

THE STORY TELLER

I SHALL BE OLD.

When I shall go again and seek the haunts
That in my joyous boyhood I did know,
And linger by old natural-fed fountains
Where crystal waters darting from below
Spark through the air a little way and fall
Back in their bowl as clear as air and cold.
All shall be as it was; the birds will call
Just as they did; but I—I shall be old.

I shall be old. Where supple-limbed I swung
Down the steep cliff, I will not dare to go.
Where then my boyish accents fearless rung,
Where swallows swiftly darting to and fro
Shrieked fear and wrath, that one should dare essay
The dizzy heights where, had a pebble rolled
Beneath the feet 'twere death; up that high way
I will not dare, for I—I shall be old.

I shall be old! Held in old age's thrall
My feet shall tread but level ways and smooth;
My ear but dimly listen to the call
Of birds whose tones I mocked, and of
Their waysome heart. This threadbare life
Worn, thin,
Till eager plighted Soul looks forth,
Shall fold
Its hands. Where supple-thewed and fair
Of skin
A boy I played, I'll rest—I shall be old.

I shall be old; but where I tread alone
Another shall walk with me ways I knew,
And life shall take a softer, sweeter tone,
And eyes and skies shall be a deeper blue,
And wisdom born of years shall sit beside
Where we will sit, where youth was proud and bold,
And eyes and skies shall be a deeper blue,
And wisdom born of years shall sit beside
Where we will sit, where youth was proud and bold,
And view the speeding years all straggled
In life's sweet afterglow. I shall be old.
—J. M. Lewis, in Houston Post.

AKOWMA'S RUSE

By George Harlow Clark.

AKOWMA was a lad of 17 when this incident happened. With his widowed mother and a twin brother, Nipsu, he lived in one of a half-dozen cabins forming a small settlement on the Koyukuk. The village was near the mouth of a stream which had its source in the Lockwood Hills, north of the arctic circle.

It was a severe winter. Besides the cold, the natives had also to contend with famine. Salmon, on which they relied principally for food, had been less abundant the preceding summer than usual, and when the season closed it had been foreseen that the stock of dried fish would be exhausted long before spring.

The utmost exertion on the part of the hunters had failed to make up for the deficiency; moose and caribou had apparently migrated, and the black bears, too, had disappeared. By the end of January the little community was face to face with actual starvation.

Akowma's mother had a brother dwelling farther up the Koyukuk. In the hope that he might be able to spare a little food for them, his starving relatives resolved to apply to him for help.

Accordingly, early in February, Nipsu set out for his uncle's cabin, while Akowma stayed at home to hunt grouse, ptarmigan and other small creatures, on which the natives were now forced to subsist.

Although the river is so crooked that three days were required to make the journey by canoe, a single long day's march overland would suffice; but the trail was practicable only in cold weather, when innumerable ponds and swamps were frozen over.

Ordinarily Nipsu would have travelled with sledge and dogs, but the last of their faithful draft-animals had been long since sacrificed, and he was compelled to trust to his snowshoes. This was no hardship, however, to the youth, who, like all native lads, was an expert snow-shoe runner.

In case game of some kind should be encountered, he took with him a musket that had belonged to his father, together with a few rounds of ammunition. A rawhide pack-strap, to be used in bringing home the provisions, if his mission proved successful, completed his equipment.

Daily during Nipsu's absence Akowma ranged the woods assiduously, in common with the other men. He was armed only with bow and arrows, but these answered his purpose admirably, for he was a skillful archer and his shooting was confined to birds.

Gray jays, the mocking-birds of the far north; the black-and-white woodpecker plying his pick industriously with resonant rat-a-tat-tat on spruce and poplar; pine grosbeaks; crossbills which, except for their queer, scissorlike bills, were living miniatures of the grosbeaks; sleek brown waxwings, with pointed crests proudly erected—all these were targets for his unerring shafts.

Hitherto he would have disdained to draw bow for the sake of such insignificant quarry, but now, spurred by hunger, he did so without compunction. The redpolls and chickadees alone were not molested; younger lads might hunt them, but they were so sprightly and cheerful that he preferred to spare them.

Nipsu had been gone two days when a hunter reported having discovered the fresh tracks of a wolf near a lake northeast of the settlement, and not far from the path to their kinsman's cabin. As the footprints were apparently those of a single animal, Akowma hoped that his brother might meet and kill it.

"Wolf meat is better than no meat, mother," he said.

But she, fearing it might be a forerunner of a numerous pack, was alarmed by the news.

"When the bears go the wolves come," said she, repeating a tribal proverb. "I pray that Nipsu may not see them."

As his brother was expected to return the next day, Akowma, who had promised to join him on the trail, hunted in that direction throughout the forenoon. The weather, which had previously been intensely cold, was moderating, presaging a storm.

A dozen or more birds of various species were tied to the rawhide cord supporting his quiver when, after midday, he entered a wide, treeless level of frozen meadow. Here, in early summer, rain and melted snow formed a large lake, on which ducks and geese and other water-fowl congregated in myriads.

A network of the curious vinelike tracks of ptarmigan indicated that a covey of these birds were feeding on the succulent seeds of aquatic grasses, the feathery tops of which appeared in patches above the snow.

Presently he perceived one of them crouching tranquilly a few feet away, evidently trusting to its white plumage for concealment.

Having secured it, he continued his search and soon flushed a second, whereupon the rest of the covey took wing, but alighted after a brief flight. The boy followed eagerly, keeping up the chase until five more had been added to his string.

He heard at intervals the report of a distant gun, and he conjectured that another hunter had also found game.

The pursuit of ptarmigan had enticed him far from the way. Snow had been falling intermittently for some time, and daylight was waning rapidly when he struck out on a beeline toward the trail.

Beyond the meadow the trail led over a steep, wooded ridge to a similar natural clearing, many acres in extent. There for perhaps a half-mile it skirted the base of a precipitous hillside, an irregular, vertical wall of weather-worn rock, overlooking the clearing.

Just in front of the precipice, and about midway along its face, grew a single tall spruce, so close that its branches almost brushed the rock. One of its exposed roots protruded across the trail, making a mound over which the natives, when sledging, drove with care to avoid a spill.

The twilight was fast deepening into dusk as Akowma descended the ridge. He was abreast of the solitary tree when a musket-shot close at hand, followed by a prolonged outcry as of an animal in pain, brought him to a standstill. A moment later he heard a loud halloo, in which he recognized his brother's voice.

"Nipsu has shot the wolf!" he exclaimed, joyfully. He hurried on, shouting as he ran.

He was within a few strides of the thick forest bordering the clearing when a wolf leaped into the trail right in front of him. His first thought was that it must be the creature at which Nipsu had fired. Possibly it was wounded. Without hesitation, he fitted an arrow to his bow and let fly at the brute. Despite the dim light, his aim was true. With the shaft sticking in its side the wolf sprang back into the thicket, yelping and howling.

Scarcely had the arrow left the bow before Akowma heard his brother calling to him.

"Gah! gah!" (Fly! fly) was all that he could make out, but he comprehended that Nipsu was entreating him to find a place of refuge without delay.

The reason for this was quickly revealed. The yelping of Akowma's victim was answered by a chorus that terrified the lad. It was a sound that, once heard, is not likely ever to be forgotten—the hunting-cry of a famishing wolf pack. Having treed Nipsu, some, if not all, of the brutes were coming to attack him.

His sole chance of safety lay in his climbing a tree immediately. Those before him were of small growth, but the big spruce at his back would afford sure protection if he could but retrace his steps. Facing about, he sped fleetly down the trail toward it.

Had the snow been covered with crust firm enough to bear the wolves, Akowma could not have escaped. As it was, the foremost of the racing pack broke from the cover of the woods as he paused at the foot of the tree to slip off his snowshoes.

Knowing that if he left them lying in the snow the wolves would speedily devour the sinew meshes and gnaw the birchwood frames to splinters, he hooked the toes of the snowshoes, together with his bow, over the stub of a broken bough above his head. Then grasping a stout limb, he scrambled up.

In doing so his head struck the heels of the suspended snowshoes, dislodging the bow. It fell upon the leader of the pack as the snarling brute snapped at Akowma's moccasins. The boy's first care was to remove the snowshoes to another stub higher up on the trunk.

Dreading lest anxiety on his account should lead Nipsu into making a rash attempt to come to his aid, Akowma climbed to a height from which he could look out over the woods where his brother was still

besieged by part of the pack, and called out reassuringly to him. Although neither could see the other, they were able by shouting to converse intelligibly.

Nipsu, it seemed, had successfully performed his errand, and he was bound homeward in high spirits when he had discovered the wolves closing in behind him. He had taken refuge in a tree near the trail, and had retained his load of provisions, as well as his musket, but he had lost his snowshoes, of which the wolves' sharp teeth had made short work.

He stated also that seven of the brutes were still watching him. He had killed three, and might have increased his score if his supply of ammunition had not given out.

Forseeing that Akowma's prolonged absence from the settlement would cause his friends to organize a searching party, the boys confidently expected rescue not later than the next day. Fur parkies (hooded coats) enabled them to defy cold, and as for hunger, Nipsu's pack, thanks to their kinsman's bounty, contained an abundance of food, while Akowma had his string of ptarmigan and other birds.

They feared only a fall, which might result should drowsiness overpower them. To prevent accident of this kind Nipsu had already lashed himself to his perch by means of his belt and a piece of the pack-strap, and he advised his brother to do likewise.

With arms outstretched, Akowma could almost touch with his fingertips the face of the precipice beside him. What if the wolves, of whose cunning he had heard much, should take it into their heads to proceed to the top of the hill, and by leaping down into the spruce come to close quarters with him? It was true that a long detour through the woods would first be necessary, but, desperate with hunger as they were, he believed that neither the detour nor the fear of falling with their victim would restrain them.

Clinging by its roots to the frozen soil on the brink of the rocky wall, a white birch drooped until its bushy branches mingled with the spruce boughs a few feet above his head. As, in sudden dismay, he glanced up through the falling snow-flakes, the sight of its gnarled and twisted trunk suggested to him that if he could but elude the vigilance of his besiegers, it would be possible for him to make his way over the birch to the verge of the rock.

Then he could hurry back to the settlement, arouse the hunters, and return with them to relieve Nipsu. Realizing that delay increased the likelihood of an attack from above, he straightway prepared to carry out this plan.

Darkness and the falling snow were in his favor, but he wished besides to devise means of distracting the wolves' attention. He rejected the idea of scattering his birds among them; these would be snapped up too quickly. But a more promising scheme soon occurred to him.

Descending the tree, he suspended three of the ptarmigan from branches where they dangled temptingly just beyond reach of the gaunt beasts.

Then, taking with him his snowshoes, he reascended to where the drooping birch rubbed against the trunk of the spruce.

Stripping off his parkie, he stuffed it almost to bursting with spruce twigs, amid which he distributed the remaining birds, after which he tied things tightly about the waist, wrists and hood of the garment.

This done, he called out to his brother, telling him briefly of his purpose. Nipsu volunteered, by shouting and feigning an intention of jumping down, to prevent those of the pack which were guarding him from noticing what was going on elsewhere.

Pushing the bulky parcel outward and clear of intervening boughs, Akowma dropped it into the snow at the foot of the tree, fifty feet below, on the side away from the rock. The wolves, no doubt mistaking it for the lad himself, pounced upon it, rending it with teeth and claws, and fighting with one another over its contents.

Now was Akowma's time. Without stopping to deplore the ruin of his parkie, he swung himself into the birch. The clamor of the quarrelling brutes below drowned the snapping of twigs, brittle with cold, that accompanied his hasty passage along the bending tree.

Knocking on the brink of the precipice, he listened anxiously while putting on his snowshoes, but there was no abatement in the noise of conflict. His flight had not yet been perceived.

The soft, new-fallen snow muffled the sound of his snowshoes as he sped on through the trackless birch forest covering the hill. He laid his course straight for the settlement. Nipsu's vociferous cries were audible long after he had left the hill, but no wolves barred his path.

On reaching home, which he did without mishap, his tidings were received with joy. Every man and boy procured weapons and snowshoes, and guided by Akowma, who had donned another parkie, set forth to slay the wolves.

As they drew near the scene of the lad's adventure, the natives divided their forces. Part assailed the wolves which were found still patiently surrounding the big spruce while the rest relieved Nipsu. The marauding pack was annihilated.

The meat obtained by Nipsu furnished food for the little company until the migrating caribou had returned, when starvation was no longer feared.—Youth's Companion.

DUTY OF CITIZENS.

How Personal Property is Listed and Assessed.

The state auditor has just issued the following notice to county auditors and assessors, which affords information every citizen should possess:

A study of assessment returns must convince anyone, that thousands of personal property owners are escaping taxation. It is the purpose in this circular to direct the attention of assessors to certain laws relating to the duties of property owners and assessors.

Section 1515, Statutes of Minnesota, 1894. "Personal property shall be listed in the manner following:

First. Every person of full age and sound mind, being a resident of this state, shall list all his moneys, credits, bonds or stocks, shares of stock, of joint-stock or other companies (when the property of such company is not assessed in this state) moneys loaned or invested, annuities, franchises, royalties, and other personal property.

Second. He shall also list separately, and in the name of his principal, all moneys and other personal property invested, loaned, or otherwise controlled by him as the agent or attorney, or on account of any other person or persons, company or corporation whatsoever; and all moneys deposited subject to his order, check or draft, and credits due from or owing by any person or persons, body corporate or politic.

Third. The property of a minor child shall be listed by his guardian, or by the person having such property in charge.

Fourth. The property of an idiot or lunatic, by the person having charge of such property.

Fifth. The property of a wife, by her husband, if of sound mind; if not, by herself.

Sixth. The property of a person for whose benefit it is held in trust, by the trustee; of the estate of a deceased person, by the executor or administrator.

Seventh. The property of corporations whose assets are in the hands of receivers, by such receivers.

Eighth. The property of a body politic or corporate, by the president or proper agent or officer thereof.

Ninth. The property of a firm or company, by a partner or agent thereof.

Tenth. The property of manufacturers and others in the hands of an agent, by such agent in the name of his principal, as merchandise."

Section 1523, Statutes 1894. "Every person required by this act to list property shall make out and deliver to the assessor, when required, a statement, verified by his oath, of all the personal property in his possession or under his control, and which, by the provisions of this act, he is required to list for taxation, either as owner or holder thereof, or as guardian, parent, husband, trustee, executor, administrator, receiver, accounting officer, partner, agent, or factor; but no person shall be required to include in his statement any share or portion of the capital stock or property of any company or corporation which such company is required to list or return as its capital and property for taxation in this state."

Section 1542, Statutes 1894. "The assessor shall call at the office, place of doing business or residence of each person required by this act to list property and list his name, and shall require such person to make a correct statement of his taxable property in accordance with the provisions of this act; and every person so required shall enter a true and correct statement of such property, in the form prescribed, which statement shall be signed and verified by the oath of the person listing the property, and delivered to the assessor, who shall thereupon assess the value of such property, and enter the same in his books; provided, if any property is listed or assessed on or after the fourth Monday in June, and before the return of the assessor's books, the same shall be as legal and binding as if listed and assessed before that time."

Section 1546, Statutes of 1894. "In all cases of a failure to obtain a statement of personal property, from any cause, it shall be the duty of the assessor to ascertain the amount and value of such property, and assess the same at such amount as he believes to be the true value thereof. The assessor, when requested, shall deliver to the person assessed a copy of the statement herebefore required showing the valuation of the property so listed, which copy shall be signed by the assessor."

Assessors should see to it that every man and woman in his district is provided with a blank for listing personal property, which statement should be properly filled out and sworn to and delivered to the assessor within a given time. Notice should be served, that if the statement does not reach the assessor on time an arbitrary assessment will be made as authorized by law.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING.

The Himalayas have several peaks over 28,000 feet, and more than a thousand which have been measured exceed 20,000 feet.

In the Alps Mont Blanc, the highest, is tedious but easy. Delicate women make it by hundreds without much danger. The lower Matterhorn, when conquered, took four lives. Whymper, one of the three who escaped death, afterward broke his leg by falling off a platform at a lecture.

Less Nasty.

Dr. Patton was delivering a lecture recently in his course on ethics at the Princeton Theological seminary and experienced much applause because some of the students ate peanuts instead of attending to him. Finally he administered this rebuke: "Gentlemen, I have delayed starting the most important part of to-day's lecture hoping that the stock of peanuts would be consumed and a restful quiet be restored. As the quantity seems ample to meet the demands and the supply appears inexhaustible, I feel constrained to request that your appetites be restrained until the conclusion of the lecture. I would be greatly pleased if in the future anyone wishing to conduct a five o'clock tea in the classroom would confine the refreshments to sponge cake."—Indianapolis News.

Feels Younger and Stronger.

Festus, Mo., May 4th.—Mr. January S. Lilly, a highly respected old gentleman, aged 70, and whose home is in Festus, says: "For many years I was failing in health. My kidneys were weak and gave me no end of trouble. I had pains in my back and hips so bad that I could not sit up straight without bracing my back, and could not sit only a few minutes in any one position. I had to get up during every night very frequently to relieve myself. Our doctor said I had Kidney and Bladder inflammation. I have suffered for over five years in this way, always worse at night. I could get no relief and was getting worse till I used Dodd's Kidney Pills. After I had used a few boxes of this remedy I felt stronger and better than I have for years and years. My pains all left me and I can rest and sleep. Every old man or woman who feels as I felt should use Dodd's Kidney Pills, and I am sure they will not be disappointed. They brought me out wonderfully."

Reliable Recipe.

A case of toothache poisoning at Wichita leads a correspondent to ask for some "reliable recipe whereby one may tell the mushroom from the toadstool." We believe that the only reliable test of these plants was given by the late Artemus Ward—"If you eat 'em and die, they're toadstools." And this is so simple and reliable that it ought to be in use in every family.—Kansas City Journal.

The Effect of Fast Time.

One result of the placing in service of the Twentieth Century Limited, the New York Central's twenty-hour train between New York and Chicago, is to bring not only Chicago but the entire West practically 200 miles nearer New York. For instance, a man can leave St. Paul or Minneapolis Monday evening and by taking the Twentieth Century Limited from Chicago be in New York Wednesday morning; thirty-six hours from home. Or, if he is in Colorado he can leave Denver Saturday night, have several hours' layover in Chicago Monday morning, and, taking the Twentieth Century Limited, be in New York at 8:30 Tuesday morning.—From the Brooklyn Standard Union.

The Difference.

She—Why, a bachelor is an object of public derision!
He—Yes; and a married man gets his at home.—Puck.

Ladies Can Wear Shoes

One size smaller after Allen's Foot-Ease. A certain cure for swollen, sweating, hot, aching feet. At all Druggists, 25c. Do not substitute. Trial package FREE. Address A. S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.

That cannot be right which is not rational.—Rum's Horn.

Piso's Cure for Consumption is an infallible medicine for coughs and colds.—N. W. Samuel, Ocean Grove, N. J., Feb. 17, 1900.

Spend to earn rather than earn to spend.—N. Y. Observer.

Stops the Cough

and works off the cold. Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. Price 25 cents.

You cannot kick back and pull forward.—Ram's Horn.


Opium and Liquor Habits Cured.

Book free. B. M. Woolley, M. D., Atlanta, Ga.

Work alone gives value to rest.—Ram's Horn.

June Tint Butter Color makes top of the market butter.

No legacy is so rich as honesty.—Shakespeare.



Mrs. T. P. Tupman, a prominent lady of Richmond, Va., a great sufferer with woman's troubles, tells how she was cured.

"For some years I suffered with backache, severe bearing-down pains, leucorrhoea, and falling of the womb. I tried many remedies, but nothing gave any positive relief. I commenced taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound in June, 1901. When I had taken the first half bottle, I felt a vast improvement, and have now taken ten bottles with the result that I feel like a new woman. When I commenced taking the Vegetable Compound I felt all worn out and was fast approaching complete nervous collapse. I weighed only 98 pounds. Now I weigh 109½ pounds and am improving every day. I gladly testify to the benefits received."—Mrs. R. C. TUPMAN, 423 West 80th St., Richmond, Va.—\$5000 forfeit if original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced.

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