soul—I must confess—I must have a priest!”

By this time I was in the midst of a surging crowd, out of which I pushed and stood at a distance until I saw the self-confessed murderer brought forth and led away. I was still standing gazing in a dazed way after the crowd that was following at the heels of the policemen and their prisoner, when the old man I had seen in the jewelry shop rushed out into the streets, crying : "Find that man ! Find that magician ! Find the hellish sorcerer that crazed my son !"

No one paid the least attention to the old man's ravings, a thing I was glad to note, as I glided away from the spot in which I had raised such a great commotion. As soon as I could get my bearings I steered straight for the residence of the aunt I had adopted. That was not at present a very comfortable place, but I said to myself : "Any port in a storm !"

As it was growing late, I feared I might be shut out of my harbor, but I found lights burning in the house and persons astir. I hoped to slip up to my room unobserved, but I was seen by the maid, who shook her head at me, and said : "You've made awful times here, sir. You've about killed your aunt."

"Do not blame me," said I, "I am almost insane myself. She would see a thing I did not want to show her."

"It's very fine to say that !" cried the girl, as she flung herself away.

Although glad to find myself housed, I was yet very miserable as I sat alone in my great and fine room. I heartily wished myself camped in the centre of some big forest back in Canada. What it would be best

for me to do I did not know. I could not bring my mind to bear upon the situation. I dreaded remaining in the house and I feared going out into the streets. I wanted to pray to the Great Spirit to assist me, but I was in constant fear of some one coming to my door.

I sat up listening, and toward midnight, when the house grew quiet, I made my preparations and performed my usual devotions. Most earnestly did I pray for guidance and protection, and most heartily did I confess my fault in having for a moment thought of Mrs. Bardsley's iron-bound boxes and in the other little trickeries of which I felt myself guilty. Having thus far eased my conscience, I carefully put away what I looked upon as the sacred symbols of my religion and began to think of my bed. But I felt that sleep would not come to my relief. "Oh, that I could see the Sky-Sifter!" cried I. "Oh, that I could see my good, wise foster-mother!"

"Then see her!" said a voice, and the Sky-Sifter stood before me. "Oron-ya-deka, is this the life for you?" said she.

"Are you indeed Ga-on-ye-was," said I, "or do I see before me an image sent by the Evil Spirit? You are but one and Ga-on-ye-was was two."

"Then see us both," and the two stood before me. "Leave here," said the pair as with one voice—"Go out upon the lake, or return to the forests, but leave this house and this city."

I was about to say that I would sail up the lakes and seek them, when the forms vanished. I rubbed my eyes and stared about the room, but it was empty. Had I

fallen into a doze, even while thinking it would be impossible for me to sleep, I could not tell. I drew forth my talisman, and, in my mirror, saw the sisters at a medicine fire on an island, or what appeared to be such. Many Indians were present, all of whom were in medicine dress. It seemed, from what I saw, that some new mystery was being taught the assembled wise men by the sisters. I heartily wished myself by that mystic fire.

However, whether or not the Sky-Sifters had visited me, I felt that the advice I had received was good—I was comforted, and, going to bed, slept soundly till the red of dawn streaked the east.

I awoke refreshed, and strong in my resolution to leave the city. I felt that I had already done too much mischief, and feared doing still more should I remain. What my present standing was in the house of Mrs. Bardsley I did not know, but I feared trouble in some shape. Was the old lady already insane? I feared the worst. I had long been astir, and the sun was high, yet I had not ventured to leave the room.

At last there came a knock at my door. When I opened it the maid handed me some newspapers, saying: "There is something for you to read."

She looked rather mischievous than cross, so I ventured to ask: "How is my aunt?"

"Your aunt—your *dear aunt*—is over her hysterics," said she, and she waltzed away.

"Not so bad, after all," thought I. I then seated myself to look at the papers. I found in each an article with startling headings, so marked with ink as to at

once attract my attention. The headings, as I remember them, were about as follows: "A Murderer Confesses on Being Visited by His Satanic Majesty;" "A Mystery Solved;" "Murder Will Out;" "The Devil in Buffalo."

On reading the articles, I found that my man had really confessed to a murder which had, for nearly a month, been looked upon as a mysterious affair. At first it was only "a mysterious disappearance" that had quite baffled the police; then, when the body of the missing young woman was found, and the crushed skull showed that a brutal murder had been committed, the whole city was stirred with excitement. My visit to the store was described much as already related, except that I was given a most fiendish expression; my countenance was fearful to behold. Some of the men that I passed on leaving the little shop asserted that my "eyeballs glowed like living coals;" others saw horns under my hood, and the tip of a tail hanging down beneath my cloak. The murderer himself asserted positively that the personage who visited him was the devil. Many also had seen the "awful cloaked figure" on the streets, and he had even visited and attempted to board the schooner "Nancy," "but was prevented by a pious old sailor, who told him, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to 'Avast!'"



CHAPTER XXXVII.

MY AUNT DESIRES ME TO SET UP AS THE GREAT AVENGER.

I was preparing to leave the house with the intention of going down to the water-front, to where the "Nancy" lay, quite determined to ship with Captain Walker, when the saucy little waiting-maid rapped at my door and informed me that my aunt wished to see me. I by no means desired to see her. I heartily wished that I had succeeded in getting out of the house before being summoned to the presence of my "dear aunt."

"What can't be cured must be endured," said I, and screwing up my courage for the fray, I marched into the presence of my venerable relative by adoption.

To my utter amazement, she arose and advanced to meet me with a joyful look. She gave me a motherly kiss on both cheeks and made me take a seat beside her. Patting me fondly on the shoulder, she declared that I was sent to her by the Great Spirit and that my work was good. She said I had brought a brutal ravisher and murderer to confess his awful crime, and she was proud of me. I had shown her the image of her child and given her the assurance of a hereafter and a heaven, with much more to the same effect.

She said that having been informed of the disguise in which I left her house, the moment she read in the papers what had occurred the night before, she knew that I was the person who had brought the murderer to confess his crime, but she did not wish the officers

of the law or the people at large to know who the "devil" really was; that was a secret that must not go outside of the walls of her house. She then informed me that she had had before her the gardener, all her household, and all had been charged, as they valued their places, to keep my secret. She took it for granted that through my magic art I had found out who it was that murdered the young lady, and threw her body over the bluff into the lake, and that I had purposely gone forth disguised in order to bring him to confess. She hinted to me of several others that she wished me to visit in the same Satanic guise. "My child," said she, "we will be a power in this city—yes, a power in the land! Within the humble walls of this little house shall dwell a power, which, issuing forth from time to time, shall cause even the proudest in the land to tremble!" and she brought her clenched hand down on a work-table before her with such a thwack as caused all the scissors and thimbles to jingle.

I was about to protest that I did not feel that it was my mission to go into such a work, but, full of her plans, she interrupted me, and began to shake her head, stamp her feet, and rattle away in an excited manner and an angry tone, more to herself than to me: "Ah, the jade—the hussy! Ah, the wretch, to talk of me! Now we shall see why it was her husband died so suddenly. She shall now see a thing that will make her soul shudder and her eyeballs start from their sockets!"

When she had calmed down a little, she turned to me and said she had just been thinking of a certain

frisky widow in the neighborhood of whom she would have more to say to me anon.

Could I have had my wish that widow would have been found dead in her bed the next morning. I did not at all relish the role of general avenger, which I saw was about to be thrust upon me. That I was to be a devil was bad enough, but to be a devil with a woman for a master, would be to give the world a devil, in comparison with whom the original Satan would be an angel of light.

I was ruminating upon this when my aunt, who seemed to be studying my countenance, said: "I wish you to feel at ease about your mother, and am going to give her a pension of twenty-five dollars a month. I will so arrange that twenty-five dollars will be sent to her every month as long as she lives."

Instantly I was conquered. I thanked her from the bottom of my heart, and felt that I would be willing, in consideration of her generosity, to play the devil in a mild way.

Presently, after discoursing at length upon the things she had wormed out of me in regard to the sacred rites and mysteries of the medicine men, and after a good deal of beating about the bush, she asked to be initiated into such mysteries. She said she wished to adopt my religion, and worship the Almighty as the Great Spirit, after the fashion of the red men. In her talk I discovered that she knew that I was practicing a peculiar kind of worship in her house.

I was curious to hear how this had come to her knowledge. After some hesitation, she informed me

that Julia, her maid, had told her. How did Julia know? Well, "the silly thing" had peeped through the key-hole of my door. I intimated that Julia might be a liar. She had at first thought so herself, and in order to arrive at the truth, one way or the other, she had also made use of the key-hole. So I owned up and said it was the only method of worship I knew.



CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A GREAT MEDICINE LODGE IN THE CITY OF BUFFALO.

Patting my head, she said: "My dear child, do not be ashamed of it, for it is the best in the world. You must teach me your medicine mysteries and your religion. I am not too old to learn. This house shall be a medicine lodge!"

She got along so fast that I could hardly keep up with her in thought. "But," said I, "there are many things to be done of which I have never spoken to you—of which you know nothing."

All was of no use; she must and would be initiated. If there were Indian women who had been admitted to a knowledge of the mysteries, white women should not be barred. What was the first step?

I squirmed, but I saw no way to avoid answering. The gray, glittering eyes of my fond relative were searching my very soul, therefore, I said: "You must first make your medicine."

“Make my medicine! How am I to do that? Tell me, and I’ll make it at once; or, I’ll buy it, cost what it may!”

I told her it was not a thing that could be bought; then I explained to her that she must retire to the inmost depths of some forest and must there watch, pray, and fast until she dreamed of some living thing, and whatever that was, whether bird, beast, reptile or insect, it would be her talisman or totem throughout life. I thought she would give up the whole business when I told her that she must go into the forest and watch and pray in solitude, as, of old, did aspirants to knighthood before they could be regularly admitted, but she at once got over that difficulty. She said it was only because they had no other place to which they could retire in order to be wholly alone that the Indians withdrew to the heart of a forest. To be wholly alone, and to fast and pray were the real essentials. She would go into her garret, where not a soul would be admitted, and there she would remain until the Great Spirit informed her in a dream what was to be her guardian totem.

I was obliged to concede that fasting, prayer, and solitude were the really important conditions, and that a wood, or a wilderness, was not essential. She then cried with enthusiasm: “I’ll at it this very night! I’ll to the garret! The chambermaid shall make me a bed up there, and as soon as I get my supper I’ll go up there and fast and pray, and sleep and dream!”

I told her it would be better to start in the next morning after a hearty breakfast; that then she might fall into a doze, and, dreaming of some object, would

awake in time for dinner. She eyed me sharply, and, though I kept a serious countenance, evidently saw that I was quizzing her. "Not a mouthful will I eat this day or this night!" said she, "and to-morrow I'll go to the garret, enter upon my real fast, and make my medicine."

I could offer no objections. She then said that, as she did not know how to pray to the Great Spirit, she would come to my room at sunset and join me in my devotions.

I tried to avoid this by telling her it was all the same as praying to the Almighty; that the name made no difference, and it would answer quite as well were she to pray in her own room. But it was of no use; worship with me she would, and did.

It was a serious business for me, and I was at first a good deal embarrassed. I could only approach the Great Spirit in truth, earnestness, and humbleness of heart. This was easy alone, or with my red friends, but far from easy for one of my age, with a critical old white lady present, and with more of curiosity than devotional feeling in her heart.

However, I made all my preparations as usual, and as the sun was sinking in the western waters of the lake I began my devotions. My aunt had requested me to pray aloud and to pray for her, that she might obtain the favor of the Great Spirit in that which she was about to undertake. I therefore prayed for her, my mother, and my friends out by the Great Lakes, telling over the names of the ancients from their totems engraved on the four sides of my medicine wand. My

fright probably made me more impressive than usual; at all events, my good aunt wept copiously toward the close of this, our first family worship. She kissed all the totems on my medicine stick before rising from her knees, then took up and tenderly kissed the little dried turtle that constituted my special medicine. As she did this, I thought I heard a giggle at my door. Rushing thither and throwing it open, I saw the little waiting-maid scurrying away. I did not at all relish this, and told my aunt that Julia had been peeping at the key-hole. "Never mind, my dear child," said she, "when I get through making my medicine, she shall go to the garret and make hers. They shall all do it. I'll make this house the greatest medicine lodge east of the Mississippi!"

I was startled. At once I hastened to tell my aunt that in undertaking to initiate her into some of the secrets of my worship and its mysteries, I had no thought of going further and taking in others.

"But don't you see, my dear, she has been peeping; she has seen so much that she must come in. Yes, this very night," continued my aunt, "I shall tell her what she must prepare for!" and her gray eyes flashed fire. "Let me now glance for a moment at your magic mirror," said my aunt.

I produced it and handed it to her.

"Just as I expected!" cried she; "that little hussy, Julia, is out in the grounds head to head with John, the gardener. By my soul, John shall make his medicine! He, too, shall come in."

Julia was not so bad, for she was very pretty and

piquant, but John horrified me. Again I tried to protest. "But don't you see," cried my aunt, "she has told John. They shall both come in—by my soul and by the life of the Great Spirit, they shall!" and my good, earnest, old aunt stamped her hither foot.

I was wretched. I did not like John, nor did I relish any part of the business into which I found myself thrust at every move I made. "But you are not yet in yourself," I mildly suggested; "you do not know that it is a thing for which John is disposed or capacitated." "I have taken the first steps," she cried. "I have commenced fasting; I have prayed, and I have kissed the turtle and—and the other thing. To-morrow I shall begin to make my medicine. Now, adieu, my child; I go to find that young hussy, Julia. She shall know at once what she has got to submit to—and all the rest. This shall be the grandest medicine lodge this side of the Father of Waters!" With this she strode out of the room, leaving me to reflections that were by no means pleasant. But one thing about the whole business gave me even a gleam of comfort; that was the monthly pension that was promised my mother.



CHAPTER XXXIX.

MY AUNT AS THE PROPHETESS OF THE CAYUGAS.

That night before retiring I indulged my soul in additional devotions. I had concluded my prayer and was just rising from my knees, when a voice behind me that thrilled me to the soul with its sad earnestness, cried : “Oron-ya-deka—Oh, Oron-ya-deka !” Turning quickly, I saw the face and form of the Sky-Sifter slowly fading out in a corner of the room. I at once sought my talisman, and, looking into the mirror, saw the Sky-Sifter kneeling on the summit of a mound in a prairie region. Her face was toward the setting sun, and her hands were uplifted.

Tears blinded my eyes, and with a sigh that was almost a groan, I returned the talisman to its pouch in my breast. “Yes, dear mother,” said I, “I will go—I will leave this house! I will go to the old home in Canada; will sail up the lakes and come to you—will do anything but remain here.” I was almost ready at the moment to strip off my fine clothes, shoulder my rifle, and march forth into the night.

How my foster-mother could seem to come to me, and speak to me, when really so far away, was incomprehensible. I remembered that the night she had seemed to visit and converse with Captain Walker, of the “Nancy,” she was all the time seated near me beside a camp-fire at the mouth of the Grand River. It was a mystery then, and is no less a mystery to-day. She seemed able to project the semblance of herself—of her two selves—to any place she wished, however distant

that place might be. I began by thinking her a mere woman—though a very wise one—and as my knowledge of her grew, I could find no place for her among the mere mortal inhabitants of the earth; and it was the same in the case of her brother, “the one who never dies.”

The next morning I had my breakfast alone. I asked for Mrs. Bardsley, and was informed that Julia would tell me of her whereabouts. When I left the breakfast room I encountered Julia in the hall, where she had been lying in wait for me. Over night I had calmly studied the situation. Although fully determined to leave the house as soon as I could find a decent opportunity of doing so without imperiling my mother's pension, I resolved that, as regarded that which I might be required to teach of my religion and the ceremonies pertaining thereto, there should be nothing farcical; though I probably had no right to teach anything, yet, what I undertook should be as serious as I could make it. This being the case, it was not with a countenance wreathed in the vain and worldly smiles of the ungodly that I met the little maid. My face was drawn to a degree of severity that would have rivaled the iron features of the ablest of the red medicine men.

I was moving by the girl with downcast eyes as though I had not seen her, when she spoke, saying she had a message from my aunt. I turned upon her a face of cast-iron, and regarded her with a look in my eyes that caused all flippancy to depart from her tongue, and make the roses sink in her cheeks. Timidly and falteringly she then informed me that my aunt

was up in the garret, where she had gone "to make her—make her——" "Medicine?" I suggested. "Yes," said the girl, "her medicine is what she is making."

"It is well," said I, solemnly.

"She don't know when she'll get through, but I was to tell you she is there and at it, and you are not to go away from the house until she gets done."

I said: "It is a very solemn ceremony, and you will please see that she is not disturbed. It may be three days, and it may even be longer, before the Great Spirit answers her prayers; in the meantime she is not to partake of either food or drink of any kind."

I was passing on after giving this order, when the girl came after me, and plucking me by the sleeve said: "Please, sir, Mrs. Bardsley says that when she is through I've got to go up into the garret and—and make, make my, my med——," and she broke down and sobbed violently.

"Your medicine? Yes, I believe that is my aunt's wish."

"Oh, I can never—never——"

"Very well," cried I, in an impatient tone, "I suppose you know what you can do—you can leave. But if you do leave—well, you know what happened to that young jeweler down town." With this shot I walked on, saying to myself, "There is key-hole business for you to carry to John!"

All that day and the following night my aunt remained in her garret, fasting and praying. The next morning Julia found a note addressed to me that my

aunt had shoved out beneath the door leading to the garret. The note informed me that my aunt had dreamed of a mouse. She, however, was not wholly satisfied with this answer to her prayers. The garret being alive with rats and mice, she thought it probable that the dream was the result of her horror of those creatures. In a note that Julia carried and shoved under the door of my aunt's retreat, I advised the old lady to continue her fast; that if the will of the Great Spirit was that she was to have the mouse for her "totem," the dream would be repeated.

My aunt continued her fast for two days and nights, when she emerged from her garret almost famished, and so weak she could hardly crawl down the stairs. Her dreams had constantly been of mice, therefore it was evident, I informed her, that the mouse was her "totem." She was much disgusted at the result of all her fasting and praying, "for," said she, "there is nothing in the world I so detest as a mouse." I comforted her by telling her that the mouse was a very sly and cunning little animal, and one by no means to be despised; that it was on record in history that an army of mice once caused the defeat of an army of men, in ancient times, by invading their camp in the night and gnawing to pieces their bow-strings.

A mouse was soon caught and its stuffed skin, sanctified with due ceremony, became the medicine totem of my aunt; she pretended to be very fond of it, but I do not think she ever kissed it, as she had my turtle. I had found in the store of a gunsmith an old-fashioned shot-pouch made of catskin, which I transformed into a

medicine bag for my aunt. Into this bag I placed the stuffed mouse and instructed my aunt to wear it on her chest beneath her dress. I had made the old lady a good copy of my medicine wand, writing out for her the names of all the Indian saints whose "totems" it contained.

The next day I was summoned to the parlor, and going thither, I found my aunt with her long gray hair streaming down her back, a feathered cap on her head, and her person robed in a dress of the Sky-Sifter pattern, which she had obtained at one of the theatres or had caused to be made for her. She informed me that she had now formally opened her house as a medicine lodge, and that she would preside as the "Prophetess of the Cayugas."

In preparing her dress she had tried to imitate that of the Sky-Sifter, which she had several times caused me to describe, though little did I then suspect with what object. As she stood before me she was the most weird and witch-like creature ever mortal beheld. Her wrinkled face, blazing eyes, and long white hair gave her the appearance of being one of the most malevolent of all the sisterhood of midnight hags. My soul sank as I gazed, for it instantly struck me that she was insane.

"The hour of sunset approaches," cried she, "and this night shall Julia go into the cell of retirement at the top of the lodge. In their turn all this household shall follow, after which they shall bring all their people; for the Prophetess of the Cayugas will here establish her medicine lodge. I have sent my mouse into every

house, and woe to all who refuse to obey when I command!" At this, she stamped the floor and waved aloft her medicine wand.

Ringing a hand-bell for Julia, she seized upon the frightened girl when she came into the room, and, in spite of her struggles and screams, dragged her to the garret and there locked the door upon her and left her with orders to "make her medicine."

During this proceeding I had escaped to my room. Conscious of being the cause of the mischief that had been done, I was overwhelmed with consternation. As it began to grow dark I became aware of much commotion and loud talk on the floor below. On opening the door and listening, I was able to distinguish the voices of my aunt and John, the gardener, both loud and angry. John declared that if Julia was to be shut up in the garret over night he would stand guard at her door. There were things going on in the house he did not like. It was no place for the girl or for any sane person, as things were going.

My aunt said the girl was safe and all right, and she would have no man camped upstairs with her; she would allow nothing of the kind in her house. Then she began to tell him to "beware of the power and the wrath of the Prophetess of the Cayugas!"

I then heard John take his departure, muttering and threatening. I felt that a crisis had arrived, and that the best thing I could do would be to get out of the house. I had before thought my so-called aunt rather cranky, and I now believed she, through fasting in her garret, had reached a condition verging upon

decided insanity. While I was thus reflecting, there came a rap at my door. On opening the door, I found before me my aunt's coachman, a young fellow who liked me well, and for many good, golden reasons, for my aunt's fine teams had, at various times, been out of nights while she was sleeping the sleep of the innocent and just.

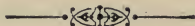
Tom (the coachman) hastily informed me that the gardener, in his wrath, had gone to police headquarters about the unlawful shutting up of his sweetheart, and that, besides, as he hated me with a mortal hatred, he was going to inform as to who it was that, sometime before, had been about the town in the guise of the devil.

Thinking that, after all, my aunt might merely have worked herself up to play a part, I told Tom to go to her at once and tell her to throw off her Indian robes and put on her usual dress and manner, as otherwise she would be dragged away to some asylum as insane. I also requested him to tell the old lady that I was about to disappear for a time, until the trouble blew over.

Tom fully comprehended the situation, and as he did not like John (for reasons that Julia understood very well), he determined to beat him in his game by frightening my aunt back into her senses, releasing the girl from the garret, and restoring the house to its usual order by the time the police reached it.

In a few moments my fine clothes were locked in a trunk in my room, my rough backwoods suit was on my back, my rifle was upon my shoulder, and I was departing

from my aunt's gate as poor as when I entered it, except that I had brought away a few dollars in pocket-money to assist me in getting out of the place. The next morning's sun found me on the north side of the Niagara River, and some miles within the borders of Canada.



CHAPTER XL.

AGAIN IN CANADA—OLD SCENES AND EVENTS OMINOUS OF EVIL.

Although I have not noted the months and seasons, skipping time here and there in my record of events, I will here say that it was now early spring, and the weather was beginning to be fine. I thought of visiting my mother, but still had some fear of the Grand River Indians, knowing how long they were capable of cherishing vindictive feelings toward any person that they once accounted an enemy.

I worked a month for a farmer, in order to replenish my stock of money while waiting for the trees to clothe themselves in full foliage, for I had determined to lead an Indian life while "spying out the land" in my old neighborhood.

When I reached the proper point I left the traveled roads and took to the woods. I found small game abundant, and, as I carried a pair of thick blankets, I was able to make comfortable camps. As I had with

me a small supply of flour, a few pounds of bacon, a frying-pan, and a coffee-pot, I lived like a prince. As soon as I had found my bearings, I went to the place in the heart of the forest where I had spent two or three days and nights in fasting and prayer, when sent out by my Indian foster-mother to "make my medicine."

The place was familiar enough, but it seemed by no means so sacred as when I had first visited it. I looked coldly upon the old Indian grave and upon the "totems" carved in the sandstone rock about the spring. My late experience at the house of my adopted aunt in Buffalo had given me a distaste for medicine mysteries; also, during my month with the family of the farmer, I had found little opportunity for due ceremony in my devotions, though I had not neglected my prayers to the Great Spirit, the really essential part.

I examined the spring closely, and arrived at the conclusion that, even though its waters were withdrawn, no man could pass through the narrow fissure in the rock from which they arose. I was seriously cogitating upon the trip that my uncle, "the one who never dies," was supposed to have taken me through the great cavern in the bowels of the earth. The conclusion I arrived at was that he had placed me under the influence of some kind of spell—hypnotized me—and led me to the spot over the surface of the earth, on the way so influencing my mind as to cause me to think I saw and heard all manner of wonderful things.

I decided to camp at the spring, and go down the brook the next day and look up the spot from which I was supposed to have started with the Wolf-Man on

my subterranean journey. I wanted to ascertain whether there was a hole in the ground anywhere near the spot.

That evening, near the spring, I made a small scaffold of four sticks, placed thereon my medicine bag, totem, talisman, and all else necessary. I then procured proper herbs, lighted a fire, and made a sacrifice of game to the Great Spirit, praying, meanwhile, for guidance, and asking the intercession of all the saints on my medicine stick. Just as I finished my devotions I saw two Indians, who had been watching me from the opposite side of the little glade, draw back into a thicket and disappear.

To say the least, they must have been surprised to see a young white man engaged in regular Indian worship. As the sun had just gone down I did not care to go out into the dusk of the thickets in search of the men who had been watching me. I did not like their presence. "If they are Grand River Indians," thought I, "they will at once know whom they have seen, and all on the reservation will know in a day or two that I am again in the country."

As soon as it was dark I allowed my fire to burn low, then moved quietly a distance of nearly half a mile from the spot and made a dark camp. I slept undisturbed. When it was light I wished to build a fire and cook my breakfast, but feared that if the Indians were watching for me the smoke would betray my whereabouts. While hesitating, I thought of my talisman, and, looking into the mirror for the two men, I saw a number of Indians in a camp near the river, under the shelter of a thick wood. Knowing that the two

men I had seen were among these, and far away, I at once made my fire and did the little cooking I required.

When I had breakfasted I prepared to go down the creek to take a look at the site of the medicine lodge, in which my foster-mother was supposed to have been burned alive. Before starting it came into my head to consult my magic mirror, which I had been carrying, concealed from all eyes, for over a month, without utilizing it in any way till that morning. I saw no one near the spot. I then thought of my aunt in Buffalo. I found her sitting quietly in her parlor. She had discarded the dress of the "Prophetess of the Cayugas," and, in a plain black silk, appeared to be talking pleasantly to Julia, who stood near smiling demurely. John was at work on the grounds, and Tom in the coach-house. Taking a look at my room, I found it just as when I left it—my trunk still in its old place. I felt greatly relieved. Tom had no doubt triumphed in what he had undertaken. Looking for my mother I found her at breakfast, and smiling as she offered a morsel of food to a cat that had mounted a chair beside her. I was glad to see her looking so well, and to see that she had a fine breakfast.

Being now quite at ease, and feeling almost merry, I at once set out for the ruins of the old wigwam. I had reached the well-remembered spot, and was standing musing upon the tragedy I had seen enacted there some months before, when a white man, a stranger to me, came up.

"A cunning old witch was the squaw that owned the hut that once stood here," cried the man.

“In what respect?” I asked.

“In every imaginable respect. For instance, the Indians of the reservation, who feared her as they feared the devil, tried to burn her alive in the big wigwam that once stood here. They caught her in her hut, surrounded it, set fire to it, and burned it to the ground, but they didn’t get her.”

“How could she escape?” I asked.

“Easily enough. Though they saw her face at the door and at chinks in several places, and though they heard her screams to the very last, till the burning roof and side walls fell in, still, the Indians who sought her life never so much as scorched a feather of her medicine-cap. She beat ’em all. Come up the hill with me, and I’ll show you how she fooled the whole lot.”

We ascended the steep little creek bluff, and when we were on the top the man led the way into the centre of a small thicket. Pointing to what looked like a sunken well-curb, my companion said: “There is the hole she came out at!”

The curb was about five feet deep, and looking into it I saw leading down from it a timbered inclined tunnel.

“You see there that she had at the rear of her wigwam a covered passage leading up into this thicket. With this means of retreat she could show herself at various places in safety, even while the roof and sides of the hut were all aflame. Finally, when the roof was about falling, she could slip into the mouth of the secret passage and scream back into the building, while all was wrapped in flames.”

“But how was it that the mouth of the tunnel was not seen the next day when the building had been reduced to ashes?”

“I will tell you. At the mouth of the tunnel, where it connected with the rear wall of the hut, there were no timbers—nothing but a few bundles of dry fagots stood on end, and supporting bundles of small sticks above, and back of which was heaped a quantity of loose soil. As soon as the fagots burned out—and she doubtless lighted them when she retreated—down slid all the loose earth and completely concealed the timbered mouth of the secret passage. By that time she was, no doubt, up here in this thicket, looking down at the fools.”

I stared at the man in surprise, almost forgetting that I had a tongue, but presently said: “I must own, my friend, that what you say appears very plausible, but how do you suppose she managed to construct such a passage? It must be at least seventy-five feet long.”

“That was easy. She had in the tribe a considerable faction of her own. These were medicine men and believers in the old Indian religion. They worked on the farms about the reservation, and had tools of all kinds. She had a gang of her own people at work here; she had but to speak and they would obey. They were also spies for her; she knew everything that was going on among the Indians—every word and move.”

“But, my friend,” said I, “did not the Indians suspect a trick when no bones—no remains were found in the ruins?”

“ Ah, my dear sir, but they did find a body—a charred trunk. That, too, had been provided for. Knowing when the attack would be made, the medicine men had dug up a dead body somewhere, and deposited it in the hut to be found after the fire.”

“ The business would seem to have been well planned,” said I.

“ Well, indeed, for even the witch woman’s husband—a white man—was deceived. He buried the body in grand style, and erected a fine monument over the grave. Poor man, he loved the woman and soon died—went to his grave thinking his wife there before him. I tell you, sir, that wife of his was a sharp one ! Why, sir, the day they buried the body found in the ruins of the hut, she appeared on a bluff above the whole crowd at the grave, and, beating a drum, she frightened all the people out of their wits—she and another dressed like her, who stood on the opposite bluff. All thought they saw a double ghost of the witch.”

So the man ran on, giving me the whole story, as he saw it. But what he could not explain was, what happened on the river that night, nor in what mysterious way all the medicine people the same night vanished from the reservation, taking with them a white boy who had “ turned Injun.”

When the man left me I fell into a brown study. I remembered about the Sky-Sifter having in appearance gone down into the earth, vanished almost at my side, and having presently as mysteriously reappeared. It now struck me that probably, after all, the old woman of the lone hut was still alive. I thought I would look

for her in my magic mirror. Retiring to a quiet and sheltered spot among some trees at the edge of a thicket, I drew the talisman from its pouch, and looking into the mirror I saw the same handsome young squaw that had been pointed out to me in the cavern by the Wolf-Man, as the spirit of the old woman. She was among many others who were strolling along in a land so transcendently bright and beautiful, that I felt that I was gazing upon the wonders of the "happy hunting grounds"—the red man's heaven. As I gazed, quite fascinated by what I saw, a slight noise caused me to look behind me. At the instant I turned I saw the head of an Indian disappear behind a large tree not ten feet away.

I grasped my rifle and bounded to my feet. I was at a loss as to whether to advance or retreat, but my first move had been to take shelter behind a large oak. As it was now important for me to know what had become of the Indian I had caught watching me, it came into my head to consult my mirror, which I had dropped loosely into an outside pocket. I had it before my eyes in an instant, and was shown an Indian skulking away through the thick undergrowth. He was descending the hill near the top of which I stood. I watched him until I saw him join two other Indians. He pointed toward the spot where I was standing. The three seemed to exchange a few words, then all moved away. After thinking the matter over for a time, I arrived at the conclusion that in my search for a secluded spot in which to consult my mirror, I had chanced upon the Indian, who had hidden in order to

watch my movements, for he might have thought that I was coming out gunning for him. I laughed when I thought of this, and, taking another look after my men, I saw all three still holding their course without once looking back. Seeing this I at once dismissed them from my mind.

I next thoroughly searched the ground in all directions, in order to satisfy myself as to whether there was, in the vicinity, any opening in the earth having the appearance of the mouth of a subterranean passage. I found the spot where the Wolf-Man had made his appearance (and where he was left with me by the sisters) without difficulty. I ranged about the spot for an hour, thoroughly examining every foot of ground. There was not discoverable the slightest sign of a cavern or opening of any kind in either hillside or flat. I then became satisfied in my own mind that I had never taken my supposed subterranean trip. At that time I knew next to nothing of mesmerism or hypnotism by those names, but, for all that, I had seen not a little of the same phenomena under other names, as "spells," and the "casting of spells." I therefore arrived at the conclusion that the Wolf-Man had placed a "spell" upon me, and that while under its influence he had made me see all that was shown me in the subterranean world. I had pretty well made up my mind that such was the case the day before, when I failed to find at the spring any means of exit; now that a place of entrance was equally undiscoverable, I no longer hesitated to set down the whole business as a piece of mental witchery.

CHAPTER XLI.

I MEET THE SKY-SIFTER'S DAUGHTERS — EVIL IN THE AIR.

Having nothing more to do in that spot my thoughts turned toward the grave in which the remains of the Sky-Sifter were supposed to lie, and I at once bent my steps thitherward. On ascending the knoll, on the top of which was the grave, I at once saw the monument, a square column of sandstone several feet in height, and near it two women that I immediately recognized as the daughters of the Sky-Sifter.

They did not seem surprised at seeing me. They were rather cold at first, and merely asked what brought me to the grave. I did not find it easy to answer, therefore quietly said that being near the spot I felt impelled to revisit it. The only inscription on the monument was the name "GA-ON-YE-WAS," with a medicine cap and feathers pictured above it. My eye falling upon this, I said: "Do you think that the one who lies here was your mother?"

"Not our mother," said one of the young women, "yet she gave birth to us—was the means of our coming into the world."

I was not much surprised at hearing this, for I remembered that on the occasion of the funeral I had seen a smile curl their lips for an instant, at a moment when all about them was grief and terror. "How long have you known this?" I asked.

"Longer than it has been known to you; for many years we have known that no human blood flowed in our veins, except that of our father."

I then ventured to speak of the old woman of the lone hut, and to repeat what the white man I encountered at the ruins of the wigwam had said about the substitution of a body taken from some grave.

"The man was wrong there," said one of the young women. "The remains buried here are those of the old woman of whom you speak, but all the cries heard were uttered by the Ga-on-ye-was—our mother. The body of the old woman was lifeless a moment after the hut was fired. Her allotted time was up before we were born; she was only kept alive by the spirit of the Ga-on-ye-was, and when that was withdrawn the mere frame fell to the ground. Her body never felt the fire."

"But your father," said I, "did he know?"

The young woman who had last spoken quickly interrupted me by saying: "The body of the only Ga-on-ye-was he ever knew lies beneath that stone—the soul of the only Ga-on-ye-was he ever knew still lives, and is not confined to one body."

I was then informed by the young women that they were on the point of leaving Canada. They were going to the Great Lakes to join the Sky-Sifter, in obedience to her orders. Hitherto, at her command, they had remained behind to comfort their father. When he died, they had received instructions in regard to their after course.

During the latter part of this conversation the two young women had descended the hill, yet I remained with them, for there were still several points upon which I wished to question them, though they seemed half-way hostile. When we had reached the little branch

of the creek that separated the island mound from the mainland, one of the sisters turned and abruptly asked: "Why do you follow us?"

I answered that I was thinking of going to see my mother, and that for some distance my path would be the same as theirs. They said it was not yet time for me to go to my mother's; that she was doing very well. "Yes," cried one of them, "your old woman in Buffalo is sending her money, therefore you are not needed."

I was astonished, but managed to ask how she knew about an old woman in Buffalo.

"Do you wish to see her?" asked the girl, and, taking from her bosom a shallow bowl of some jet-black material, she filled it with water from the brook, and, placing it before my eyes, said: "Look!" Looking into the saucer-like vessel, I saw my "aunt by adoption" on her knees in her parlor. About her were eight or ten other women and a black-coated man. All were on their knees, and the gentleman in black seemed engaged in prayer. His face was half a yard long, and his hands were uplifted. My aunt was peering out at the man between the spread fingers of the hand she held before her face. The queer motions of the great mouth of the long-faced man, and the ludicrous upward roll of his eyes, caused me to burst out laughing.

The girl withdrew the bowl, and, on gazing into it, her face became as black as night. "So it is thus your convert now worships the Great Spirit!" she hissed.

I said I feared the poor old lady was not sound in mind.

“Evidently not, judging from what I have seen of her,” said the girl; then added, “My mother is not pleased with what you did in that house.”

I said I was aware of her displeasure, and had left Buffalo on account of it. I then told of the Sky-Sifter’s visits, and, saying I could see her whenever I wished, I produced my magic mirror and handed it to the girl. She glanced into it a moment, and, without speaking, held it above her head with both hands, crying, in Mohawk: “It is the great totem!”

At the instant, on all sides, there seemed to arise a murmuring sound. I looked about me among the trees and bordering brushwood, but saw nothing.

The girl laughed and said: “It is only the wind—you are a great brave to start at a puff of wind!”

I knew it was not the wind, but said nothing. The sound was that of many suppressed grunts and whispers.

The girl gazed sharply at me for a moment, then said: “I see you are not satisfied. Do you suppose we are so badly off as not to have persons near to watch over us when we go abroad?” She then placed a whistle to her lips, and, blowing a low note, three Indians at once came forward from behind trees and logs.

“These men,” said she, “were watching over us while we were at the grave on the mound. They recognized the totem as having once belonged to the Ga-on-ye-was, and gave vent to their surprise and satisfaction, therefore what you heard was not the wind.”

She then returned me the totem, advising me to

treasure it as I would my life. She said I would see them no more; that they would inform my mother that I was well, and then advised me to decamp from that part of the country as soon as possible. It was not a very friendly leave-taking.

As they took their departure along the trail, their Indian guard, not a man of whom had spoken, disappeared among the trees bordering the path the young women were following, as if to scout the woods for their protection. As for myself, I felt that I was in great danger. I knew that men were lying concealed all about me. The murmuring sound I had heard was too great to have been made by three men. I was sure that the calling them up was a mere blind. I could see that while making a show of friendship, the girls at heart disliked me. Though they had satisfied my curiosity in some things, it was in those which they took some pride in making known. Reviewing my late conversation with them, I saw that it had wavered between a show of friendship and ill-concealed dislike that boded me no good. I was quite sure that the young women were plotting against me. They were, at least, half human, and I had always seen that they had observed my intimacy with the Sky-Sifter with a jealous eye.

As I made these reflections I was slowly returning to the grave on the mound, where I had left my rifle and camp outfit. While shouldering my trappings I heard the calls of birds and other forest creatures in various directions, the meaning of which was plain enough to me—I had been too long under the tuition of the Sky-

Sifter to misunderstand such sounds. I knew I was surrounded and watched on all sides.

I could not help myself in the woods, but could I get hold of a canoe and run across the river I might elude those who were on my trail. I did not greatly fear losing my life, but I was sure I was to be deprived of my greatest treasure, the magic mirror. Who was in pursuit of it I did not know, but was sure it was a person whose designs were favored by the two girls, for one of them had held it aloft that it might be seen by the eyes of some person bent upon gaining possession of it.

As I could not escape espionage, I assumed a careless air and sauntered down to the mouth of the creek where, in former times, was wont to be kept the medicine canoe of the Sky-Sifter. I thought I might there find some old "dug out" that I could press into my service for a dash across the river. To my great surprise, I found there the medicine canoe of the Sky-Sifter, looking as fresh and fine in paint and feathers as when I had last seen it.

My first thought was to take it and push out upon the river, but a moment's reflection told me that this would only precipitate matters. Doubtless other canoes were hidden near at hand that would at once be manned, and would shoot out in chase. I therefore halted, only for a moment, then turned and moved up the river to where I knew there were fields on the banks, and where the forest that concealed my enemies was back nearly half a mile.

After reaching the fields I kept close to the bank and

maintained a bright look-out for canoes. Presently I saw a small one hauled up on the beach, and, though it was almost in front of an Indian cabin, I at once shoved it off, and, boarding it, began swiftly paddling toward the opposite shore.

No one came out of the cabin from which I had taken the canoe, nor did any canoe start out in pursuit. I steered for a creek, the whereabouts of which I knew, and running up into the mouth of it a rod or two, hauled my craft ashore. I then crept up the bank, and climbing a tree that was densely covered with foliage, keeping my body behind the trunk, I closely watched the opposite side of the river.

It was by this time nearly sunset, and the opposite (southern) shore was well lighted up by the slanting rays of the sun and reflections from the water. Though I saw no canoe putting across the river, I discovered a smoke that I did not like. It was in a place where I knew there was no habitation, and had the appearance of being made by putting damp moss or green leaves upon a fire. It had a suspicious look to me, but, after all, might mean nothing.

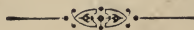
I now carefully scanned my side of the river, for, said I: "If no men were on watch for me here I would have been followed."

As I glanced up and down the near shore I noticed an old blue crane flying along leisurely up stream. Half a mile below me, a point of land put out into the river. On this little promontory was a dense growth of small trees, and one tall dead tree. The crane steered for the point, and was about to alight on the

top of the dead tree, when he turned a sort of back somersault, and with a perturbed flapping of his great wings, wheeled about and went back down the river.

“Aha! men there!” said I. I knew that nothing but one or more human beings on the point would have so startled the crane. A moment later assurance was made doubly sure, for I saw go up from the point a long line of white smoke, which arose through the still air some feet above the top of the old tree. It was the answer to the smoke across the river.

I waited to see no more. Doubtless the men on the point had seen me cross the river and were on the watch. As matters now stood, I thought it would be best for me to wait until dark and then again launch forth and run down the river.



CHAPTER XLII.

THE GIANT WARRIOR AND FLAMING RAFT.

In descending from my perch in the tree I caught a glimpse of a structure of some kind in the thick wood near the bank of the creek. I at once went to examine it. It was a long, low shanty of logs with a roof of canvas—evidently old sails. Bunks had been ranged along the walls, ship-fashion. A long table of rough boards occupied the centre of the single room. A lot of old pots, pans, tin plates, and the like, lay about the rude fire-place; also, I found an old ax, an iron shovel,

a hatchet, and some other old and battered tools. The place had evidently long been deserted. At a glance it was plain to me that the hidden shanty had been used by a gang of smugglers.

My first thought on glancing about was that the old shanty afforded, ready to hand, fine material for the construction of a raft, but as I could better escape in the canoe, the raft would be superfluous. The thought of a raft gave me an idea of playing a trick upon the Indians, who were sure to be lying in wait to catch me that night, if I attempted to go down the river and escape by coasting along the lake shore, which was the plan I now had at heart.

No sooner had I thought of frightening the Indians than the way in which it could best be done came into my head. I tore the cloth roof off the shanty, and out of a few of the pine poles, small side-logs and punch-eons (split timbers) of the floor, constructed in the creek a raft about six feet wide and twenty feet long, lashing the whole together with pieces of old rope found in the cabin.

On the stern of this hastily-constructed raft I placed the old table, turning it upside down. The table formed a platform ten feet long by six feet wide, and this I soon covered to a depth of four inches with soil shoveled from the bank of the creek. This made a fine hearth for a big bonfire. I soon had it covered with a pile of pine knots, a large stock of which I found at the cabin.

At the bow of the raft projected, several feet, a central log, in which was a two-inch auger hole—a hole in

which had been one of the big wooden pins that supported a bunk. This log was selected and placed for a purpose from the start. It was to hold a mast-like pole eight feet in length. The pole being found to snugly fit the hole, I took it down, and, with sail-cloth and bundles of dry leaves, soon made an image of a giant warrior, robed in his blanket. Dry flag-leaves represented the feathers standing up from his head, and a short cross-stick gave him breadth of shoulders. When the old fellow was placed erect on the raft, he presented an appearance so formidable, in the dusk of the evening, that I was almost afraid of him myself.

After all seemed in readiness, and while waiting for perfect darkness, I was still adding some touches to my giant brave. Finding in the cabin an old fish-spear with a handle about fifteen feet in length, I so fastened it that it seemed to be carried in a natural way. I also arranged a mass of light and dry kindlings in front of my pile of pine knots, to make sure that the whole could be kindled at the first touch of a match.

In order that the raft might float steadily, bow first, down the river, I fastened to its stern a billet of wood attached to a piece of old cable about thirty feet long. As the breeze would be up the river, I wished the raft to so float that the flames of my bonfire would be driven away from my giant warrior—not toward him. In short, nothing was forgotten; for, from the dragging down and laying the first long timbers of my raft, I was thinking ahead to the conclusion of the whole.

I had been mightily afraid of being interrupted in my work by a land party, therefore made the raft, and did

all else, in an almost incredibly short time, for the sun was nearly down when I begun. As soon as all was dark on the river, I made fast to the raft, and, paddling my canoe without lifting the broad paddle out of the water, silently stole out into the centre of the stream. Luckily there was but a mere zephyr drawing up the river.

I had at first intended to follow in the wake of my giant chief, but finally decided that it would be safer to keep just ahead in the dark, and so slip past the several camps while the Indians were still wondering and staring at the tremendous fiery apparition. In front, too, the shadow of the huge image would be thrown far ahead.

All being in readiness, I lighted the kindlings of my bonfire, then quickly left the raft and paddled ahead in the strong current until I was some three hundred yards in advance. By this time the pine knots, all rich in turpentine, were well kindled, and a great blaze was beginning to rise.

Soon the flames rose nearly straight up till as high as the head of my bogus chief. The appearance of the effigy I had constructed was most striking and awe-inspiring, even to me, its fabricator. The huge brave seemed standing in the midst of a mass of flames that were darting upward out of the bosom of the river, for no sign of the raft could be seen. A pillar of inky smoke towered to a height of fifty feet above the head of the chief, and the red glare of the flames, striking through the canvas composing his flowing toga, gave him the appearance of a living creature red-hot from Hades. The fish-spear

appeared to be a formidable weapon of war, and the dry blades of flag stood up like huge eagle feathers.

Soon were heard wild cries from the Indians on both sides of the river, and it was not long before the steady, doleful boom of several drums rolled out over the water; the medicine men were out to drive away the Evil Spirit. I felt safe when I found that it was thought that the fiery giant was an enemy against whom it was useless to pit any one but a medicine man. The current being strong in the middle of the river, the raft made rapid progress down the stream. Owing to its greater weight it drifted so much faster than did the canoe, that I was obliged to make frequent use of my paddle in order to maintain my proper position in advance.

From my starting point at the creek it was only three miles down to the mouth of the river. When almost at the edge of the lake, I turned and pulled in to the eastern shore, at a point where I saw a few clumps of willows. There I hauled my canoe into the bushes, and, climbing the bank, stood to see my raft go by. The pile of pine knots was flaming bravely, and was not half consumed. My bogus chief seemed a grand and terrible being, and without any aid from the imagination; what, then, must he have appeared to the eyes of the superstitious Indians?

Out into the broad waters of Lake Erie darted my flaming raft and its giant warrior. When beyond the influence of the current of the river, a gentle breeze took it and carried it out across the waters in a westerly direction. I watched it dancing over the swells, until

it seemed a mere torch in the distance, then turned to seek out quarters for the night.



CHAPTER XLIII.

HOW I LOST THE GREAT TURTLE TALISMAN.

I took from my canoe my blankets, rifle, and a small sack of provisions, and crossing two or three small sand dunes, went up into a patch of thick wood on a low hill. I had carried the little bag of cooked meat and bread all day, without finding leisure for making an undisturbed meal, and I was becoming ravenously hungry. After devouring the contents of the sack, I crawled into a thicket, wrapped myself in my blankets, and was soon sound asleep. I felt quite safe, for I thought I had completely outwitted my pursuers.

When I lay down to sleep, it was my intention to take to my canoe, about daylight, and paddle down along the shore of the lake till I came to the first town inhabited by whites; judge, then, of my dismay when I woke and found the sun nearly an hour high. Making a roll of my blankets, and shouldering my rifle, I crept out of the thicket and cautiously descended the hill to the lower ground. Meeting with the tracks made by me the night before in crossing the sand dunes, I naturally began to trace them back, as they would lead me to where my canoe was hidden in the willows.

I had not proceeded two rods before another faint

mark in the sand attracted my attention. A slight examination showed me the light imprint of a moccasin, and having seen one, it was easy to find enough others to make it plain to me that some persistent red man had never once lost sight of me, and was, doubtless, at the moment watching me from some lurking-place near at hand. No doubt I had been watched while building my raft and bogus chief. Why I was not then taken and robbed, I could not comprehend.

All being "up with me," as regarded hiding, I marched boldly down to my canoe. On coming to the river, I glanced across it and saw a great number of large canoes drawn up on the beach, with a populous camp of Indians on the sandy flat above. It was the same spot on which I had camped with the Sky-Sifter the night before she set sail up the lake. Instantly it flashed into my mind that the daughters of the Sky-Sifter were about setting sail, and that the crowd of Indians I saw were men from the Great Lakes sent to conduct this second exodus of the faithful and worthy. These were the men who had been dogging me—friends of my foster-mother, and, no doubt, my own sworn brothers in the mysteries of the worship of the Great Spirit. I could now well comprehend why I had not at once been knocked on the head and robbed of my talisman.

I found my canoe safe, but I knew it would be useless to venture forth in it. After a moment's reflection I concluded to secure the small supply of provisions and cooking utensils left in the canoe, and take to the woods. No sooner planned than executed. In five

minutes I was out in a dense part of the forest. "The fools forgot I had legs!" said I, and I chuckled audibly.

At the instant, I saw three Indians coming to meet me. They were strangers, and not Mohawks. They greeted me in a friendly way in broken English. After talking a while, one of them offered to sell me his blanket. Although I told the man I did not want it, he said it was just the thing for me. "See, him plenty long to sleep in," said the man, the largest and tallest of the party. "Him reach from you head to you heel," and, suiting the action to the word, he gave the blanket a fling in such a way that it enveloped my head.

In an instant I found myself closely pinioned in the arms of two strong men. "You have only to be quiet," said the third man, as he proceeded to open my vest, "and you will not be hurt; what I do is orders;" and he took from me my treasured talisman. When my head was released from the folds of the blanket, my rifle was taken. "You will find it in you canoe," said the man who carried it away.

Although I did not then fully appreciate the value of what I had lost, I was almost heart-broken at being robbed of a treasure of such inestimable value, and so wonderful as regarded its use. I threw myself upon the ground, feeling that what I had lost far surpassed, in power to aid me, any of the natural senses with which I was born. However, as I began to more carefully consider this point, I found that my natural senses were, after all, more useful for all purposes of every-day life; the talisman gave me a certain power and instant

knowledge of things passing at a distance, but, after all, this knowledge was of a kind that I could well do without. In looking back, it appeared to me that the talisman had brought me more or less trouble whenever I had made any public use of it—when I had permitted anyone save myself to behold its revelations.

After rolling about on the ground for half an hour, I got upon my feet determined to not be cast down by my mishap, but to make the best fight in life possible with the use of the senses natural to me. I need not now fear going anywhere, as I possessed nothing that any man coveted, therefore I went boldly enough down to the canoe, and in it found my rifle, a thing of more vital use than was the talisman—it would procure me food in the wilderness, whereas the other would let me starve while feasting my eyes on dinners hundreds of miles away. As I came to the river, I saw the fleet of Indian canoes, with sails set, just moving out upon the broad waters of the lake. My heart was bitter toward all who thus sailed away, not only because of my great loss, but also for the reason that I saw that I had been played like a trout by the Indians and finally hauled in when it suited their purpose. I knew that this had not been done without the knowledge and consent of the Sky-Sifter, therefore I might consider myself excommunicated—cast out from among those initiated into the mysteries of the worship of the Great Spirit. In my rage I stripped off and threw into the river my medicine bag, my totem stick, my dried turtle, and all else of the Indian worship.

While I was thus flinging away the emblems of my

religion and resolving to go over to the Evil Spirit, I saw a small canoe leave the departing fleet and turn back toward the mouth of the river. It contained only one man, and he seemed to paddle for dear life. Two big canoes took in their sails, and, getting out paddles, started after the man in the little craft, but they had only begun the chase when they turned back, doubtless in obedience to orders from someone high in authority.

After seeing the solitary canoeman turn into the mouth of the river, I slipped down into my canoe, determined to keep out of sight until he had passed. I lay a long time at the bottom of my canoe, and was on the point of peeping out to see what had become of the fellow when I heard the sound of a paddle close at hand. Looking up, I found the canoe almost upon me. In it was a young Mohawk known to me by sight.

The man did not speak until he had hauled up his canoe and stepped ashore. He then said he wanted to "have a talk," and asked me to come out to the bank. We had a long talk, much of which was of interest to me. First of all, he told me why he deserted the fleet. It was because he was in love with a young girl to whom he was going back. Her parents had given up the old religion—cared nothing for it. He secretly held to the old religion, but made no talk about any religion; therefore, his love affair prospered. All was arranged for his affianced to go with him up the lakes as his wife, but, at the last moment, the parents found out the character of the expedition—that it was a religious exodus—and the girl was forbidden to leave the house.

She was made to tell her lover she had changed her mind and would not go with him. At this he was piqued, and started away with the others, but when out on the lake his "heart was too strong," and he turned back. He said the chief laughed when he ordered the pursuing boats back, and cried out: "Let the boy go, there is a fawn he wishes to bring up the lakes."

The young Mohawk informed me that it was a chief, who had seen the talisman when it was given me by the Sky-Sifter, who had finally succeeded in taking it from me after long watching. He had refrained from taking it until the last moment, fearing that I would invoke the aid of the white officers of the law who would come out upon the lake with an armed boat and stop the fleet of canoes. This chief was to marry one of the Sky-Sifter's daughters on the arrival of the party at the Great Lakes. The girls had sent word to their mother to my injury. All this, and much more, that the young Indian told me, gave me to understand very distinctly that the girls were my enemies, and that I had been very closely watched while in Buffalo. It was evident that the chief had never ceased plotting to obtain possession of the talisman from the time he had seen it pass into my hands. I was told of a white spy who was in the house in which I lived in Buffalo, and believed that this spy was either Julia or the gardener.

The young Indian went to his canoe and, to my surprise, brought up the bank to me my medicine bag, prayer stick, and turtle totem. He had picked them up in the river, and knew them, as he had seen me use them. He acknowledged that he had been one of those

who dogged me in the woods and had watched me at the medicine spring. I told him I was done with such things and he might keep them.

He was delighted to get hold of the wolfskin medicine bag and totem stick, but advised me to keep the turtle if I thought of going upon the lakes; it was my medicine and would prevent my being drowned. He said his totem was much the same, as it was the frog, a creature that could live either in water or on land, therefore, he would never be "drowned." To please the young fellow, I resumed possession of the turtle totem, and, owing to it or good luck, in after times safely passed through three shipwrecks.

I was anxious to go up the river and pay a visit to my mother, but the young Indian told me it would not do. Being in love and pleased with what I had advised him to do in that business, the young man felt well toward me. He said the Indians were in a dangerous mood. They had heard of my return, and unfortunately for me two cabins had recently burned, a cow or two had died, and some children were acting as though bewitched; all of these mishaps were owing, it was said, to my return and my enmity.

As I could not go up the river I told the young man where my canoe belonged, and prevailed upon him to take it in tow and restore it to the owner. As soon as he was gone I started down the lake shore on foot, watching for game as I traveled, for I was again very hungry. I soon shot four or five fat squirrels, and, finding a spring, built a fire and breakfasted like a lord. That night I camped in the forest, and the next morn-

ing directed my steps toward a white settlement to look for work on a farm, pretty well cured of all my "medicine" notions and the Indian religion, though I still clung to the Great Spirit, as being the same as the white man's God.

I spent a week in trying to find work among the farmers. It was the wrong time in the season. All told me that a few weeks later there would be plenty of work in the harvest fields. After a few days I made my way to Port Robinson, where I found employment at driving a team, with very fair wages.



CHAPTER XLIV.

A PHANTOM ARMY.

What I am now about to relate may be set down by some persons as a mere hallucination, but if so, it was a hallucination of hearing as well as of sight; and, besides, was of such a nature as affected many others as strongly as it did myself.

It was in July, 1839, as I happen to remember, for I was then nearly twenty years of age, that I started out from Port Robinson, one evening, for Niagara, with a political prisoner. I was driving a wagon in which was the prisoner, and also a corporal, with a guard of six soldiers. To "haul" a man away to his death was a kind of job I did not relish, but I was not then my own master, therefore obeyed the orders of my employer.

Besides the soldiers in the wagon, we were attended by an additional guard of six cavalymen under command of a sergeant, who rode alongside the wagon.

Nothing unusual occurred, and we all moved along quietly until we neared Brock's monument, at Queenstown Heights. It was here that was fought (October 13, 1812) a battle that proved disastrous to a body of Americans, who made an attempt to invade Canada, under General Van Rensselaer. This General sent a portion of his troops across the Niagara River to attack the British at Queenstown Heights. The English were driven from their position, and in the fight General Brock was killed. General Van Rensselaer then returned to the American shore to bring over the remainder of his army; but the militia proved a cowardly set of fellows, and, denying the constitutional right of their commander to take them out of their own State, they refused to embark. Meantime their comrades on the Canadian shore, so basely abandoned to their fate, were having a terrible and bloody struggle with the British and Indians, who had returned to the attack on finding that no reinforcements came from the American side of the river. Though the Americans fought desperately for a time, they were at last obliged to give way. Many were killed and many forced over the Heights, the remainder surrendering when overpowered and all retreat cut off. In the fight some wild work was done by the Indians, and many took the leap over the cliffs rather than fall into their hands.

Such is a brief sketch of the battle fought near the place where stands the monument erected by the

English to their General, Sir Isaac Brock. As we drew near and were on the old battle-ground, our horses all stopped and could not be made to move a step, all trembling and snorting with terror.

We were just beginning to speak of the strange conduct of our animals, when there followed that which rendered us tongue-tied and dumb. From the ground about us there rose a strong light with a sort of phosphorescent glare. Though all seemed almost as bright as day, yet it was with a sort of blue, quivering, unnatural light. Almost the instant the light flashed up, the forms of men and horses arose, seeming to come up out of the ground.

On the instant, pandemonium appeared to have broken loose. The air was rent with yells and the rapid report of firearms. Forms on foot and on horse-back rushed to and fro past us, and on all sides was heard the clashing of swords and bayonets.

At times, the forms of both men and horses appeared to pass over us, under us, and on every side; we seemed not to incommode the shadowy forms or to be in the least in their way, as they rushed back and forth like flashes of light. Groans and yells arose on all sides, and at times the whoops of the Indians almost drowned the crack of the rifles and muskets. Indeed, the commotion was such that it appeared to jar the solid earth.

The cavalry escort, with the sergeant in the lead, turned tail and left us soon after the uproar began. The corporal and his men stood it a few moments longer, when they leaped from the wagon and took the

back track. Thus I was left alone with the prisoner, who seemed to be unable to move a limb or utter a word, so utterly overcome was he by the terrors of the scene. I merely felt a sort of cold numbness and an instantaneous conviction that I could only stand my ground and let things take their course.

In the first flash of the light and opening of the scene, it darted into my mind that it might be a plan concocted to frighten off the guards and rescue the prisoner, but I soon gave that up, as the shadowy warriors all seemed intent on business of their own, and none of their movements were made with the least reference to us; indeed, as I have said above, they appeared to pass over and all about us, utterly ignoring our presence.

How long the whole vision lasted I do not know, for I was not in a condition of mind to take note of time. It seemed five or ten minutes, yet the whole thing may have swept along almost with the swiftness of light. It ended with a rush to the brink of the heights, and, being so situated in regard to a curve in these, that I could look down their face, I saw men who had leaped over, clinging to the tops and boughs of scores of trees. These the red-skins were fast shooting and butchering.

After this it grew dark and silent as suddenly as the lights and all else had flashed up. I shouted for the soldiers, and they presently answered and came back to the wagon. They assured me that they had retreated only two or three hundred yards before all had become silent, dark, and natural. They had then halted, and

were consulting about returning to the wagon, when they heard me calling to them.

Two of the soldiers told me that just as they were leaving the wagon they saw an officer shot from his horse that they believed was General Brock, or at least his ghost. All were sorry that the prisoner had not seized upon the opportunity that so strangely offered to make his escape; for, after all, the man was merely a raider on Canadian soil, and he had shown great courage before being captured. The man was taken to Niagara, where, in due time, the halter ended his life.

At first I was of the opinion that the ghostly battle-scene was enacted in order to permit of the man making his escape; but since, I have thought it was intended as a warning to him that he must soon join the crew of spirit warriors, and do mimic battle with them (at certain seasons and places on the borders), by the phosphorescent light of their phantom bodies, or under the dim lamps of the midnight heavens.

In the above brief sketch I have spoken of a strange thing which I myself saw, and which was also seen by others. The cause and nature of it I do not pretend to understand. It certainly was not natural, in the sense that we usually speak of such things, as are the products of nature in her usual methods of operation, therefore, it must have been supernatural. That I believe it to have been supernatural does not prove me superstitious in the ordinary sense of the word; indeed, in all ages of the world, there has been a wide-spread belief in the supernatural, and that, too, among some of the greatest men of all countries; and all history,

even from the most ancient times down to the present day, records supernatural events.

Guizot, the great French statesman and historian, who died no longer ago than 1874, in a speech in 1851 (before a Bible Society), said: "What is the grand question, the chief question, that, just now, occupies all minds? It is a question lying between those who recognize, and those who deny, a supernatural order, certain and sovereign, although impenetrable to human reason; the question being (to call things by their right names), between *supernaturalism* and *rationalism*."

"We want no statue or image of our God in marble. It is a living God that we need. It is necessary for our present and future salvation, that faith in the supernatural, respect and submission to the supernatural, should live in the world and in the human soul; in great, as in simple minds; in the highest, as in the lowliest stations. The real, efficacious, and regenerating influence of religious creeds, rests on this condition; without it they are superficial, and well-nigh useless."

"The sacred books are the source whence this sublime truth is received and its empire established. They are the history of the supernatural order; the history of Deity in man and in the world."

All history is full of occurrences similar to that which I witnessed at Queenstown Heights, though many are even more wonderful. To begin with, I will quote from Flavius Josephus, the famous Jewish historian. In his history of the war of the Jews against the Romans (book VI, chapter XXI), he says: "Shortly before the feast of Easter, on the 27th of May, an event happened

that I should fear to repeat, lest it might be considered fabulous, were it not that persons are still living who witnessed it; and the misfortunes that followed confirmed its truth. Before sunrise there appeared in the air, throughout the whole country, chariots full of armed men, traversing the clouds and spreading round the cities, as if to inclose them. On the day of Pentecost, the priests, being at night in the inner temple to celebrate divine service, heard a noise, and afterwards a voice that repeated several times: '*Let us go out from hence.*' "

Pausanias, the Greek historian, in his "Attics," relates that, four hundred years after the battle of Marathon, the neighing of horses and the shock of armies were nightly heard on the spot. Pliny says that during the war of the Romans against the Cimbrians, they were, on several occasions, alarmed by the clang of arms and the sound of trumpets, which appeared to come from the sky. Plutarch, Appian, and other historians, speak of the same kind of things.

Antiochus was preparing to a second time carry the war into Egypt, when a wonder appeared. It is recorded that in the sky appeared men dressed in cloth of gold, armed with lances, galloping like squadrons about to charge; even their casques, bucklers, naked swords, and lances could be distinguished.

In the time of Charlemagne, phalanxes, supposed to be composed of sorcerers, were seen fighting in the air. In the reign of Charles the Sixth, battles appeared to be going on at different times in the clouds; armed

knights encountered one another, and the sky was the color of blood.

At the time of the Crusades, history is full of supernatural appearances in the heavens and on the earth while battles and sieges were in progress. We are told that during the hottest of the fight at the siege of Jerusalem, Godfrey and Raymond beheld a celestial knight waving a buckler on the Mount of Olives, and giving the signal to the Christian army to enter the town. Michaud, in his "History of the Crusades," says, at the battle of Dorylæum, St. George and St. Demetris were seen fighting in the ranks, and at Antioch, in the midst of the battle, a celestial troop, armed with flashing weapons, was seen to descend to the earth and mingle in the fray.

The ancient Greeks and Romans record similar prodigies. Thus Plutarch, in his life of Coriolanus, states that in the fight against Tarquin, Castor and Pollux were seen on white horses, valiantly fighting in front of the battle. With their horses "dropping sweat," the two divine heroes then at once appeared in the forum and announced the victory to the people of Rome. It is for this reason that July 15, the day the victory was gained, was consecrated to those two sons of Jupiter.

It is also related that in an attack on the Temple of Delphos by the Gauls, those barbarians were frightened by the apparition of three shrouded heroes who suddenly came out against them.

Don Dias del Castillo, in his history of the conquest of Mexico by Cortez, after giving an account of a great

victory against immense odds, says Saint Iago appeared on a white horse in the van of the battle and led the Spaniards on till the fight was won. The writer was in the battle, but did not see the saint. He evidently was of the opinion that such a miracle was not for such eyes as his, for he regretfully exclaims: "Sinner that I am, what am I that I should have beheld the blessed apostle!"

I shall conclude with a comparatively modern instance of the supernatural appearance of armed men in Scotland, in July, 1686, in broad daylight, as related by Peter Walker in his "Lives," which book was published in Edinburgh, in 1827. He says: "In the year 1686, in the month of July, many yet alive can witness that about Crossford, two miles below Lanark, especially at the Mains, on the waters of the Clyde, many people gathered together for several afternoons, where there were showers of hats, guns, and swords, which covered the trees and the ground. Also were seen companies of men in arms marching in order upon the water-side; companies meeting companies, going all through one another, and then all falling to the ground and disappearing; other companies immediately appeared, marching the same way. I went there three afternoons together, and, as I observed, there were two-thirds of the people who saw, and a third who saw not; and, though I could see nothing, there was such a fright and trembling on those that did see, that was discernible to all from those that saw not. There was a gentleman standing next to me, who spoke as too many gentlemen and others speak, who said: 'A pack of damned witches and

warlocks that have the second-sight! The devil a hait do I see!' Immediately there was a change in his countenance. With as much fear and trembling as any woman I saw there, he called out: 'All you that do not see, say nothing; for I can assure you it is matter of fact, and discernible to all who are not stone blind.'

"Those who did see told what kind of locks the guns had, and their size and length; what handles the swords had, whether small or three-barred, or Highland guards; also the color of the ribbons forming the knots on the bonnets, whether blue or black; and those who were able to see them there, for a time after, wherever they went, saw a bonnet or a sword drop to the ground before them."

Pausanias, in his account of the sounds heard on the field whereon was fought the battle of Marathon, says: "All the curious did not hear the noise, while those who traversed the plain unpremeditatedly, heard it perfectly." No writer of antiquity (except Herodotus) has comprehended, in the same compass, more interesting facts than are to be found in the works of Pausanias.

In the ancient poem of "Albania," mention is made of the sounds of battles and hunting being heard in places in Scotland. The cattle break away, and of the herdsmen it is said:

"Aghast he eyes
The upland ridge, and every mountain round,
But not one trace of living wight discerns."

CHAPTER XLV.

I RE-VISIT MY AUNT—MILLERITES AND ASCENSION ROBES—MORMONISM AND URIM AND THUMMIM—I AM UTTERLY DISCARDED.

After this adventure I sickened of “land navigation.” Having a few dollars ahead, I concluded to cross over to Buffalo and take a look among the vessels at that port. On my arrival in Buffalo, I thought it would be but civil to visit Mrs. Alice Bardsley, my pseudo aunt, and explain the reason of my departure. Down town I happened to meet my aunt’s coachman, who had always been my staunch friend. I was glad to see him before going out to my aunt’s house, as he could inform me in regard to her condition, and give me some idea of the kind of reception I was likely to meet with.

Said the coachman: “The house has been full of preachers since you left. First a lantern-jawed Millerite was the favorite, and the house was constantly overrun with cattle of that style. Your aunt went so far as to have her ‘ascension robes’ made, and took great pride in them. She used to put on her white robes and sail about in them. A piece of drapery hung down the whole length of each sleeve, in imitation of wings. She had so often sailed about flapping of her wings, that at last she took it into her head that she could fly. She went about half way up the stairs, straddled the rail, turned herself loose, flapping away with her wings at a devil of a rate. Half sliding, half falling, she landed at the bottom of the stairs with such force that she came near breaking one of her poor old legs. We

had to bring a doctor, and she did not get out of bed for a week. While she was in bed the old Millerite preacher came. He told her that the time to go up was near at hand, and tried to get her to make over all her property to him. That raised her wrath. She rang her bell and sent for me. When I came in she said to him: 'So you think it would be best for me to deed to you all my property?' The preacher said it would. He, no doubt, thought I was called in to be sent for a notary, and was pleasantly licking his chops in anticipation. All at once your aunt raised up in bed and turned loose. I cannot tell half she said, but she raked the fellow terribly for having the 'last day' come while she was not able to get up, put on her robes and fly aloft with the others. She said it was plain that he wanted to get away with her property and leave her behind to the tender mercies of the devil, while everybody else went to heaven. Then she ordered me to show the preacher out, and gave orders, in his hearing, to have him booted off the premises if he ever again came inside of her gate."

I asked the coachman if he thought the old lady had at any time been in earnest in her belief in the Millerite doctrine.

"Who can tell?" said he; "as much in earnest for a time as in other things. She must have half-way believed she could fly, or she would not have jumped off the stairs and hurt her leg. Now, these here new-fangled Mormons are after her. A long-haired elder is in the house every day, telling her of the prophet Joe Smith, the golden plates, and how the prophet

translated them by looking into some kind of peep-stone. She gives out that she will herself soon become a prophetess, and the elder encourages her. He is already gently hinting about her selling out and going West to join the Saints."

After hearing all this, and much more to the same effect, I was in no great hurry to see my aunt, yet I thought I ought to go and thank her for what she was doing for my mother.

The old lady was delighted to see me. She called me her dear child, and devoured me with kisses. She said my old room was ready for me; I would find she had kept it exactly as it was the day I left.

She asked me to sit with her in the parlor, and almost at once began talking on the new doctrine of Mormonism. She gave me the whole history of the finding of the plates and their translation by Joe Smith through the use of the two transparent stones called "urim" and "thummim." She talked of going soon to Kirtland, Ohio, and thence to Nauvoo, Illinois, in which places she would appear as a prophetess. She had been dying to see me, and had written scores of letters to all parts of Canada. The Mormon elder would be at her house that evening; she had told him that she had been promised by an angel—here she chuckled me under the chin—a gift of the "urim," and that when she received the precious gift, she would be able to see what was going on, not only in all parts of the world, but also in heaven and hell. She had promised that as soon as she received the "urim"—the wonders of which had already been shown her

—she would sell all, go to Kirtland and thence to Nauvoo, where she would take her place “on the right hand of the prophet Smith.” She had even told the elder that the “urim” was an opal of immense size and inestimable value, in the back of which was a mirror which showed at once all one desired to know, and she had told him, she said in a wheedling tone, that this wonder had been shown her by an angel. So saying, she patted my head.

Of course, I knew all the time what was coming. What I had to tell her would be a terrible blow to her, and would completely demolish all her fine castles, but I made up my mind to tell the exact truth.

Presently, she said: “The elder and several friends will be here this evening. I feel that I shall this evening be able to look into the ‘urim’ and tell them some astounding things.”

I said nothing.

“I shall need nothing more in this world than the ‘urim,’” said she; “therefore, before joining the prophet, I shall sell my possessions here, and all shall be yours. Now, my child,” said she, holding out her hand, “give me the ‘urim.’ You are made for life, and need it not, while I feel that I have a mission.”

I told her my story of having been dogged and robbed of the talisman by Indians. She said I was a “miserable, ungrateful little liar,” with much more to the same effect. I protested that I had told the simple truth, and when she continued abusing me I arose, took my hat, and told her I would at once leave her house, never again to enter it.

She now changed her tactics; she rushed upon me, and, clasping me in her arms, burst into tears. She said she was an ill-tempered old fool, and begged a thousand pardons. Next she said she would call her coach, go instantly with me to a notary, and deed me all her property, the consideration to be the talisman.

When I again assured her that I had told her the truth—that the Indians from the Great Lake region had robbed me—her mood again changed. At first she said I was a fool to go among the Indians with a thing of such value; then she declared that I had once given it to her, and that, stealing out of the house in the night, I had robbed her of it. I was a robber; that was what I was. I had robbed her of her “urim!” and, ringing the bell violently, she said she would have Julia call the gardener, and he should throw me out of the house; perhaps she would have me turned over to the police; there were other valuables in the house, and I might have taken other things besides her “urim.”

I said I would not wait for the gardener, and at once started for the door. She followed me through the main hall, abusing me as a thief and robber, and, as a parting shot, came out upon her front steps and called out to me, as I was nearing the gate, that she had cut off my mother's pension. I made no reply to my blessed old aunt. I wanted no more war, and I saw that the gardener, armed with a grass-sickle, was holding himself in readiness for me in the vicinity.

I made my way rapidly toward the water-front. I resolved to seek out a tavern I had formerly visited,

and which I knew to be much frequented by sailors, for now all my thoughts were of going upon the lake as a sailor. I hoped to hear of Captain Walker and the "Nancy."



CHAPTER XLVI.

HOW DICK DUNSTAN DOWNED THE DEVIL.

I found the tavern very readily, as all the old tars knew it, and was soon seated in the midst of a lot of rough, but rather jolly, "sailor-men." All were strangers to me. I took a rather tough cigar that a young fellow offered me, and, entering into conversation with him, found that he was well acquainted with the old salt of the "Nancy," who had always insisted that I was a near relation of "Davy Jones," if not the veritable boss of the brimstone regions himself. He told me that the old fellow's name was Dick Dunstan. I was glad to know this, for if I had ever before heard the man's name I had forgotten it. When a man feels himself down in the world, he rather likes to know of some old acquaintance whom he can call by name, particularly in a strange place. I did not expect to see Captain Walker at the tavern; if in port he would be at his own house.

Presently the young sailor left me and I sat a long time moodily gazing about me without speaking to any one. I was thinking of going to some other place frequented by sailors when in rolled my "old salt." He

seated himself at a table with his back toward me. I at once crossed over to him, and, slapping him on the shoulder, cried: "Devil ahoy, Dick Dunstan!"

The old man bounded to his feet as if a pistol had been fired at his ear. I was dressed in much the same clothes as those worn by me when I went aboard the "Nancy" from the Sky-Sifter's medicine canoe. The old fellow turned pale, and dropped into his seat again.

"How goes it, old shipmate?" said I, cheerily.

"No shipmate o' yours, I hope," said he; then suspiciously asked: "How comes it you know my name's Dick Dunstan? Nobody ever calls me anything but old 'Tarry.' You never heard nobody call me Dick Dunstan."

"Not to your face," said I, "but I have a way of finding out such things."

"I believes you—you finds out too d——d much. Howsomdever, I must say you've done the han'some by Cap'n Walker, but he knows the price he paid for it, I s'pose."

I said: "Dick, that's all bosh, but if Captain Walker has been doing well I'm glad to hear it."

"Doin' well!" cried the old fellow, "why, he's made a fortin. Everything goes his way. It's all long o' that string. But I sails with him no more—I'm done with him. My last trip with him up the lake in the 'Nancy' let me out. I took my bag out of his craft as soon as we got into port. I'm now in the brig 'Ontario,' Cap'n Harvey. I s'pose, if you or your boss had not run against old Tarry, you'd among you got all hands of us the last trip."

I laughed and said: "Pooh, nonsense! I haven't been near the lake since I last saw you. I've been in Canada—up in the country."

The old fellow eyed me suspiciously, and it took hard coaxing to get him to tell what happened on the last awful trip. Finally, he said: "Wal', I s'pose it'll be no news to you, still, I'll tell you, and two or three of the men will swear to it on a stack of bibles, if I may wentur' to name sich a thing in your presence."

"Wal', as I told you, everything has been goin' Cap'n Walker's way. The wind is allus in his sails, head which way he may. Of course, this fills his vessel with freight and his purse with money. So it has been goin' right along. Course, we all know'd this wasn't nat'ral, but we stood it till this last trip, then we began to see where it would all end, and where we'd all land."

"Wal', as I said, things was goin' so fine that we was all hands gittin' pretty bad skeered. We'd often talked of leavin' and gittin' aboard a more nat'ral craft, but we still held on—temptin' Providence. A little more'n the devil—beg parding—would have had us all. We was only saved by the skin of our teeth."

"Well, what was it?" cried I, losing patience—"wind, a hurricane?"

"Wind, no! how would wind hurt that craft? Wind, no; it was fire and the devil!" blurted the old man.

"This was it: we was comin' up the lake one night, a short while ago, when we took a tack toward the Canada shore. We kept goin' and goin', no end to the tack. 'Why does the ole man keep her on this

tack so long?' whispers one o' the men to me. 'God knows,' says I. Then the Cap'n goes down into his cabin, sayin' as he goes: 'Keep her on this tack an hour longer.'

'We all looked at one another; it was awful, but what could we do? Old Knibbs was at the wheel, it was my lookout for'ard, and the other man or two war sloshin' about somewhars. All to once I saw a light ahead. 'Light ahead!' I sings out. The second mate comes and says: 'By the pokers! so there is, an' a quare one, too. It's mighty low, ain't it? Too low for a ship—must be in a boat. May be a fishing-jack or some sich contrivance. Keep watch of it,' says he, and goes back.

'The light all at once seemed to flash up ten times bigger'n before, and come dartin' right at us. The blaze was comin' square up out o' the water, and in the midst of the fire was an Injun fifteen feet high. He carried a big spear, and had feathers on his head a yard long. He had fiery eyes as big as teacups, and blue blazes was a flyin' out of his mouth. He was comin' right at the bow of the 'Nancy' with his big spear in his hand. I yelled, and all on deck ran for'ard. The mate took one look, and went for the Cap'n, yellin' every jump.

'Down in the fo'castle was an old musket, loaded for geese. I jumped to the hatch, and told the men to hand me up the gun, quick. When I got the gun, the thing wasn't half the schooner's length ahead. As I raised the musket and took aim, the Cap'n came runnin' up, and hollered, 'Don't shoot!' but he was too

late. Bang went the gun, and down upon the deck I tumbled with the starboard side of my head nearly kicked off. Thar was half a pound of powder and a whole double-handful o' goose-shot in the old musket. When I got up and got my senses, the thing was gone.

"Jack Dobbs, Cribby, and the rest said that when the charge o' shot struck the big old devil he seemed to jump two feet into the air, then dive head first into the flames that was shootin' up out of a hole in the water. The next instant, the 'Nancy' sailed over the spot, and nothin' more was seen. The musket-shot took the old feller by surprise, and he at once made a dive for the lower regions.

"Cap'n Walker pretended to be as skeered as anybody, and let on not to know what the thing was, but sartin sure, his time was up; the old gentleman had come for him, and but for my flustratin' him with the shot he'd tuck him then and there—the 'Nancy' an' all hands would ha' gone down to the 'locker' in fire and smoke. We could smell brimstone for two hours arter.

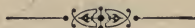
"Now, where was you all this time?" said old Tarry, eyeing me over. Said I: "Well, about that time I was over in Canada, on Grand River." "By G—d! I thought so," cried the old fellow; "this happened jist off the mouth of Grand River. It was about the same spot where you came aboard of us from the canoe of the Injun witch. I see it all now; the Cap'n made that long tack because he had another 'pintment—this time with the old one himself."

I laughed and told the old man I could easily explain the whole matter, but he would not hear a word.

"Young feller," said he, "I've seen the devil 'bout that craft before. He tried to board me here in Buffalo one night. Now, I don't know what you've got to do with all this, but I've noticed that always when the devil appears you ain't far away. Proverbably, now, you may think I didn't reco'nize your voice that night when you tried to slip aboard us down here at the wharf?"

"Why," I began, "that was only——"

"Avast with your only!" cried the old fellow, and he got up and bolted from the place.



CHAPTER XLVII.

ABOARD THE FORTUNATE "NANCY."

When old "Tarry" left me in this unceremonious way I soon took my departure. I found a decent lodging that night, and the next morning set out to look for Captain Walker. I soon found he was not in port, and was obliged to wait three days for him to arrive. He was glad when I told him I wanted to ship with him. He treated me as if I had been a brother. He said he would consider me as a passenger and I should draw wages all the same, taking hold of work only when I felt like it.

I told him I would have nothing of the kind; that I desired to learn his business thoroughly, and that I

would go into the forecastle with the men, and expected to be treated the same as the others, for anything else would make trouble for both him and me. He said I was right, but that should not begin until we left port; meantime, I should be treated as a visiting friend.

Presently he invited me into his cabin and then told me that, on the trip before, he had seen a thing that had made him very uneasy and had caused some of the men to leave the schooner. With that he began to speak of a giant apparition that had borne down upon him, standing in the midst of a sheet of flame that seemed to rise from the bosom of the lake.

I stopped him, and, to his great relief and amusement, gave him the full history of the flaming brave, and also old Dick Dunstan's account of the "Nancy's" meeting with it. Captain Walker said that the old man did really blaze away with an old musket and knock the thing over, also himself at the same time.

Said the Captain: "What puzzled us all at the time was what became of the thing—how it could wholly disappear so suddenly—but I now understand that by the time the smoke of the musket had cleared away we had run down the little raft and extinguished the fire."

The good skipper had in his composition no small amount of real old-fashioned sailor superstition. It was of the genuine regulation kind on all points that could come up. As he had never once thought of the apparition he had seen being a manufactured article, he had been much worried about it. He thought that at the very least it meant an end to his good luck. He declared that the string I had given him surpassed any-

thing he had ever seen or heard of in the way of a charm; it always brought the wished-for wind, perhaps not at once, but still in very good time. He said that after some partial failures he had hit upon the plan of having his little girl tie in the winds for her papa. "She does it," said he, "with her little prayers, and when I untie the knots and the little prayers fly out, the Sky-Sifter herself could not bring the 'Nancy' a better breeze."

I took one of the men of the "Nancy," and, going up town, had him select for me a first-class sailor outfit, bag and all. When I told him that I was to be his shipmate, he did not seem particularly well pleased. I mentioned this to the Captain as a bad sign. He said: "It comes of old Tarry's talk. The old fellow, Tarry, is confident that you have dealings with the evil one, and he has seen you in so many different shapes as to toggery, and all else, that nothing can drive his notions out of his head. When he found out where we were in the lake, at the time the fiery demon made its appearance, he actually thought his shot had done for either you or the Sky-Sifter, and told the men so."

Captain Walker then told me to take an early opportunity of relating to the men my adventures among the Indians, and my contrivance for frightening them, without a hint that anyone had informed me of the "Nancy's" adventure with the fiery giant on the lake. "Let them draw their own conclusions," said he, "and they will then see what a simple thing gave them a great fright."

That night I told the whole story. They laughed heartily, and told me how badly frightened "old Tarry" had been at the thing, but not a man among them had cared a "chaw terbacker for it." They had put it up to be a boat adrift, with a flaming fishing-jack stuck up in front. However, after my story I found the men more free and hearty with me, and in a day or two I was quite at home in the forecastle.

I made several trips with Captain Walker that were quite successful, and, though the wind was not always just right, he couldn't see it. It made him "hot" to say that a breeze was slow in coming. "Never you mind," he would say, "the little girl knows what she is about." All his good luck was now brought about by the little girl. The men were wont to joke among themselves, at times, about the "sweet little girl that sits up aloft to give a fair wind to poor Jack;" still, when she sometimes came aboard the "Nancy," at Buffalo, the men looked upon her as something more than human—she was their "mascot."

The "Nancy" had the name of being the luckiest craft on the lake; Captain Walker had many good offers for her, and, having a goodly share of worldly wealth in store, he at last sold her at the earnest solicitation of his wife, and bought a fine farm in Knox County, Ohio, near Fredericktown, about sixty miles South of Sandusky.

When Captain Walker turned the vessel over to the new owners, I left her, as I did not like the man put in command.

I soon shipped on the brig "Ontario," Captain Har-

vey, much to the consternation of old "Tarry"—Dick Dunstan. A man who went with me from the "Nancy" gave me a good name, and "Tarry" cooled down somewhat, yet he still muttered on the sly that one day all hands would see something awful happen. We made a few lucky trips, and the men laughed at "Tarry" about his predictions, but he said the good luck was what most frightened him; it always began that way. He stoutly maintained that he had shot a genuine fiery devil, and that the other version of the story was one made up by myself and Captain Walker to quiet the "Nancy's" men. As he had told his story to all the "Ontario's" men, he would not be cheated of his glory.



CHAPTER XLVIII.

PHANTOM SHIPS AND OTHER WONDERS OF THE SEA.

The "great deep" is ever old, yet ever new. From the earliest ages there have been told tales of the sea, and to-day there are still new tales to be told. Grand is what is said in the Bible of the "great deep," and grand is that line in which Homer speaks of "The innumerable smiles of the many-voiced sea." The poets of every age have described the sea in all its moods, and the sailors of every land have told of its monsters, its sirens, and its many marvels, as of "Ships dim-discovered, dropping from the clouds."

The Norsemen of old told of the "kraken," a mon-

ster seen off the coast of Norway and sometimes mistaken for an island by parties who landed upon it, and who were terrified at finding it slowly sink or begin moving away. Pliny speaks of a sea-monster in the Straits of Gibraltar which barred the entrance of ships.

In the old times mariners told of islands that seemed to sail about like ships, or float about like rafts, being now seen in one place and again in another. These stories were, after a time, set down as mere sailors' yarns, but, of late years, the greater part are found to have been grounded on truth. Graham's Island came up in 1861, near Sicily, then vanished. In 1863 it reappeared, but soon to sink from view, and over the spot there is now over seven hundred fathoms of water. In the harbor of the island of Santañini, near Rhodes, in 1866, a small island came to the surface, and on it were two well-preserved houses of solid masonry. It was an old island that had gone down to the bottom of the sea, but, after a nap of a few centuries, had concluded to come up and see how the world wagged. In 1783 an island, that was named Nynoe, suddenly rose above the sea off the coast of Iceland, and, at the end of the year, sank out of sight. The same thing has frequently happened among the Azores, and quite often in hundreds of other parts of the world.

In the lifetime of the present generation there have been over fifty instances of islands either coming to the surface of the sea or sinking below it, with several cases in which the same island performed both operations. As this is seen to be going on in our own time, it may well be supposed that it was the same in the days of

the old Norsemen and prowling Vikings. It is by no means improbable that these ancient rovers of the sea may have witnessed the coming up of islands, and may have even been encamped on some when they settled back into the depths from which they arose. Such a phenomenon would very naturally give the rovers the idea that what they had taken to be an island was some lazy monster of the deep, whose back was covered with sand and shells. So, doubtless, arose the story of the "kraken," and the monster of the Straits of Gibraltar was probably of the same kind.

However, there are immense creatures in the sea—not taking account of whales and the sea serpent. In 1819 one of these, a thing like a snail or a leech, some rods in length and of many tons weight, was thrown on shore near Bombay by a tidal wave. It was left high above all ordinary tides, in which situation it required nearly a whole year for it to rot away. The stench from the mass was so great that it became necessary to alter the course of the road that was usually traveled, as no means could be thought of by which the huge carcass could be moved back into the sea. The creature at last rotted wholly away, and it was then discovered that, huge as it was, not a bone was left behind. As the washing ashore of this lubberly monster is well authenticated, we need not laugh very loud or long at the stories the Norwegians tell of their "kraken."

Again, there are at times seen at sea clouds that bear such a striking resemblance to land as would deceive the "Ancient Mariner" himself. To this phenomenon sailors give the name of "Cape Flyaway." Being

blown away from such supposed capes or islands, and unable to find them again, the perplexed navigators have believed the land to have sunk while they were cruising round in search of it. These flyaway capes are a certain indication of a heavy storm.

Even the story of Sindbad, of the island of load-stone which drew all the iron spikes out of the vessel passing too near it, is now found not to be so preposterous as it was supposed at one time to be. At Tristan d'Acunha, one of three islands near the Cape of Good Hope (the others are the Nightingale and Inaccessible), are such mountain masses of pure magnetic iron that the compasses of all ships are affected when sailing past. In that region are volcanoes that pour down into the sea, at times, lava that contains a considerable per cent of iron. When this lava, as it floats on the sea, reaches a point near the iron mountain, all the pieces set out and steer directly to its base, where they cling. No matter how often they are torn loose and carried back by the waves, they always return, till at last they are ground to powder.

Sailors encounter on the immeasurable wilds of the ocean many wonderful aerial and electrical phenomena. Among the latter are St. Elmo's light, or *corpo santo*, or corposant, all of which names are given by sailors and others to the balls of electric fire which, in the time of a storm, often appear on the spars of a vessel. The sailors have many superstitions about these strange and beautiful lights. These lights were known to the sailors in ancient times. If only one flame appeared the Romans called it "Helen," and said the worst of

the storm was yet to come; to two or more lights they gave the name of Castor and Pollux, and said the storm would soon end.

On the Great Lakes of America there may be fewer wonders than on the great world-wide ocean, but the dangers are almost as great, and the hardships about as many. However, the sailor seldom thinks of dangers until they are upon him. He has faith in the words of Dibden's old song—

“There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft
To keep watch for the life of poor Jack.”

The hard work he takes as a matter of course. One of his commandments is—

“Six days shalt thou labor and do all thou art able,
On the seventh holy-stone the deck and scrub the cable.”

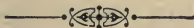
His food is always coarse and poor, and too often he has set before him ancient “salt horse” instead of good sound beef. On such occasions he philosophically accepts the situation, and, on recognizing an old acquaintance in the dish before him, mournfully sings—

“Salt horse, salt horse, I say, what brought you here,
From Saccarappa Point to Portland pier?”

But what I set out to relate was a curious experience I once had, not on the boundless ocean, but on Lake Erie, a sheet of water only about two hundred and forty miles long and some sixty miles wide in the broadest parts. Thus, in case of a storm, that which is the sailor's greatest terror, land, is ever present on all sides, let the wind blow from what quarter it may.

Lake Erie is noted for its violent storms, which often cause disastrous shipwrecks, attended with fearful loss of life. Owing to the shallowness of the lake (it aver-

ages only one hundred and twenty feet, and two hundred and seventy is its greatest depth), there are liable to be tremendous ground-swells, causing short, chopping, pitching, and dangerous seas. Also, on account of the small number of good harbors, the navigation is peculiarly difficult and dangerous. There is here no running before the wind, in case of a big storm, for a day, or a week, as in the wide ocean. Land is always at hand in some quarter, and "eternal vigilance" is the price of life.



CHAPTER XLIX.

WE ENCOUNTER A PHANTOM SHIP—AN AWFUL STORM—GHOSTS AND OTHER WONDERS—"PAUVRE PETITE!"—ALL IS WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

As before remarked, the "Ontario" made a number of successful trips, but this was now to change. In October, 1839, we left Buffalo for Toledo in company with a number of other vessels. It was near the end of October, and about the beginning of the stormy season, which is usually in November and December, on these lakes. The sky had an unusually murky look, even directly overhead, the sun at noon looking like a ball of red fire. It seemed, however, that the red haze was mostly smoke, and it was thought there were great forest fires somewhere to the northward, up the lakes.

One old sailor, however, was very uneasy. He said

there was more fog than smoke in the air. He called it a "dry fog," and said it meant mischief. He said he had been watching this dry fog, and found it had been thickening for two days. "It is damming up," said he.

When asked what he meant by damming up, he said: "Why, it is piling up between two winds—between this wind from the north and one that is trying to come up from the southward. When that wind does come from off south it will tear things. I don't want to be afloat when the point of stagnation is pushed out over the lake and busts up in a fight between the two winds. I've seed it do that business once or twice and I don't want any more of it. Besides, the rats are leavin' the brig. I saw 'em at it last night. They was running along the cable in sich a steady stream that one was treadin' on the tail of another."

While old "Bombay," as we called the old salt, was muttering out these dismal prognostications to a group of half a dozen attentive sailors, Captain Harvey had edged up near enough to hear his last words. "What's that you say about rats leaving the brig, you old deep sea growler? Don't you know that here on the lakes the rats are always coming aboard and going ashore? They visit back and forth between the towns. What you saw was only a lot of Sandusky rats that came up with us for a week's visit to their Buffalo friends. Do you suppose they are such fools as to be carried back to Toledo? If you do it shows that you still have a good deal to learn about the rats of Lake Erie. Go below and take a snooze!"

Old Bombay turned his quid in his cheek, and slouched forward with an eye cocked at the sky.

After the Captain went away, one of the men said: "It's all very fine to talk about rats visiting back and forth, but I'll bet a month's pay that a squint at the barometer this moment will show that it is falling. The rats here on these lakes are cunning critters; they are pretty good barometers themselves. They don't like to be jammed in shifting cargo or to be swimming about below half drowned. When they find a big storm brewing they go ashore if they can get there."

"Good logic," said another man, "and the Captain knows it as well as any of us."

Next, the cook came to the Captain, and, saying he was sick, asked to lay off that trip. The Captain sent him back to his galley with a flea in his ear.

Somehow we all felt uneasy. The very hair of our old cat seemed to stand on end with electricity, or something else that was in the air, and the cocks we had aboard crowed incessantly.

In the evening, when we were about to sail, old "Bombay" was found to be missing. Two men were sent to bring him aboard. They came back and reported that they could not find him, but they had heard that he was somewhere up town "drunk as a biled owl." The Captain swore blue blazes for about five minutes, and then ordered all hands to make sail.

The wind was still blowing from the north when we left the harbor of Buffalo, but it did not appear to move the red haze that filled the air a single inch—that seemed to stand still in spite of the breeze.

Although the majority of us were mere fresh-water sailors, still, men of sense may learn something on fresh water—particularly on such inland seas as are our Great Lakes. We did not at all like the looks of things—least of all occasional bright, saffron-colored streaks that flashed through the copper-hued sky to the south and southwestward. The light that came through these opening and closing chinks in the red haze was so bright that there seemed to be another sun in the south. This was strange, as the real sun had, for nearly an hour, been below the horizon in the west.

“What are you all staring at, you moon-calves?” cried the Captain. “Is this the first time you ever saw a smoky sky? I tell you it is nothing but smoke from some of the pineries up along the lakes!” As the Captain walked away one of the men muttered that he thought he knew the difference between “pine smoke and brick dust.” Still there was no increase of wind. It held about the same. The next morning we were some distance above Long Point, near the Canada shore, when the saffron streaks in the southwest opened wider than they had before been seen. The Captain ordered in several sails, and hardly were they in before the wind came from the southwest, blowing a perfect gale. Yet, with our reduced sail, we were able to weather it very comfortably.

Some of the men said that after all it must have been “mostly smoke,” or that it was a “big preparation that produced but little.” But I could see that Captain Harvey was still uneasy. He frequently left the deck and went below to his cabin. The steward said to us

in a whisper: "'Fraid we's gwine to ketch de berry debble 'fore long. Cap'n Harvey all time come down to look at de barometure." The Captain was very uneasy. Some of the men reported hearing him mutter to himself as he stood gazing to the windward: "I never saw a thing hold off so."

Presently he ordered the carpenter to go below, with two men, among the cargo and brace everything. Still we saw no change in either wind or sky. As the sun sank below the horizon that evening it looked as big as a cart wheel and was as red as blood. A little after dark the wind from the north got the upper hand. It was cold and misty—very different from what it had been before and from the hot south wind it was driving back.

An old Lake Michigander whispered to me: "No pine smoke in this. I know the taste of it—it comes square from the North Pole! The battle between the two winds will begin before midnight—the battle that old Bombay spoke about—and it will be fought out right over this lake."

The mist that came with the north wind seemed to take all the red dust out of the air and turn everything gray. It was not rain, but a sort of thin, wet fog. Through this we seemed to be able to see further ahead than we had done before in the red haze. Whether it was really the case I do not know, as in an atmosphere of varying density it is extremely difficult, after nightfall, to tell whether the red and green lights of an approaching vessel are two hundred yards or a mile away.

About nine o'clock at night, as I was sitting on the

capstan-head, Captain Harvey came forward. He rested his arm on the side of the capstan-head and stood gazing forward into the gray mist. He said, as though speaking to himself: "It will be a dirty night, if nothing worse."

The next instant he sprang erect, and stamping the deck, yelled: "Starboard your helm!—hard a-starboard!"

Before our eyes, and apparently bearing directly down upon us, was a large vessel under about the same sail as we were ourselves carrying. She seemed to have come straight up from the bottom of the lake. I had been looking directly forward, where all was apparently clear, when, without a moment's warning, and as if it had sprung out of nothing, the huge vessel—twice as large as any I had ever seen on the lake—was dashing at us. The whole thing for a moment seemed to tower above us, its lights twice the height of our own; then, when we were holding our breath for the grand crash, all melted away. We seemed to pass directly through it.

"My God!" cried the Captain, "what was it? Did you see that vessel?"

"Certainly, I did," said I, "and I thought we were gone."

"It beats me," said the Captain, and he then turned about and asked the man at the wheel if he had seen a big vessel pass.

"We passed no vessel," said the man, "but just as you called out, sir, I thought I saw something loom up ahead. I was just going to 'port,' when you sung out 'starboard.'"

“Devilish strange!” said the Captain. “What did she look like?”

“Well, I didn’t see much shape to her, but her lights looked very high, and a little dim, sir.”

Two of the men who had been on deck were called up and questioned. Both had seen the big craft. One said that when the Captain called out to the man at the wheel the strange vessel went straight to the bottom of the lake; the other, old Tarry, said she fell right back into the mist, and sailed away against the wind. Both were sure that nothing had passed us.

The Captain said nothing to this, but went at once to his cabin. We all stood looking at one another aghast. In a moment he was up again, and we heard him say to the first mate: “Mr. Walters, make all snug; the devil is coming!”

Those of us who had seen the phantom ship thought the devil had already come. Though the wind had not increased we were ordered aloft to take a double reef in the topsails.

The wind was still from the north. About the time we returned to the deck the whole sky to the southwest seemed to open and a yellow glare shot out that reached nearly to the zenith. Overhead were immense inky clouds that seemed to be moving slowly in from all quarters and circling about in the yellow light.

Just here a thing occurred that I never saw before, nor since, on the lakes, though at sea, about the West Indies, it is a not uncommon phenomenon. A round ball of fire, as large as the full moon, but much redder, started from one big black cloud and slowly moved

across to another. Then came an explosion that seemed to shatter the whole dome of heaven. A moment after there came a puff or two of hot wind from the south, then there burst forth from that quarter such a hurricane as made the whole lake hiss and boil like a pot. The direction of the waves was changed, and the water was heaped up in mounds. There seemed to be no direction to the waves for a time—all appeared to be dancing up and down, churning up the mud of the very bottom of the lake. Our vessel was whirled and tossed to all points of the compass, even with two men at the wheel; besides, in the first grand whirl and commotion, we did not know which way to head, one course being about as safe as another.

If any orders were given at this time no one heard them. At last we were sent aloft to close reef topsails, the rain then pouring down in a deluge. The men at the wheel could do nothing with the vessel, and we shipped sea after sea. One of these carried away the galley and the cook with it. The hurricane struck us about midnight and raged for nearly two hours, during which we could do nothing but hold on, so great and frequent were the seas we had shipped. Then the blow ceased as suddenly as it had commenced, though there was still quite a gale from the southward. There was still a yellow glare overhead. This cast a dim light on the deck. During the height of the storm there had been a crash above, and part of the topmast, or something else from aloft, had come down to the deck and lay piled against the foremast. The Captain, after setting a sail or two to hold the brig steady, gave orders

to clear away the wreckage that lay about the bottom of the foremast, then went below.

In less than a minute he came flying up from his cabin, yelling that the cook was down there. This was startling, as all hands by this time knew that the cook had gone overboard with his galley.

The Captain was so frightened that he made no secret of it, even before the men. He swore that the cook or his ghost was in the cabin. The first mate went down into the cabin and soon came back, saying nothing, either living or dead, in the shape of a man, was down there.

About this time, however, there was a wild yell forward, and the men who had been set to clear away the wreckage at the foot of the foremast, came running aft in a body, old Tarry in the lead.

“There is a dead woman forward!” cried old Tarry.

“No, it’s a dead baby,” screamed another.

“What are you fools howling about?” cried the Captain, whose courage had returned when assured that the cook’s ghost had not taken possession of his cabin. “You cowardly lubbers, are you frightened at a bunch of sail cloth? Go back at once and clear away that wreckage.”

“There’s a woman there,” said old Tarry. “I felt her hair and face.”

“A baby,” said the other, “for I got hold of its hand.”

“Have you lost your wits?” cried the Captain. “You know there is neither woman nor child aboard the brig. Go back and clear away.”

The men did not move. "I'll go and see what's there," said the old Lake Michigander. "Go along with you, then," said the Captain.

In half a minute the old fresh-water "salt" came back, laughing. "It's nothing but a dog," said he, "but d——n if I know how he got there."

"A dog!" exclaimed the Captain. "That's strange; the only animal we have aboard is a good-for-nothing old tomcat, and I warrant he's snug below in his den. Is the dog alive?"

"D——n if I know," said old Michigan—"I guess not very."

"I'll go and see," said the first mate, and he went forward.

In a moment he came tearing back like mad. "A woman, Captain—there's a woman there!" The Captain did not answer. Nobody said a word. I heard some one's teeth chattering, and, turning to see who was behind me, I happened to shut my mouth, when I discovered they were my own.

After waiting for some time for the Captain to speak, the first mate said: "Captain, it's strange and awful, but there is really a dead woman forward."

"I heard you, Mr. Walters," said the Captain; then, lowering his voice, he added—"and I shouldn't wonder if the cook isn't down in the cabin again."

Again there was silence. The men were all huddled about their officers, and there were, no doubt, some ghastly faces there, could they have been seen. The man at the wheel was becoming alarmed, and asked, once or twice, what was wrong. Some one growled out: "Nothing, Jim."

“If we had a light,” said the Captain—and then proceeded no further.

“I’ll go down into the cabin and get one,” said old Michigan, greatly to the surprise and relief of all hands.

He was gone some time, but at last came back swinging a lighted lantern.

With the old fellow and his light in the lead, we all went forward in a body. “Good God!” cried the old sailor, as he reached the foot of the mast and held down the light.

All crowded up, and there, amid pieces of spars, ropes, and other drift, we saw lying a drowned woman, a child, and a great dog.

Great was the wonder of all present. It was soon found that the child had been tightly bound on the woman’s back, and that the woman was tied securely to the body of an immense Newfoundland dog. All were tangled among some wreckage, and had in some way been washed aboard us in one of the seas we had shipped, lodging among our own wreckage at the foot of the foremast.

In a moment pity drove the fear of ghosts, goblins, and phantom ships out of all hearts. The lashings that held the woman and child were cut, and their bodies were tenderly carried into the cabin. Nothing could be done but to decently compose their limbs, as both were past all human aid. By the time all this had been done, streaks of gray began to appear in the east. Daylight found us pretty badly battered and crippled, both alow and aloft. We were in sight of land, and by ten o’clock in the morning had managed to work our

way into Port Stanley, a small place on the Canadian shore, about twenty-five miles from the more important interior town of London.

Great was the commotion our arrival created in the town. The dead mother and child brought all the women in the place to the church to which we had carried the bodies. Even the dog was carried there and laid in the porch, for he had on him a collar that might help in the identification of the dead mother and babe. On the plate of the collar was engraved the word "Navigator." This was, evidently, we thought, the name of the dog. A ring on the finger of the drowned woman, who was young and beautiful, even in death, would also help in the identification, as it contained some initials; besides, the ladies who had charge of the bodies would be likely to find marks on the clothing of both mother and child.

As we lay in Port Stanley repairing damages, the strange occurrences of the previous night kept the tongues of our men wagging, as was very natural. That the bodies of the woman, child, and dog were thrown on the deck of our vessel with one of the heavy seas we had shipped, seemed the natural explanation of their presence, but this the old sailors would not allow. They said the bodies were deposited there by the phantom ship. They asserted that, though those aboard the phantom ship did not succeed in getting the bodies aboard of us on their first visit, because of their being discovered, yet they were not to be thwarted; they had returned in the midst of the roar of the hurricane, the crash of thunder, and the deluge of rain. It was then,

when all was uproar and confusion, that the ghostly crew had pitched the bodies aboard the brig. Not an old tar among our men but was ready to swear to this, and one or two—old Tarry of the number—now began to remember having caught a glimpse of some such transaction during the height of the storm. They had been a good deal blinded by the lightning, but were quite sure they saw the outlines of a big vessel alongside us, and something pitched from the strange craft to the deck of the brig. Old Tarry was ready to swear to it.

Toward evening a small sloop, with half a dozen persons aboard, came down the lake and ran up alongside of us. Those aboard told us that a great number of vessels had been lost, and the whole lake was full of wreckage. Hundreds of lives had been lost. They informed us that they were from a place further up the lake, near Pointe au Pins, and they had come out that morning in search of friends and fellow-townsmen who had been across to Cleveland in a small schooner. They feared that their friends had been out in the storm, and perhaps they had been wrecked. Had we seen anywhere a little schooner called the "Navigator?"

Our Captain told them we had seen no craft bearing that name. "But," said he, "we found a dog that has the word 'Navigator' engraved on his collar," and he then began to tell the strange story of the woman, child, and dog being washed aboard the brig.

When the Captain began to describe the dress and appearance of the woman and child, an old man standing among those on the deck of the sloop began to tear

his grey locks and beard. "*Mon Dieu ! Mon Dieu !*" cried he—" *Mon Dieu, Celeste ! Mon Dieu, Celeste, pauvre petite !*"

One of the men on the sloop told the Captain of our brig that the big dog belonged to the schooner they were in search of. "As for the poor lady and child," said he, "well, we may guess," and he slightly inclined his head toward the sobbing old man.

A plank was put out from the sloop, and two young men led the weeping old gentleman ashore, in order to go up to the church to see the bodies. "*Mon Dieu ! Mon Dieu ! Mon Dieu ! Celeste, pauvre petite !*" moaned the poor old man at every step he took.

The men who remained on the sloop said the drowned woman and child were doubtless the daughter and granddaughter of the weeping old Frenchman. His son-in-law, an American, formerly of Cleveland, was owner of the schooner "Navigator." He had taken his wife on his last trip that she might make a short visit to his people, as they had not yet seen his little daughter and first-born child.

With the assistance of workmen from the shore we had repaired damages by midnight, when we at once put to sea, Captain Harvey being anxious to reach Toledo, distant one hundred and fifty-seven miles, as soon as possible.

The wind was fair and the lake no longer rough as we sailed out of Port Stanley. There was a small moon, and the storm having cleared the atmosphere it was fairly light. There were still lights in the church and we could hear singing as we left the little harbor.

After we had laid our course up the lake we saw much floating wreckage and were obliged to keep a bright look-out ahead. About three o'clock in the morning I was awakened by an unusual shouting and tramping, and a moment after the second mate came thumping at the forecastle, shouting: "All hands on deck!" We found the brig hove to and men getting out a boat. Nearly a beam, and only about one hundred yards away, we could see a small dismasted vessel with her deck almost on a level with the water.

We were told that a man had hailed the brig from the wreck and they were getting out the boat in order to bring him off. The Captain, who was looking through his glass, said he could see a man standing by the stump of one of the masts. Our men soon had him aboard the brig, and there was not much time to spare, as the water-logged wreck was in a sinking condition. Her stern was already under water, but her bow was tilted up three or four feet.

Almost as soon as the boat reached the brig's side our men cried out: "It's the 'Navigator'—the little schooner from which the woman, child, and dog were lost!"

Although the young sailor who was rescued was a good deal exhausted, he was soon able to satisfy our curiosity. His story, in a word, was that most of the crew went over with the masts. The man at the wheel was washed overboard. The Captain, who was also the owner, went next. Another man was knocked over and one went crazy, apparently, and jumped overboard. The young sailor was then left alone with the

Captain's wife and child, and the dog. He did not know the whereabouts of the vessel, but thought she must soon go ashore somewhere on the Canada side. He thought that by keeping her out of the troughs of the waves and headed before the wind, she would, in a short time, beach herself somewhere. He knew the lady to be an expert swimmer, therefore, he strapped her child on her back, tied a line about the dog's chest and securely knotted the other end about the woman's waist.

This done, he stationed her by the stump of the foremast, telling her to hold on there till the schooner struck, when, if she were washed over, the big Newfoundland dog would tow her ashore, even though unable to do much swimming herself. The young man then went to the wheel to try to keep the craft properly headed; but, water-logged as she was, he could do little with her. The waves seemed tumbling in in all directions. The rolling little craft got into a trough; a sea was shipped; he heard a shriek, and, running forward, found that woman, dog and all had disappeared—had evidently been washed overboard. Such was the story of the young sailor, and we saw no reason to doubt its truth. Before reaching Toledo we saw much wreckage, but found no more castaways to rescue. At Toledo we heard many frightful tales of the destructiveness of the storm, and saw many people mourning.

When we got back to Buffalo, and had a little leisure, the old Lake Michigander and I one day took a stroll up town. In about the first "rum-pit" we entered we found old "Bombay."

The old salt promptly acknowledged that he deserted because he feared a big storm on the lake. Out in the ocean, where was plenty of sea-room, he said he "would not have cared a rap for it," and he roared out—

"But sailors are born for all weathers—
Great guns, blow high, blow low;
Our duty keeps us to our tethers,
And where the wind drives, we must go."

By the time we had finished our account of the phantom ship and the other wonders that befell us, "the old man of Lake Michigan" began to be merry, and he rumbled out—

"The storm came on thicker and faster,
And black just as pitch was the sky,
When truly a doleful disaster,
Befell my poor shipmates and I."

Curiously enough, that which seemed most to impress old "Bombay" was the Captain having seen the ghost of the cook in his cabin.

He said he was once aboard a vessel that sailed from Newcastle-on-Tyne. Very soon, the cook died. A few days after his funeral, the second mate, and all hands who were on deck, saw the cook walking ahead of the vessel. There was no mistake; it was the cook—gait, dress and all. The second mate was as badly frightened as the men. He ran down to the cabin and told the Captain that the cook was walking ahead of the vessel, and all the crew were on deck to look at him.

Being annoyed at being disturbed in his nap by such a story, the Captain told the second mate to go back and steer the ship toward Newcastle, that they might see which would first reach the port.

However, the Captain went on deck. He took a look at the object towards which all hands were staring. He seemed quite thunderstruck. He was as pale as a ghost. "If it ain't the cook, d——n my eyes," said he.

Seeing the Captain knock under, there was a regular panic. Every man dropped his work. Even the man at the wheel let go the spokes and came forward, when, had it not been almost a calm, the vessel might have got into trouble.

As all were gazing, the cook took off his cap, made a bow, and went down out of sight. "To-day," said old Bombay, "folks at Newcastle will tell you how the cook was seen walking on the water."

"About the ghost of your Newcastle cook I don't pretend to know," said the old Michigander, "but I do happen to know about the ghost that Captain Harvey seed in his cabin; but you must promise to keep shady."

We promised to say nothing.

"Well, boys," said he, "I was the ghost the Captain seed. I knowed he seldom kept his grog-case locked, and I had slipped down there to get a nip to take the chill of the storm out of me.

"I wear a cap like one the cook wore when off duty, and am of about the same build, so at a back view I look a little like the cook did.

"But what got the Captain was this: You know the cook had the asthma and was given to strange wheezings and whistlings in the throat. Well, I had just swallowed a monstrous dose of rum when the Captain

came into the cabin. It was almost strangling me. I wanted to cough, but didn't dare do it. I tried to smother the cough, when it came out between my teeth in just such a wheeze as the cook used to make. That settled it with the Captain and he dashed away like mad.

"I didn't know what to make of his running away like that just when I thought I was in danger of losing my scalp, but of course I slipped out of there without loss of time. When I was safe on deck it was meat and drink for me to hear the Captain telling about the ghost of the cook."

"I can understand now," said I, "why you were so bold and ready to go into the cabin for the lantern."

"Well, I wanted another suck at the bottle and I got it. The ghosts of all the cooks—good God! look there!" and old Lake Michigan tried to dive under the table at which we were seated.

Old Bombay, though usually red as a turkey cock, turned white, and I felt cold chills about the heart, for marching straight up to our table came the cook! He had been picked off some wreckage the morning after the storm, and had been in Buffalo two or three days nursing his bruises and recuperating.

Seeing our cook still in the land of the living, old Bombay whispered in my ear: "As for the Newcastle cook that walked on the water, do you know that before we quit the spot we found that the ghost was only a piece of the top of a mast that went bobbing along before us. Devil a thing else."

And now I may say that a probable explanation of

the miracle of my phantom ship may be found in the phenomenon of the "Spectre of the Brocken," in the Hartz Mountains. It was the greatly magnified image of our own vessel thrown for a moment upon a passing cloud of mist. Such images are at times thrown upward to clouds half a mile or more in height. Following is an instance: In the old colonial days of America, a certain ship was anxiously expected from England. On a Sunday afternoon, after a great storm, she was seen floating in the air. Every spar was so clearly represented that there was no question of the identity of the vessel thus painted in the clouds; but that was the last that was ever seen of the ill-fated ship.

Old "Tarry" took his bag and left the "Ontario" as soon as we reached Buffalo. He reminded Captain Harvey and all hands that he had foretold what would happen to any craft on which I sailed—sooner or later awful things would be seen. He said that though I might not be the old boss devil himself, it was quite plain that I was his "first mate." No money would have hired him to ship in the same vessel with me, and even ashore he gave me a wide berth, bawling out "Avast!" the moment he saw me, and taking a different tack. In his opinion I was responsible for the appearance of the phantom ship and for all else that happened the night of the storm. Indeed, so frightened was the old fellow that he left the lakes and went back to the ocean, swearing that was the only safe place.

CHAPTER L.

MY AUNT DEVELOPS THE "GIFT OF TONGUES," AND IS CAPTURED BY THE MORMONS—I RESUME SAILOR LIFE—EXPERIENCE AS A FUR TRADER ON LAKE SUPERIOR.

I remained nearly a fortnight in Buffalo waiting for Captain Harvey to secure a cargo to his liking. Having more time at my disposal than for a considerable period previously, I spent a day or two about the city, hoping somewhere to come upon Tom, my pseudo aunt's coachman, for I was curious to learn how the old lady was getting on and what was her latest freak. After the summary dismissal I had suffered at the old woman's hands, I felt no inclination to again darken the door of her castle. A letter from my mother had informed me that her monthly allowance had been cut off, therefore I saw that the threat the fiery old creature made at the time of my abrupt departure from her mansion was not an idle one.

At last I found Tom at a large livery stable, where he had a good position. He informed me that Mrs. Bardsley had not escaped the Mormons as easily as she had rid herself of the Millerites. In the old Mormon elder she had found more than her match. As Tom expressed it—"The elder thundered her blind" with the new doctrine and the wrath to come upon all except God's chosen.

In short, I learned from Tom that besides the "thundering" he did himself, the elder brought to the attack half a dozen "Saints," male and female; in

fact that they turned the house into a sort of tabernacle, and at last quite captured the old lady when they made her believe that she had the "gift of tongues," the elder translating the nonsensical sounds she uttered, and declaring that it was a language spoken before the deluge. The old lady was hailed by all the Saints as a prophetess. Being thus established she would gabble for an hour on the slightest provocation.

Being now an acknowledged seeress, God's chosen people could not get on without her—she had become "an instrument for the salvation of souls." As the Saints were to be guided by the revelations she made for their good, when speaking in the tongue of the Mighty One who had been on the earth before the flood (perhaps, as Tom suggested, the devil), it would be necessary for her to go to Nauvoo, and to go there it would be necessary for her to turn into cash all her Buffalo possessions.

The "gift of tongues" appeared to be to the old lady as big a card as the "urim" for which she had so thirsted. It was true, however, that she was obliged to depend upon the elder for the translation of what she said. Presently the elder, in his translation, declared that the "Mighty One" said his mouth-piece must sell all and go forth to comfort the chosen of the new Zion. This, as Tom said, was "a clincher." Forced to the brink, the old lady took the plunge; she sold all and went West with the elder and his little flock. With her the old woman took most of her household, the elder "splicing" Julia and the gardener when they were on the eve of departure.

Tom had heard nothing from any of the party after they left Buffalo. A "dead-set" had been made at him by the elder and others of the Saints, both male and female, but he fought shy of them, "forting up" in the stables; and when they began to besiege him there with hymns and exhortations, he threw up his position of coachman and left the place. 'Tom was inclined to believe that the war was designedly carried into his stronghold, as he said he noticed that as soon as he was driven forth the elder "mounted the box and handled the ribbons."

It was plain to me that Mrs. Bardsley cared very little about the Mormon religion. She was taken with the notion of being revered as an oracle or priestess, and that of speaking in unknown tongues, and the elder had struck while the iron was hot.

There being nothing to confine me to Buffalo, I now for several years made my headquarters at various ports on Lake Erie, for after a trip or two I left the "Ontario" and Captain Harvey to go on vessels trading in the upper lakes. I did this in order to see new regions and because the pay was better; also, I again began to wish to see some of my old Indian friends, particularly the Sky-Sifter, my foster-mother. I had no desire to see her daughters, however, for I was sure that they had done much to harm me. At no place on Lake Michigan could I hear of such people as I described, though I saw many Indians. One or two of these had heard of the fleets of canoes I described, and these were of the opinion that the people they carried had gone northward into Lake

Superior. Finding at last, one season, a schooner that was going up into Superior on a trading trip, I bargained to go in her, the owner agreeing to allow me to do a certain amount of trading in furs on my own account.

This trip proved both pleasant and profitable, and while making it I saw many Indians at the various points where we stopped to trade. Although the languages of the tribes I saw were strange to me, I found my knowledge of the Indian sign language of great use; but much more useful were my "medicine grips" and signs, for these at once won the hearts of those among the chiefs and leading men who were of the initiated and understood them. All these at once called me brother. As I still kept my "totem," I showed it to some of the chiefs, and explained to them (for all could speak in broken English) how I came to wear it, and that I was a Mohawk. They knew of the Mohawks, and where they lived. Word was soon passed, in every place, that I was a Mohawk and a "turtle;" then I found myself everywhere called the "White Turtle." All who had the same totem (the turtle) at once claimed me as a brother.

This was of great advantage to me in trade. All wanted to trade with me, and I was soon up to my limit in my purchases. The owner of the schooner had seen how things were going. He would not permit me to cease the traffic, but made me his trader at a good per cent. This gave me so much prominence that in the eyes of the Indians, at all the towns and posts, I was the owner of the schooner and all else. The fact

that I gave a medicine feast at all places where there were many Indians, before opening trade, also did a good deal to strengthen this notion. As this arrangement was immensely to the advantage of the real owner, he was well satisfied to be temporarily thrown into the background.

At all places I inquired of the leading medicine men for news of the Sky-Sifter, but could learn nothing definite until we arrived at the little town of Fond Du Lac, on the St. Louis River, some twenty miles up from where it enters Lake Superior. There I found a medicine man who could tell me something, though he did not know my foster-mother by the name of "Ga-on-yewas," the Sifter of the Skies, or any of her people by names familiar to me. He knew of the two fleets of canoes and the many people they carried, and said the leaders were great chiefs and medicine men. They went to all the mounds and sacred places about the lakes, and for a year or two made many grand medicine feasts in a big medicine lodge that they carried with them. Their medicine was better than that of any of the great men on the lakes. He had not seen these people, but he had heard that they lived always among the islands of the lakes. Last season they had all gone away, far away from the lakes toward the northwest. He had heard they were going to the great Mackenzie River—nobody knew where—it was a great mystery. They had much money and bought many ponies, going away with a train of three thousand, he had been told.

I could learn nothing more from the man. When

pressed for further news he could only say that it was "a great mystery," that the people lived in the islands, and of all those who went to their big medicine lodge not one was left in the country—they all went away to the northwest to the Mackenzie River. Some had said they were going to cross the big water at a narrow place and go to some other world—it was a great mystery, and it was said they had dug up and carried away many things that had been buried on the tops of the mounds.

To obtain the information briefly presented above required an arduous session of over two hours with my "red brother." I could learn nothing more of my foster-mother at any place on the lakes, though many had heard of what they called a "medicine tribe" of Indians on the islands. With most of the Indians there are several large islands that are "bad medicine"—no ordinary Indian could be hired to land on such an island.

The schooner did so well on this trading trip that her owner was very anxious to have me return another season and repeat it. At first I would not promise, but when he told me that in case of our doing as well on a second trip I should be made half owner of the schooner on our return, I agreed to go out a second time. However, the trip was never made, as my friend, the owner of the schooner, died that winter of small-pox, contracted, as some thought, from some of the furs he handled, a story I never believed.

CHAPTER LI.

GOLD DISCOVERED—OFF FOR CALIFORNIA—MY PARTY
—THE BURNING OF THE STEAMER “BELLE OF
THE WEST”—A NARROW ESCAPE.

I had now been knocking about on the lakes for several years and was beginning to be very tired of the life of a sailor when, as though for my special benefit, the great California gold excitement broke out, and nothing else was to be heard of among sailors or any other class. All began to lay plans for a trip to the land of gold on the far away shores of the Pacific, at the same time gathering and treasuring up every item of news that came from the gold fields. Some of us even went so far as to spend considerable time in the pleasing task of making a lot of buckskin bags in which to stow away the pounds on pounds of gold we were sure it would be our fortune to find. Everything had a golden hue, even to boarding-house butter.

Let the reader imagine the journey to California decided upon, all preliminary arrangements made, and leave-takings with friends in Canada over. Buffalo is the appointed place of meeting for those who are to constitute my party. In that city we assembled on the seventh day of April, 1850. As some of these old comrades are doubtless still alive, I will here record their names. They were Robert Chalmers, John S. Ferrier, John Ames, James McColough, Perry Wiggins, Sand Hopkins, and M. Morton, making, with myself, a company of eight men, all Canadians.

I shall not attempt to give a detailed account of our

trip to the California gold fields, though I have a journal of our progress from day to day, with a description of the country passed through (as it then appeared), with a history of all our adventures, trials, and tribulations. A few things may, however, be worthy of being recorded here.

Almost at the outset of our journey we narrowly escaped being burned alive. Going down the Ohio River we were passengers on the ill-fated steamer, the "Belle of the West," which was destroyed by fire. Fortunately, we were in the upper cabin, and all managed to get forward; thus, when she grounded on the bank for which she was steered, we got safe ashore, though with the loss of part of our baggage.

The burning of the boat was an awful scene. Nearly one thousand persons were either burned alive or drowned. The fire having originated in the hold of the vessel, they first lifted the after hatch in an attempt to reach and extinguish it; failing in this, they tried the forward hatch, and the air thus reaching the hitherto half-smothered mass which had been ignited, the whole central part of the vessel was speedily in a blaze. When this vast column of flame was belched heavenward, as from the crater of a volcano, all who had been too late in getting forward were obliged to choose between the waters of the rapidly rushing stream and the consuming fire. Hundreds seemed to at once lose their senses—men as well as women. I saw one woman, who, in the attempt to pass forward, literally wilted and shriveled to nothing in the intense heat which proceeded from the point where the boilers were

situated. Men, too, as though they had forgotten the nature of fire, or were fascinated or rendered insane by the roaring flames, stared a moment, and then rushed headlong into the fiery furnace. A flash (as their clothing took fire), a tossing aloft of the arms, and they were gone. Even their shrieks—if they uttered any—were drowned in the roar of the flames. I saw a woman on the stern of the boat, who had with her four children. She drew them all to her, and, embracing all in her arms, looked down at the water. She hesitated a moment, and then plunged with them all, over the stern, into the rushing river.

The work of the flames was so rapidly done that in half an hour the boat had burned to the water's edge. Soon after the central pillar of flame arose, and it was seen that communication with the shore was cut off, men and women went over the sides and stern in masses. It seemed that the moment their attention was turned to the river, all were in haste to leap into it.

I visited the scene of the wreck the next day, and could discern, from the position of the charred trunks and skeletons—mostly, I think, of females—that several had never left their staterooms. The awful story of the burning of the “Belle of the West” is, however, still so well known that I need not dwell upon the many horrors of the scene.

CHAPTER LII.

SALT LAKE CITY—MY AUNT AMONG THE APOSTATES—
PITIABLE PLIGHT OF A PROPHETESS—HOW I
RESCUED HER.

We arrived at Independence, Missouri, May 4th, and took our departure from that place May 9th, with eight yoke of good oxen and two wagons. The cattle averaged sixty dollars a yoke, and the wagons cost one hundred dollars each, covers and all complete. Here, too, we laid in all necessary supplies. I shall not detail the trials and hardships of our route. As the cholera was abroad on the Plains that season the amount of suffering was unusually great, and every mile of the way we faced death in some form. When I say that the prevailing sickness and the scarcity of grass caused no fewer than seven hundred wagons, and about three thousand persons to turn back after journeying as far as Fort Laramie, it may be imagined that the terrors of that year were great. To pass a camp in which four or five persons lay dead, with two or three just dying, and several others sick and helpless, was enough to appall even the most stout-hearted, therefore it need not be said that those of but ordinary courage were thoroughly smitten with terror.

Traveling through the "Valley of the Shadow of Death"—graves to the right and graves to the left of us as we toiled on our way—we reached Salt Lake City, July 14th. There we were told of a much shorter route than that taken by wagons, through which we might "swiftly glide" on horseback, with pack

animals. We believed in this "cut-off," therefore sold oxen and wagons, and bought horses and pack animals. For the oxen we got about what we paid, but all else went for a song—a song that was sung by Mormons with voices tuned to the sharp notes of Mammon, "god of the Syrian." We still had to "pay the piper" when we bought horses and mules, and for our extra provisions and supplies they took all to the tune of prices in the large cities of the States—about St. Louis prices.

We did not get away from Salt Lake on our trip through the perilous desert cut-off until July 22d, therefore we had time in which to see a good deal of Zion and the Saints. We were camped in the suburbs of the place, and near us were scattered a score or more of miserable board shanties and log huts of dilapidated and poverty-stricken Mormons—Saints whose whole wealth consisted of great packs of lean dogs and ragged children. In this part of the holy city was a public well to which all living in the neighborhood resorted for the little water they required, for they apparently never used it except for cooking and drinking. We also procured water at this well. One day when I was drawing water, a wretched and ragged old woman came up with an old coffee boiler and stood waiting. Having filled my buckets, I filled the old lady's coffee boiler. The attention pleased her, and she thanked me very profusely. She asked where I came from, and when I told her she said she once had a friend whose home was on Grand River, Canada. I asked his name, and when in answer she pronounced

my own name, I was so astounded that I stepped back, upset, and almost flattened out, her old coffee boiler. "And, for God's sake, who are you?" cried I.

"My name is Bardsley—Mrs. Alice Bardsley—I once lived in Buffalo."

And truly it was so. After many years of separation it was thus that I met my "adopted aunt." Now that she mentioned her name, I was able to trace out and recognize her once familiar features. I was shocked and pained to see the woman of wealth, who had once been my patroness, reduced to a condition of squalor and destitution. I at once forgot her little freaks of passion, and only remembered the kindness she had, on most occasions, manifested, and the generous manner in which she had at one time extended over me her unbounded protection, treating me as though I had been her son and heir.

I took the old woman in my arms, kissed her withered cheeks, and pressed her to my bosom as though she were a bright little beauty of sixteen, and my first love. She sobbed like a child, and at the sight my eyes overflowed and sent two little streams coursing down my cheeks.

"O, my boy, my boy!" cried she, "why did I let you leave me?"

As several curious loungers and a few inquisitive women of the neighborhood began to gather about the well, I whispered the old lady to point out her house and in an hour I would come to her, when we could converse without being overheard.

She pointed to a little cabin some three hundred

yards away—a mere hut of quaking-asp poles—and as she did so tears again gushed from her eyes and sobs rent her bosom.

That moment I saw in my mind's eye the grand house and beautiful grounds in Buffalo—and in my soul I knew that the same picture was before her eyes.

Again I filled the old coffee-boiler, holes in the bottom of which were stopped with bits of rag, and, before taking up my buckets, saw her started for her home. I could have tracked her all the way thither by the trails that little streams of water from her old coffee-pot left in the dust.

When I went to her hut I found that the old lady had changed her dress and “spruced up a bit.” It was a doleful den, with a dirt floor and a stick chimney. Her furniture consisted of one chair, two stools, a rickety table, and a cupboard made of pine boxes; a curtain screened a bed in one corner of the cabin, doubtless to hide its squalor.

I need but briefly touch upon the history of the wrongs and robbery Mrs. Bardsley had suffered; it was the old story, and what hundreds of others had suffered. Suffice it to say that for a time she was honored as a prophetess and ranked with the leaders of the church. Joe Smith had soon persuaded her to place her money in trust in his hands as the head of the church, telling her that, without further care or thought on her part, all her wants would then be provided for during the remainder of her days. She did not understand that she was making a gift of her money to the church, but that she was merely giving Smith the use of it until the

affairs of the church were firmly established; besides, it was stipulated that at any time when she wanted a few hundred dollars she had only to ask for it. It is needless to say that she never was able to get back a dollar. While Joe Smith was alive he had the decency to see that she was comfortably clothed, housed, and fed, but after his death she was made to shift for herself; "was fed," as she said, "at the common trough." Although made to herd with the new converts gathered from the ends of the earth, Brigham Young had promised that she should be better provided for when the Saints were established in the "promised land." But when they reached Salt Lake, Young said he had nothing to do with Joe Smith's contracts, and knew nothing about them. If she had ever given Smith any money it had been spent in building up Nauvoo.

At last it appeared, from what I could gather, that Mrs. Bardsley got into one of her towering rages and denounced Brigham and all the leaders among the Saints as thieves and impostors, and was cut off from the church. As an apostate, she could receive no church aid, and would have starved if some among the Saints had not possessed human hearts and assisted her in secret, she repaying them as well as she could by doing plain sewing. She had tried fortune-telling, as she informed me, with a little of the old twinkle in her eye, but a Mormon "teacher" had warned her to desist just as she had worked up a paying business.

Considering what she had endured I was surprised to find the old lady still possessed of all her wits, much strength, and not a little vivacity. This she attributed

to change of climate and stirring scenes which had kept her mind alive and active. She said that before meeting me at the well she had not shed a tear since leaving Buffalo; and she asserted that the tears she had that day shed made her feel years younger—they had “lain on her heart for ten years.”

That evening I carried her a good supply of coffee, tea, sugar, and other little delicacies, causing her to shed so many tears that she declared she felt that she yet had a score of years before her, could she but get out of Mormondom.

I knew what she wanted, but as we were to leave our wagons and pack through, she could not go with me to California. The next day, however, I found a well-to-do Missourian, with several teams and wagons, who had a sick wife with a young child. I told the burly, bushy-whiskered “Pike” Mrs. Bardsley’s story, and when I had seen him draw the sleeve of his coat across his eyes two or three times, I suggested that she was just the person he wanted to look after his wife and child, and help a little about the cooking.

“By George!” cried he, slapping his thigh, “I guess that’s about so;” and, musing a moment, he asked: “When can she come?”

“This evening,” said I; “your wife needs her, and the sooner she comes the better.”

That evening I went to Mrs. Bardsley’s cabin and told her of the arrangement. She took up her bonnet and said: “Show me the way.” She was going to walk out without taking a thing with her, but I reminded her to make up a small bundle of clothes, besides

which there was nothing worth taking except the few groceries I had given her the day before.

As she was making up her bundle I saw that a little red dress and some other small things constituted the main part. "Had I, in my joy, forgotten these," said she, "I would have come back for them on foot and alone all the way, over mountains and plains."

For certain reasons I waited until it was quite dark before transferring the old lady from the cabin to the Missourian's wagon. Once she was housed in the wagon I felt that she would be safe, for the Missourian was a good hater of Mormons, and he had in his train many a stalwart Pike.

"My aunt," as I still called her, felt brave as we marched forth. She was straight as a ram-rod, and almost as thin, and when I asked if I went too fast for her she cried: "No, I could walk across the whole of the Plains. I have not felt so strong in ten years."

The Missourian was expecting us, and at once guided Mrs. Bardsley to the wagon in which were his wife and child—the big, roomy, family wagon.

The Missourian train was to pull out the next morning and I told Mrs. Bardsley that I would not fail to come and see her off. I went as agreed and found Mrs. Bardsley more smiling and happy than I had ever before seen her in my life. Already the big Missourian was calling her "mammy"—it was mammy here and mammy there. I could see that he was charmed with the nurse I had provided. Taking me aside he said: "Mammy tells me that she will soon have my wife up on her feet again and sound as a dollar!"

I knew that among other things Mrs. Bardsley had dabbled in medicine and was a very good doctress of the Thompsonian school, therefore I said: "And so she will; she is a good physician; she has studied medicine for years."

"By George!" said the Missourian, "she's a wonderful woman. She told my wife, right away, all that was the matter with her, just how she felt, and what she needed; she did, by George! and it's no wonder, for she's a reg'larly edicated botanic doctor. Look at her," whispered he, giving me a dig with his elbow, "she gets in and out of that wagon like a cat."

My parting with Mrs. Bardsley was very cheerful; indeed, almost gay, for we promised to meet each other in California. "O, yes," said the big Missourian, "you'll find mammy and all hands of us over thar. If we get thar fust we'll put the big pot in the little one and have dinner all ready. By George!" and he slapped his thigh, "we'll bake a pone, if they have any corn-meal over thar!" And so we parted.

Our then notion of California and the diggings was that everything centered about a small patch of country, and that there all friends would soon be assembled and in daily communication.

After the big Missouri train had "pulled out"—a hundred wagons, in all—I went back to town and went up to take another look at Mrs. Bardsley's cabin to see what had happened there, or, rather, to see if she had been missed, and if so, whether her disappearance was making any noise.

I found half the women of the neighborhood there.

As there was no lock on the door, all who wished could enter the cabin. As there was much wondering and a vast deal of "cackling," I said: "You will all do well to keep your mouths shut. There has been a 'revelation.' The old lady has long been sick; she was troubled with a disease known as apostacy, but she will now soon be cured. She has gone on a little trip for her health with Porter Rockwell (the leader of the Destroying Angels), so you see that the less you say the better."

None of those present seemed much affected except one old lady—the most poverty-stricken in appearance of the lot. Seeing that she began sobbing, I said: "And it is further revealed that all that is in this cabin, as well as the cabin itself, is to be given to this good woman. Let no one dare to dispute her right." Then, turning to the old crone, I said: "Come, aunty, I must put you in possession," when I led her into the cabin, shut the door upon her, and walked away, leaving all those in the vicinity quite subdued and bewildered. Mention of the name of Porter Rockwell had sent a chill to every heart.



CHAPTER LIII.

ON THE CUT-OFF —DOWN THE HUMBOLDT RIVER—I
AM CAPTURED BY PIUTE INDIANS—THE VIRTUES OF
“MEDICINE LORE” AMONG THE PIUTES AND OTHER
TRIBES—CALIFORNIA AT LAST.

We left Salt Lake to take the much-lauded cut-off, under the guidance of a Frenchman who said he had traveled that way two or three times with Fremont and others. We took with us provisions for only fifteen days, as our guide said that in that time he would land us in California, instead of which we came out at the end of the period of time named, upon the main wagon road at the head of the Humboldt River. We had constantly traveled through a succession of waterless deserts, one of which was ninety miles across. In all of these deserts we were obliged to carry water and grass, and to travel much of nights.

We were more dead than alive when we reached the Humboldt, and our animals were barely able to crawl after us when led. At the Humboldt we learned, to our rage, that in taking the “cut-off” we had traveled one hundred miles farther than would have been required had we followed the main wagon road. It was a trick of the Mormons to send emigrants packing through the so-called cut-off of the deserts in order that wagons, supplies, and all except what could be carried on horses and mules, might be “dumped down” at Salt Lake and almost given away. How well they did at this may be imagined when I say that in our one party there were no fewer than three hundred men.

Party after party were deluded into taking this cut-off, and the Mormons always had in readiness one of "Fremont's old guides" to steer them through at a salary of about twenty dollars a day.

We were landed on the head of the Humboldt River almost destitute of provisions, and the stock of the wagon trains that had preceded us had devoured nearly all the grass. The carcasses of hundreds on hundreds of dead animals of all kinds tainted the air. We were thirteen days on the Humboldt and were often obliged to swim or ford the river in order to get a few handfuls of grass for our starving animals. As for ourselves, we were glad to make a meal of such frogs as we could catch, or at times to pick the bones of cattle slaughtered by parties ahead of us, then to crush the bones and make soup of them.

While on the Humboldt a little adventure befell me which proved the efficacy of the smattering of Indian lore and mysteries I had obtained while a boy in Canada. Taking the strongest horse that remained to us, I had gone to the northward of the river, a distance of about three miles, to a range of hills, in the hope of being able to kill a deer. On a sudden, as I was going up a bushy canyon, three Piutes dashed out of a thicket. One seized my bridle and another my right arm and gun. As soon as I was disarmed the third man drew a large butcher knife and made the man who had disarmed me a sign to pull me off my horse.

Seeing that the intention was to cut my throat, I made several medicine signs. Though the signs were not understood, the Indians were astonished and

puzzled. They had evidently seen the signs made by their chiefs without knowing their meaning. As they stood wondering, I produced and showed them my turtle "totem," which I had continued to carry, just as some persons carry the foot of a rabbit.

This they understood and at once the scowl went out of every face.

By signs they asked : " What tribe ? "

I made the Mohawk and other tribal signs, but they understood none until I came to the Sioux and the Kaws, or Kansas Indians. All this, however, did not satisfy them. Leading my horse by the halter they made signs that I must go with them to their leader.

After traveling about a mile up the canyon we rounded the point of a hill and found about forty Indians camped on a little meadow by a spring. I was led at once to where the chief was seated. My captors spoke to the chief for some time, and though I could not understand the language, I could guess the import of what they were saying.

As the men proceeded I could see that the chief was astonished at what he heard, and soon he arose and made me a sign of welcome. I made him several medicine signs, but saw at once by his puzzled look that he did not understand them.

As the chief and I stood staring at each other, neither knowing what next to do, an old man who was squatted on the ground near the spring gave a grunt and, advancing to me, gave the answers to the signs I had made. Signing for me to dismount, the old man then led me to a clump of quaking-asp trees a few rods away, and examined me as to my mystic knowledge.

I was somewhat rusty, yet managed to acquit myself to the satisfaction of the old fellow, though I soon found that as a medicine man he was many degrees above me. He at once saw this, as I failed to reply, and came back to what I could understand. He understood from what my captors had said that my totem was the turtle, and showed me that his was the same. He then gave me the tribal sign of the Piutes—made by holding the clasped hands high over the head—and led me back to the chief in command, one of the Winnemucca family, but not the old head chief, as he wore no stick in his nose.

The medicine man made a long report to the chief, and made it favorable and strong, for I had given him a burning-glass and a pocket knife containing a whole kit of tools. He then said a few words to the other Indians, who came forward and saluted me as “Wung-ah”—brother. The chief gave me a saddle of venison, restored my gun and horse, and when I was departing handed me a pass good for the remainder of my way through his dominions. This was a buckskin string containing several peculiar knots and having a broad end cut to resemble the head of a wolf. I found the pass useful down the river. At each point where it was examined a knot was untied, and the last Indian who was shown it, after taking out a knot, pocketed the pass. This was where we left the Carson River (where the town of Dayton now stands) and where we were leaving Piute territory to enter that of the Washoe tribe.

I omitted to mention that at Union Town, on the

Kansas River, I saw a big war party of Kaws, or Kansas Indians. They had just returned from a victorious expedition against the Pawnees. I attended a big feast and scalp dance given by them at Union Town (a village of Indian huts, and the houses of a few white traders) and was well received by their medicine men and chiefs. They gave me their tribal sign and other useful signs for one traveling farther west. On the North Platte we passed an encamped war party of about three hundred Sioux, also then at war with the Pawnees. At a sign I made, one of their medicine men came out and traveled some distance with me. He spoke very good English and knew many men that I mentioned having seen—chiefs and others—when I was trading for furs on Lake Superior. He was not much surprised at seeing a white man who knew something of medicine mysteries, and told me he had met several that had taken all but the very highest degrees.

On the cut-off, between Salt Lake and the head of the Humboldt, we encountered the Shoshones. Before we saw any of them they stole several horses from our party and shot others with poisoned arrows. One day we surprised a flock of squaws who were gathering grass seed. With them was a very old man who proved to be a medicine man. After exchanging grips and signs with him, I made him understand by signs the loss we had suffered. The next day a younger man appeared on a ridge in advance of us and began making signs. Our leading men halted, and hearing the cause I rode to the front, and understanding the signs the man was making invited him to come down to us. He

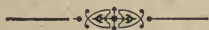
came, and said we should be troubled no more, and he would willingly return the captured horses (he did not look upon the taking of them as stealing), but that they were beyond his reach. Our men presented him a number of trinkets at my suggestion, with all of which he was delighted, as several were of a nature to mystify his people.

At Carson River we found on sale an adequate supply of provisions, but at enormous prices. These supplies had been brought over the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and the persons who brought and sold them seemed determined that no money should pass them—they wanted all.

We arrived at the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains August 24th, and at Georgetown, El Dorado County, California, on Saturday, August 31st, having traveled a distance of two thousand and fifty miles between that point and Independence, Missouri. In the Sierras we had again been seduced into taking a "cut-off," a packers' trail, which we presently lost, and were at last brought to a halt by a genuine "jumping-off place"—a precipice over a thousand feet in height. We were then obliged to retrace our steps to the main trail.

We arrived at Georgetown in great want of rest, but we found that there the Sabbath was not a day of rest; on the contrary, it was the great business day of the week. On Sunday the miners of all the surrounding diggings came to town for supplies, and for the purpose of hearing the latest news and having a good time. The auctioneers were ringing their bells and shouting,

bands were playing before the gambling-houses, fiddles were going in the dance-halls, singers were roaring in the saloons, mule-drivers were yelling in the streets, and near at hand there was constant and lively target practice with guns and pistols, while in the midst of all the uproar a preacher, mounted upon a dry-goods box, was trying to make himself heard.



CHAPTER LIV.

I FIND MY AUNT—HER DEATH AND APPARITION—
TALISMAN AND TOTEM—I STILL REMAIN A WORSHIP-
PER OF THE GREAT SPIRIT—CONCLUSION.

In the diggings of Georgetown I took my first lessons in gold mining, a business I followed with varying success for a number of years in many towns and camps. I also went on many a "wild goose chase" in search of diggings that were literally of "fabulous" richness, as to the Gold Lake, Gold Bluff, and many other places where it was reported that gold could be shoveled up by the pound. Of my adventures in the mines and mountains of California and Nevada, however, I shall not speak, they being related in another book devoted to pioneer days in the "Golden State" and in "Silverland," my present home. In this book will be found not only sketches of old times in the mines, but also adventures in connection with staging and snowshoeing in the mountains during the many years that I was

superintendent of the teams and coaches of the lines of Wells, Fargo & Company's Express across the Sierra Nevada range.

I must not forget, however, before concluding this part of my life history, to mention an agreeable surprise that I met with in the spring of 1854. Business took me into Napa Valley, one of the most healthful agricultural regions in California. Coming, one day, to a large and handsome farm-house, I halted to ask if I could get dinner and have my horse fed. To my astonishment and delight, who should come out to answer my hail but the burly Missourian with whom Mrs. Bardsley had shipped at Salt Lake in the capacity of nurse. For over three years I had searched and inquired for him in vain; but this was because I had always thought of him as having settled in some mining town.

He recognized me at once, and cried: "Hello! so at last you've come to see mammy."

I explained that I would have come long before had I known where to find her. "She has never given up looking for you—talks about you nearly every day," said the Missourian.

In answer to my inquiry about her health he said: "O, she's fine, mammy is—she's acterly getting fat!"

Mrs. Bardsley was delighted to see me. She still called me "her boy," and I called her "aunt Alice," a circumstance that seemed to rather puzzle the Missourian and his family, but I left it to the old lady to make explanations in her own way after my departure. I found her looking bright and well, but "thin as a rail." Her "fatness" was all in the admiring eye of the big-

hearted Pike. He was himself growing portly, and all about him seemed to him likewise to be acquiring plumpness.

I was glad to see the old lady still active and alert. She told me she had derived great benefit from the climate, and said that when she found herself growing stiff in the joints and sluggish in mind, she would go still nearer to the sun—would keep moving southward until she found herself on the equator.

I remained two days with the Missourian, who had a ranch of over two thousand acres in the heart of the valley and was rolling in wealth. He now had three children, and all called Mrs. Bardsley "grandmammy." He was never tired of sounding the old lady's praise, and I was glad to observe that in this he was heartily seconded by his wife. He told me that Mrs. Bardsley had surely saved his wife's life on the Plains. "Why," said he, "she has saved many lives. She doctors all the women and children about here, though it is only ten miles to Napa City, where are men doctors." Then he told me that "mammy" was going to teach all his children. "And she can do it," said he, "for she's got a beautiful edication."

On the second day of my visit, Mrs. Bardsley asked me to go to her room. On entering, I saw spread out on her bed the well-known little red dress. "You see that I do not forget," said she. "Those things will be buried with me."

Bancroft

Presently, on glancing about the room, I saw, on a sort of altar in the corner, two small vases containing joss-sticks, and behind them a hideous little devil of a Chinese god.

The old lady was watching my eyes, and laying a hand on my shoulder, she said: "Say nothing to any one in the house. I have had many talks with the Chinese cook about the religion of Buddha, and I believe it is good."

I was amused, when, some hours after, the Missourian said to me: "Mammy has a good many talks on religion with our Chinese cook, and I believe she'll convert him; she has taken his god away from him and has it locked up in her room."

"She is very strong on religion," said I.

"Powerful!" cried Pike. "Yas, she's powerful on religion, mammy is."

There was no gloominess in our parting, for then I expected to pay all another visit at no distant day, but affairs were so ordered by an overruling Providence that I never again returned to the hospitable mansion of my Missouri friend.

On the night of the fifth of August, 1859, I was encamped in the high Sierras, at Hermit Rock, with no companion but a large Newfoundland dog. Rolled in my blankets, I was sleeping with my feet to the fire. I had been asleep about an hour when I was awakened by the howling of my dog, who was standing with his head directly over my face. I tried to quiet him, but seeing that he was trembling and in great terror, I sat up and began looking about to try to discover the cause of the dog's fright. At first I saw nothing, for my fire was low and illuminated only a small circuit of ground. I was about to arise to my feet, when, from behind the blue wreaths of smoke ascending from my

fire, glided forth the apparition of Mrs. Bardsley, just as I had seen her in life. She held by the hand a tall young girl robed in white.

The two images stood motionless for what seemed to me a full minute—at all events long enough for every hair on my head to assume the perpendicular, when the apparition of “my aunt” said in a low, solemn tone: “Do you understand?” Then both figures began to move slowly backward until lost in the darkness of the surrounding forest.

I did understand, and at once wrote to my Missouri friend, telling him what I had seen, and asking for particulars in regard to Mrs. Bardsley’s death.

In a few days, an answer came from the Missourian, and I was told that the old lady had retired the evening of August 5th, apparently in her usual health, but when she did not appear at her usual hour the next morning, his wife had gone to her room and found her cold in death. “She was found kneeling in that corner of the room in which stood the Chinese god and joss-sticks,” wrote the Missourian, “a thing I can’t understand—but she probably over-exerted herself in prayin’ for the destruction of the heathen and their gods.”

The circumstance of her being found dead before an image of Buddha did not at all trouble me. I knew that her heart was right, and her anxiety to join her child in the other world was such that she was ever ready to pray to the Almighty wherever she thought he might be found and reached.

I give this circumstance of the apparition in the

forest because it relates to one of whom I have had much to say, good, bad, and indifferent, and I need not apologize for speaking of it as an actual occurrence after what I have already said of similar apparitions seen by me on several occasions in my youth. All my life I have seen similar images of the dead (and at times of the living), and could give over fifty instances as striking as any related in the foregoing pages, with "day and date," but to introduce them here without any connection with preceding parts of my narrative would be a mere unnecessary dragging in. Also another consideration restrains me, which is the fact that much of what I would have to relate would be painful to many persons still living here on the Pacific Coast and in the Atlantic States. I have never claimed to be a Spiritualist or a spirit medium, and have never, of my own volition, exercised any power except that which was born with me, and which I believe to be a sort of natural hypnotism or mesmerism, but not self-mesmerism, for I do not try to throw myself into a clairvoyant state; it comes of itself, or is induced in me by other minds or spirits, either in or out of the flesh. From a close study of the apparitions I have seen, I am of the opinion that man has, besides the natural body, an aerial or ethereal body—which is an exact image of the natural body—and a spirit or essence which has no more shape than a certain amount of electricity, but which is capable of at any time animating and making visible the ethereal body. It appears to me that whenever the soul leaves the physical body—whether temporarily in life, or perma-

nently at death—the aerial form goes with it and can be made to become apparent at the will of the animating spirit. As for the voices heard, as if proceeding from the aerial shape, I am of the opinion that there is really no sound uttered, but that all is the result of impressions made on the brain (or spirit) of the person who is communicated with. Thus, when the Sky-Sifter, in her astral body, appeared to Captain Walker, while his vessel was in the midst of Lake Erie, and spoke to him while he was on deck, none of his men heard any sound.

As regards the talisman or magic mirror I have mentioned, it is a mystery I do not pretend to understand; therefore, will offer, in regard to it, what has been said by another, Lady Hester Stanhope. Lady Hester Lucy Stanhope was the daughter of Charles, third Earl of Stanhope, England; granddaughter of the great Lord Chatham, and niece of William Pitt. She was born in 1776, and, as the Indians would say, was a born “medicine woman.” She left England in 1810 never to return. She went to Syria to study the mysteries of nature among the Arabs, a people who had knowledge of these things from the most ancient times. In Syria she finally became the head of a tribe of Arabs living in tents. She dressed as an Arab Chief, and was known as the “Queen of the Desert.” It is said that from ancient manuscripts, kept as charms or heirlooms by the heads of families who could no longer understand them, she pushed her knowledge of occult things far beyond that of even the most learned of the modern Arabian magi. It was this that gave

her her power as a chieftainess and prophetess—that gave her a people and a tribe of her own in the deserts.

She finally established herself, as she grew old, in an ancient convent in the Lebanon range of mountains. There she even defied Mehemet Ali, fortified in her convent, or rather castle of Djoun. Her fortress was about a day's journey from Beyroot, and she ruled supreme in all the surrounding mountains, thinking nothing of sweeping away a whole village for disobedience, as, for instance, in the murder of a traveler. Besides the lore of the Arabs, she also obtained that of the Druses, and the mysteries of the Akals, or the initiated among the Druses, a people who do not adorn themselves with gold ornaments, or wear silk, embroidered, or fanciful garments; who forbear using wine, spirits, tobacco, and other luxuries, believe in one God, never swear, utter obscene language, or lie.

The Queen of the Desert was visited in her castle of Djoun, some years before her death, by Alexander W. Kinglake, author of the "Invasion of the Crimea," who tells of his interview with the English-Oriental mystic in his "Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East." Among a multitude of other things, Kinglake says: "She spoke with great contempt of the frivolity and benighted ignorance of the modern Europeans, and mentioned, in proof of this, that they were not only untaught in astrology, but were unacquainted with the common and every-day phenomena produced by magic art. She said that the spell by which the face of an absent person is thrown upon a mirror was within the reach of the humblest and most contemptible magicians,

but that the practice of such-like arts was unholy as well as vulgar."

As an answer to those who may wish to know whether I still carry my turtle "totem," I will say that in October, 1852, I was on the Middle Fork of the American River, at El Dorado Slide. As the shades of night were gathering, three other men and I attempted to cross the river in an old scow. The boat capsized, and we were all thrown into the stream, which was quite rapid. Two of the men were drowned, and I sank twice (as I think), and was then carried over a dam and thrown upon some rocks. I lay unconscious for a time, but at last recovered my senses and crawled out upon the bank of the stream. I went to a cloth house used as a saloon, where I saw a light, and when I entered there was great consternation. All thought they saw a ghost, for the man who had escaped at the time of the upset had reported that I, and all but himself, had been drowned.

After I had changed my clothes for dry ones and had become comfortable, I thought of my "totem" as having saved me from drowning and searched for it, but it had disappeared. Since that time I have never been exposed to the danger of losing my life by drowning, though often before. I think of the loss about as a man would of a rabbit's foot he had long carried, and that is all.

I am now over seventy years of age, and though I have seen and heard much of the various religious sects that are in existence, the worship of the Great Spirit as I learned it in my boyhood seems to me most satisfy-

ing. However, I do not think the medicine stick, and its "totems of ancients," or the mummeries of medicine feasts necessary. I find that which is better for me in the stars of the heavens, the winds, the clouds, mountains, forests, and all the works of the Great Spirit by which I am surrounded. All these are much better than the more petty symbols made by the hand of man.

Some of the unseen and unseeable forces are far more powerful than any of the things of this earth that are visible and palpable, as electricity, gravitation, and magnetism, with others so subtle that as yet they are but faintly manifest to our senses when our physical bodies are in their ordinary state. There is a sort of mind telegraphy, many traces of which are seen, but which we cannot yet securely grasp. It is seen to exist between the minds of the living, and, as the mind or spirit never dies, it must exist to the same extent between the mind of a living person and the mind or soul of one whose mere physical body is dead. I think that I have had thousands of proofs of this. To persons differently constituted, however, it may seem nonsense.

THE END.

KNIGHTS OF THE WHIP

—OR—

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