

The Valley of Voices

By GEORGE MARSH

Author of "Toilers of the Trail," "The Whelps of the Wolf"

(W. N. U. Service.)

(Copyright by the Penn Publishing Co.)

LASCELLES

SYNOPSIS.—With David, half-breed guide, Brent Steele, of the American Museum of Natural History, is traveling in northern Canada. By a stream he hears Denise, daughter of Col. Hilaire St. Onge, factor at Walling River, play the violin superbly. He introduces himself and accepts an invitation to make the post his home during his stay. He finds the factor worried and mystified. The "log chateau" is a real home. From St. Onge he learns of the mysterious creature of evil, the Windigo, and the disappearance of a canoe and its crew, with the season's lake of furs. Then at night the Windigo gives a weird performance. Even Steele is mystified. David, Steele's Indian, and Michel, St. Onge's head-man, leave for the scene of the canoe's disappearance in an attempt to solve the mystery. St. Onge tells Steele that Lascelles, the company's manager at Fort Albany, seeks his ruin in order to compel Denise to marry him to save her father. Steele and Denise fall in love. Steele finds the track of the Windigo—huge and much like a bear's. David finds the same thing. Tete-Boule, Indian in St. Onge's employ, is caught listening to Steele's talk with David and Michel, and roughly handled. Louis Lafamme, factor at Ogoke, makes application for the hand of Denise. Pierre, Indian from Ogoke, visits the Walling River post.

CHAPTER V—Continued

—10—

"But why should he come so far to make trouble here, as you say? What is behind it all?"

For an instant, Michel seemed on the point of making a revelation. Then, evidently changing his mind, with a shrug of his bony shoulders, he answered: "We see some day."

Steele and David exchanged puzzled looks. What could Michel have in the back of his head?

With the coming of the canoe with news from Feather lakes, Walling River was again thrown into a panic of fear of the night prowler. After a hurried talk with St. Onge, Steele started up the river, bound for Big Feather lake. He had little hope of discovering anything which would throw light on the mystery. But one thing piqued the curiosity of the three men. They were keenly interested in finding tracks similar to those near the post, for they carried the exact measurements of the latter, and in case they talked with those at the Feather lakes, forty miles away, they would have discovered a new and most peculiar trait in animal habits, namely, a beast with feet strangely like a bear's, which had ranged forty miles within a few days.

On the morning of the second day the canoe was traveling in the easier water inshore, when Michel, poing in the bow, suddenly exclaimed: "Requay! Look!"

On the shore, ahead, were the remains of a fire and near it what resembled the body of a man. With a few strong thrusts of the poles, the canoe was driven to the beach. The men leaped ashore. Before them, stretched beside the dead fire, lay an Indian, hideously mutilated.

"He has been literally torn to pieces," muttered Steele. "A bear alone could have done this, and yet I never heard of such a thing."

David was on his knees searching for tracks in the dry leaves, when a cry from Michel drew the attention of the others.

"Look! Track on de shore!" and the Iroquois pointed to a patch of mud clearly marked by the prints of huge feet.

"They're ringer for the tracks near the post," said Steele, and he took from his pocket strips of rawhide of the dimensions of the footprints which had frightened Charlotte. In breadth, length and character, the tracks in the mud were identical with those near Walling River. The three friends looked blankly at each other.

"It's the same bird," said Steele. David removed his felt hat and scratched his broad forehead. "No bear travel forty mile and back twenty unless something drive heem," he insisted.

"But bears don't mutilate bodies like this," added Steele.

"Wal," muttered the Ojibway, "dees one mak' de mess ov dees poor feller all de same. W'at you goin' do?"

As the features were obliterated, Michel was busy examining the kit of the dead man in an attempt to identify him as an Indian trading at the post.

"De sun sees French company ron,

but de kettle and knife I nevalr see before. I tink eet ees not Walling Riviere hunter."

"Who could he be, then, traveling on this river so late in the year?"

"Eet ees ver' strange," muttered the headman.

"Eef dat bear ees de Windigo," David's wide face contracted in a network of wrinkles, as he grinned at Steele, "w'at we do den?"

"Windigo or no Windigo, David, he's our meat if he steps in front of my Mannlicher—or yours. Why, what's the matter, Michel?"

The grave face of the Indian had suddenly assumed an expression so sinister as to arouse the white man's curiosity.

"By gar! We are de fool!"

"What d'you mean?"

For answer, Michel leaped into the canoe and poled rapidly upstream for a few hundred yards, while the puzzled Steele looked on. Then the Indian swung the nose of the boat down river and paddled past them in mid-stream.

"What in thunder is he driving at, David?"

"We are de fool for sure," was the laconic answer as Michel swept by with his eyes on his friends, then threw the bow of the canoe to the shore and landed.

"He nevalr pass here widout seein' dis camp."

Michel's maneuver was explained.

"Dat Pierre pass here two sleeps back," said Michel, joining Steele.

"Dees man bin dead t'ree, four day an' de tracks on de shore are old one. De riviere rise after de rain two sleeps back. De Windigo mak' dem tracks here before de rain," and Michel pointed to some footprints which were barely covered by water.

"Suppose he did not notice this camp, what then?"

"He was hongree an' hunt for game; he sees dees camp for sure."

David nodded in agreement.

"Then why did he not tell us?"

"Dat ees w'at I ask heem tonight at Wallin' Riviere."

CHAPTER VI

The twenty miles of hard running river down to the fort was covered by the three skilled canoe men in a few hours. On arriving, they hastened to the trade house. Steele opened the ponderous slab door and entered, followed by the two half-breeds, to learn that Walling River had a visitor. Seated with St. Onge behind the trade counter was a short, thick-set stranger, wearing a cap with an insignia in gold braid.

"M'sieu Lascelles," whispered Michel over the shoulder of the American.

St. Onge and Lascelles were evidently in the midst of a heated conversation in French, for they ignored Steele's entrance.

"You are as superstitious as you claim the Indians to be. I am not interested in this Windigo stuff," Lascelles said irritably, when St. Onge, glancing toward the door, saw Steele.

"You are back so soon, monsieur? And you have news?" The factor appeared relieved at the appearance of the man he thought far upriver.

Brent Steele's back stiffened as he advanced to meet the man who had the power in his hands to crush the girl over in the factor's quarters, whose rare quality he would never sense, whose soul he would never know. As he walked around behind the trade-counter, there was a set to his heavy shoulders, a glint in the gray eyes, which did not pass unnoticed by the men he approached.

"Monsieur Steele, this is Inspector Lascelles of the Revillon Freres."

With a smile Steele extended a hand, hard as a spruce knot, and grasped the fingers of the puzzled and curious Lascelles.

"I missed meeting you at Albany, inspector, in August. You were over at Moose when I called."

The black eyebrows of Lascelles rose as he now identified the stranger whose presence at Walling River he found most annoying for his plans.

"Oh, yes, Monsieur Steele, the American scientist; I thought you left Albany weeks ago bound for the Nepligon," he suggested pointedly.

"I did, monsieur, but I stumbled on a most interesting situation here—right in my line, you know. I found what I have been searching for, for years." Steele was losing no time rubbing it into the skeptical Lascelles.

"You have a bona-fide Windigo in this valley, monsieur—a most interesting situation to a scientist, I assure you. The Indians are in a panic and you

will have difficulty in keeping them on their trap-lines this winter."

"You, a scientist, believe in Indian sorcery and superstition?" demanded the Frenchman, sarcastically.

"Well, now, that is somewhat difficult to answer, monsieur," badgered Steele, to the delight of the two swart-faced men with whom he had entered. "I have heard the Windigo wall in the night; I have seen his tracks; and I have just returned to report to Monsieur St. Onge that we have found up near the mouth of Stopping river the remains of an Indian torn to pieces, evidently by this same Windigo."

"What do you say?" St. Onge was on his feet.

"This morning we found the camp and body of a strange Indian—the tracks were identical with those you saw near here on the trail." Then Steele suddenly changed the subject.

"Where is that Pierre who came here from the Feather lakes the day we left? Michel wishes to ask him some questions."

"He left this morning. Didn't you pass him on the river?"

A muttered curse from Michel met Steele's backward glance.

"Too bad!" exclaimed the American.

"I suppose, monsieur, you attribute the loss of our furs to this same Windigo?" broke in Lascelles.

"Oh, undoubtedly, inspector," replied Steele, with a suspicious curl of the lip, his blood slowly rising at the tone used by the man from Albany.

However, above all things, he had to consider St. Onge and Denise, he told himself, and not to allow this fellow to lure him into a hostile attitude.

"I see you are joking," rejoined the Frenchman, flushing.

"On the contrary, I am very far from joking when I tell you that there are mysterious things afoot in this valley—which neither my experience nor scientific knowledge are able to fathom. You had better go upriver tomorrow and see for yourself. You seem skeptical regarding the whole matter."

"Have you never seen a dead man before, monsieur?" derided Lascelles.

"I fear it has gone to your head—this Windigo matter."

St. Onge excitedly half rose from his chair, as the cool gray eyes of his guest slowly surveyed the man from Albany, from moccasins to hair; and then fell back relieved, when the American, flushed, but in control of himself, drawled:

"Monsieur, you were formerly a man of war, a soldier, while I am only a peaceful man of science. To you it is but natural that violent death should be a familiar sight, while to me it is most terrifying. Why, I find it most repulsive even to clean a fish."

So innocuous was Steele's smile, and so guileless his manner, that Lascelles, conscious of being played with by the rugged American, found no words to reply, but sat in impotent rage. Then the retreating backs of Michel and David, whose shaking shoulders betrayed their suppressed mirth, spurred the Revillon man to answer:

"If you are so afraid of food," he sputtered, "why are you hunting this man-eating Windigo?"

Steele smiled down good-naturedly at the man he would have blithely battered with his fists, and leaving the two men at the trade-house, sought out Denise St. Onge.

"Oh, welcome back! Monsieur Steele," she said, forcing a smile, "I have just heard that you have made a terrible discovery."

"Please, we will not talk of that," he insisted. "I have something to say to you before I go, tomorrow. Tonight there will be no opportunity." He wondered if Lascelles had seen her privately since his arrival that afternoon, but it did not matter. "We are to make a wide circle of the country," he went on, "and will be away until I leave for Nepligon."

Her sensitive face quickened with emotion as she listened.

"Mademoiselle St. Onge," he began, "I have no right to ask this from you, but in justice to yourself I must."

She started to speak, as if in protest, then her troubled eyes squarely met his.

Is Lascelles in the plot, too? Or are these suitors pressing their suit each in his own way?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Different When Polished

Diamonds in their natural state are usually of a dull lead color.



Sedan \$775, f. o. b. Lansing, Mich.

Power, Quality, Economy

Low-cost Transportation

Star Cars

FACTORY: f. o. b. Lansing, Mich.

COMMERCIAL CHASSIS	\$425
ROADSTER	\$525
TOURING	\$525
COUPSTER	\$595
COUPE	\$675
COACH	\$695
SEDAN	\$775

DURANT MOTORS, Inc.
250 West 57th Street, New York

General Sales Dept.—1819 Broadway, New York

Dealers and Service Stations throughout the United States
Canada and Mexico

PLANTS: Elizabeth, N. J. Lansing, Mich. Oakland, Cal. Toronto, Ont.

The British museum was visited by more than 1,000,000 persons last year, the largest number on record since 1851.

REPAID THIS MAN A DOZEN TIMES

"I have been repaid a dozen times over in improved health for every dollar I spent for Tanlac, and the medicine is still building me up every day," is the striking statement of Joseph Desjars.

"Tanlac has driven pains from my body that had troubled me for ten years. Besides backache, which almost killed me at times, I had rheumatic pain and swelling in my hands and legs, my circulation was poor, feet always cold, nerves undone, my stomach didn't feel right, I had regular headaches and I was a discouraged man."

"I have never seen the equal of Tanlac in my life. It has more than doubled my appetite, my stomach feels great and my general health is so improved that I can not praise Tanlac enough for what it has done and is still doing for me."

What Tanlac has done for others, it can do for you.

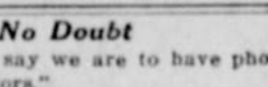
Tanlac is for sale by all good druggists. Accept no substitute. Over 40 millions of bottles sold.

Take Tanlac Vegetable Pills for constipation; made and recommended by the manufacturers of Tanlac.

TANLAC FOR YOUR HEALTH

Sore Throat!

Quickly eased with Musterole. Its oil of mustard penetrates, softens and cools. Apply with the finger tips.



WILL NOT BURN! Better than a Mustard Plaster

No Doubt

"Now they say we are to have photoplays in colors."

"That will help authors who are strong for local color"

Novelist on His Lot

Gilbert Frankau, the English author, deplored on his last visit to New York the privations of novelists.

"The novelist and the hen," Mr. Frankau said quaintly, "both scratch for their living. The only difference is that the hen gets hers."

DEMAND "BAYER" ASPIRIN

Aspirin Marked With "Bayer Cross" Has Been Proved Safe by Millions.

Warning! Unless you see the name "Bayer" on package or on tablets you are not getting the genuine Bayer Aspirin proved safe by millions and prescribed by physicians for 25 years. Say "Bayer" when you buy Aspirin. Imitations may prove dangerous.—Adv.

Use of Steel Increases

In 1880, when the steel industry was establishing itself, the per capita use of steel in the United States was 50 pounds, but due to modern industrial development the amount required is now about 755 pounds per person.

Cole's Carbolic Acid Quickly Relieves and heals burning, itching and torturing skin diseases. It instantly stops the pain of burns. Heals without scars. 50c and 60c. Ask your druggist, or send 20c to The J. W. Cole Co., 127 S. Euclid Ave., Oak Park, Ill., for a package.—Adv.

Season for Everything

The season for changing seats in canoes is over. Next comes the season for running the motor of the car while the garage doors are shut. The person who does this rarely has a chance to tell about it.

Why buy many bottles of other vermifuges when one bottle of Dr. Perry's "Dead Shot" will work without fail? Adv.

Omnibus Centenary

This year marks the centennial of the omnibus, which made its first appearance in 1825, at Nantes, France.

Children Cry for



Fletcher's CASTORIA

MOTHER:—Fletcher's

Castoria is a pleasant, harmless Substitute for Castor Oil, Paregoric, Teething Drops and Soothing Syrups, especially prepared for Infants in arms and Children all ages.

To avoid imitations, always look for the signature of Dr. J. C. Fletcher. Proven directions on each package. Physicians everywhere recommend it.