

# THE SPACIOUS DAYS OF NOVA SCOTIA

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IN my work during the past eight years both as Provincial Archivist and as a member of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, I have been trying to see the history of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotians in perspective, and wondering how I could present the best interpretation of the living past from the great variety of material at my disposal. I have found that there has been a tendency hitherto on the part of our writers to over-emphasize the romantic or heroic age, the age when French and British struggled for control of the continent, but no real Nova Scotians existed; to neglect the evolution of the Nova Scotian as such, the growth of local patriotism or national consciousness, and to underestimate the achievements of those who remained in the province as compared with those who migrated to other colonies and the United States, or rose to prominent positions in the imperial service.

So far my attention has been concentrated upon the cultural history of Nova Scotia, and, in exploring this aspect of our history, I have discovered or rediscovered many interesting things. Six years ago I discussed some of these things in an article on *The Intellectual Awakening of Nova Scotia*. Later I published studies of early literary and historical movements, the growth of libraries and educational institutions; and from all these studies I came to the conclusion that during the first four decades of the last century Nova Scotians were becoming increasingly conscious of themselves, both of their shortcomings and of their talents; that between 1837 and 1867 they were alert, hopeful, ambitious, a self-conscious people eager to know the extent and variety of their intellectual and economic resources, to make the richness and value of these resources better known to Great Britain, and to play their part as Nova Scotians in the world of affairs.

In this article, therefore, I shall try to recapture the spirit of the province in this period, which I shall call "the spacious days of Nova Scotia"; and in doing so I shall pay some attention to the provincial exhibition of 1854, which was designed to reveal Nova Scotia to the Nova Scotians, and to the international exhibition of 1862, in which Nova Scotians took part, with the

hope of revealing Nova Scotia to the world. When I have finished, I hope it will be apparent to my readers, as it is to me, that Nova Scotians had attained national consciousness several years before Confederation, that love of country was to them a perennial source of inspiration, and that local schoolmasters, poets, and historians as well as statesmen were contributing to the flowering of native genius. I hope that my readers will also feel, as I feel, that to-day in Nova Scotia something of the same spirit is reviving, that after floundering in the Slough of Despond for more than fifty years we are recovering some of that buoyant optimism which characterized our great-grandfathers, and that the next half century will be a period of mutual encouragement and friendly emulation in the revival of Nova Scotian literature, art, science and industry.

It seems natural to the colonial mind to mistrust its own judgments in the domain of literature and art, and to await the verdict of critics in the metropolis. In this respect Nova Scotians did not differ much from other colonists of their day; but their newspapers published with pride the achievements of their students in British universities or the distinctions won by native sons in the imperial services. Even Joseph Howe himself, the greatest exponent of local patriotism, regarded it as the height of his ambition to obtain some employment in the imperial service, not to gratify personal ends, but as an indisputable proof of colonial ability. Hence it transpires that we find our first signs of assured national consciousness in the respect paid by Nova Scotians to those fellow countrymen who won recognition in Great Britain: Haliburton, Cunard and Howe himself. It is because the first English edition of Haliburton's *Clockmaker* appeared in 1837 that I have chosen that date as the beginning of the spacious days of Nova Scotia, although the work had begun to appear serially in Nova Scotia two years earlier, and the first edition in book form was published by Howe in December, 1836. From 1837 to 1860 new works by Haliburton or new editions of his old works continued to have international vogue, and to spread the fame of a Nova Scotian author far afield. Lord Durham quoted Haliburton in his famous *Report* of 1839, and Howe, in his *Letters to Lord John Russell* in the same year, exhibited his work as evidence that Nova Scotians were not a race inferior to those who dwelt upon the ancient homestead.

Though many differed from him in politics and disliked his satire bitterly, the citizens of Halifax united in entertaining Hali-

burton at a public banquet on his return from Britain in the summer of 1839, out of respect for the reputation that he had won abroad as an historian and humorist; and a year later Howe in the *Novascotian* links Sam Slick with Cunard's steam packets as two great agencies for making Nova Scotia better known to the English-speaking world. In January, 1840, Howe wrote, "It is a matter of pride for us also to reflect that we were the first to introduce to the world the celebrated Samuel Slick of Slickville, 'a fellow of infinite jest', who has certainly done as much towards promoting the health of the great British family, by making them laugh, as any modern humourist on either side of the Atlantic," and in September of the same year, after Cunard's dream of regular steam communication had been completely realized, he pointed out the effects of *The Clockmaker* and the steamboats on imperial relations as follows: "*The Clockmaker* is generally known, and the latter form floating bridges across the 'wide waste of waters', which before divided us. The voyage from 30 days is now reduced to 10 or 12. Two-thirds of the distance has thus been annihilated. The journey has been reduced to certainty. Thousands will soon visit us in search of pleasure or of business, who would never have approached our shores, had it not been for the introduction of this mode and facility of communication. Our politics will become better known and understood. The policy of the Colonial Office will grow more healthy, and be better adapted to our condition and circumstances. The true motives and standing of men and parties will be accurately scanned and valued at the source of power."

Howe then rejoiced that two Nova Scotians had obtained international recognition, that as a result of their work in Nova Scotia the province itself would become better known throughout the Empire, and above all that having had its attention called to a certain Nova Scotia the British government would realize, as he contended, that Britons overseas were as intelligent and as worthy of local self-government and partnership in imperial concerns as those at the very heart of the Empire. But the editors of the Tory newspapers in Nova Scotia were equally proud of Haliburton and Cunard from an imperial and economic point of view, and, though less concerned with the national aspirations of the province, they contributed indirectly to that sentiment by their stinging diatribes in defence of their own monopoly of place and power. Thus, the *Halifax Times* gave much publicity to Haliburton's attacks upon Lord Durham in

*The Bubbles of Canada* and *A Reply to the Report of the Earl of Durham*, and expressed the earnest hope that his work would neutralize completely the effects of Durham's main recommendations. Likewise, in a series of jubilant editorials on the significance of Cunard's contract with the imperial government, it argued that his work was of much greater importance to Nova Scotia and the Empire than all the activities of the Reformers in the local legislature during the past session; and that the establishment of regular steam communication between Liverpool and Halifax should make the latter the depot for the British trade with the United States. It is obvious to the historian that the *Times* was wrong in both respects, since it was the alert and aspiring atmosphere of the Nova Scotian Reform movement that made Cunard's opportunity and prepared his path before him in Great Britain, and his contract called for steam packet service to both Boston and Halifax. None the less, it is true to say that all Nova Scotians, Tory and Reform, were proud of the international achievements of Haliburton and Cunard, and that all were inclined to esteem themselves more highly because of them both.

Though Cunard unconsciously made the name of Nova Scotia effectively known to Great Britain and the United States, and Haliburton consciously strove to sting Nova Scotians into social and economic activity by his satirical writings, neither of these great Nova Scotians won a place in the affections of his fellow-countrymen at all comparable to that of Howe himself, who did so much to assist them both on the road to fame and was so ready to boast of their achievements. The reason is not far to seek. Howe seemed to have been born a local patriot, and, from seventeen to sixty-seven, consciously strove to encourage his fellow-countrymen to the utmost. His first significant writing was a patriotic poem, his first great lecture to the Mechanics' Institute was a plea for love of country as a stimulus to enterprise, his last great fight was waged to preserve the self-respect and independent spirit of his native province, and his last significant utterance was that "A wise nation preserves its records, gathers up its muniments, decorates the tombs of its illustrious dead, repairs its great public structures, and fosters national pride and love of country by perpetual reference to the sacrifices and glories of the past." Like Haliburton, he thought that Nova Scotians should first learn to know themselves and then make themselves known to Great Britain; but, unlike Haliburton, he encouraged self-confidence directly by precept and

example. Though an ardent admirer of British institutions and a persistent champion of the British connection, he was impatient of perpetual tutelage, and he insisted that in imperial relations "The idea to be cultivated, instead of that of the parental relation, with its inevitable termination at the close of a very limited period, should rather be that of a partnership, which may last for centuries, and need not terminate at all, so long as it is mutually advantageous." For more than two decades in the press or in the legislature he strove to educate his countrymen in politics and government, insisting that they were not only worthy of the British constitution but, because of their loyalty, intelligence and spirit, capable of becoming a normal school for the other colonies; and, when responsible government had been won, though grateful to the imperial government for the concession, he still insisted that the new constitution rested upon "the fiat of no Colonial Secretary" but upon colonial insight and energy: "the treasured experience of fifteen years of painful and laborious discipline."

Apart from the fact that Howe gave his fellow-countrymen a sense of dignity and importance, or interpreted their yearning and ambition so adequately, his frank *camaraderie* and buoyant optimism won their hearts. Through the *Novascotian* he "stepped across their thresholds, mingled in their social circles, went with them to the woods to enliven their labors, or to the fields to shed a salutary influence over their midday meal", and was everywhere a welcome guest. But when he sang their praises or illustrated their genius in Great Britain, Canada or the United States, they all felt proud of him and of themselves, and knew that they were a people fit to stand before kings.

Howe, therefore, more than any other native-born Nova Scotian, inspired and set the pace of the spacious days of Nova Scotia; but in doing so, as he would have been the first to admit, he was loyally supported by a large band of able contemporaries, while at the same time many of his most bitter political opponents were at one with him in their love of Nova Scotia. Perhaps at no time in the history of Nova Scotia has there been such a large group of able politicians and skilful debaters as in the middle of the 19th century. Among his loyal supporters I should mention Herbert Huntington, George R. Young and William Young, James McNab, Hugh Bell, A. W. McLelan, Lawrence O'Connor Doyle, Alexander McDougall and, after 1840, James Boyle Uniacke. Among his able opponents, who differed from him as to means but were agreed as to ends, were Alexander Stewart, L. M. Wilkins, James W. Johnston and E. M. Dodd.

Through the clash of these minds and interests between 1837 and 1851, self-government was evolved and thoroughly reorganized, control of postal and telegraphic communications assumed, protection of the fisheries was undertaken, trade and commerce and shipbuilding were encouraged, a railway was projected, the general principles of a provincial educational system elaborated, and a future of great promise envisioned. By 1851, therefore, when Howe made his great speeches in Southampton, in Halifax, and in Toronto, in Quebec and Montreal on railways, colonization and imperial solidarity, both he and Nova Scotia were at the zenith of their independent careers, though they felt that they were only gazing upon rosy-fingered dawn, so far as their influence upon the other colonies and the Empire was concerned.

In the meantime, throughout the province and apart from the debates and discussions of the Legislature, the people as a whole were sharing in the pride and optimism of their leaders. For example, in Liverpool John McPherson, a young school-master poet, had caught the spirit of the age, and in his poem of September, 1840, on *The Cunard Enterprise* he digresses to sing of responsible government:

How great the change that in a few short years  
Even in our still neglected land appears!  
Behold her people taught their worth to feel,  
And take the stand that best secured their weal.  
Behold the Parent mindful of her Child  
Whose voice has reached her from the northern wild,  
And nobly granting what we long have sought—  
The sacred rights for which her Hampden fought.

Throughout the decade preceding the achievement of responsible government the newspapers were filled with articles, essays, poems and letters from every corner of the province showing a marked growth of interest in politics, education, literature and art, commerce and industry; and when Nova Scotia celebrated the founding of Halifax in 1849, there was a tremendous outburst of both local and imperial patriotism. Nova Scotia's pride in her achievement of self-government by the British method of evolution rather than the continental method of revolution was expressed by Howe in his *Song for the Centenary*, in which he wrote:

The blood of no brother, in civil strife poured,  
In this hour of rejoicing encumbers our souls!

The Great Exhibition of 1851 in the Crystal Palace, London, the first international exhibition of the arts of peace, stirred Nova Scotia to its depths, and evoked the idea of a provincial exhibition to reveal Nova Scotia's own resources to itself. The proposal was made by Rev. Alexander Forrester, later Superintendent of Education, in the Mechanics' Institute during the winter of 1852, and an exhibition was planned for 1853; but, as the organizing of such an exhibition required more time and work than was at first realized, only a provincial cattle show was held in that year, and the first provincial exhibition was not held until the autumn of 1854. It was a brilliant success, and lent wings to the imagination of Nova Scotia, which henceforth soared beyond all former heights. A glance at the programme, prize-lists and addresses delivered at this exhibition will explain some of this optimism. In the first place, the industrial exhibition as distinct from the animal show was held in the Province House, at either end of which a huge tent had been raised to contain the vegetable and dairy products and the more bulky manufactured articles; but every room of the Province House, except the offices, was filled with exhibits. In the Judges' Robing Room saddlery, hardware, gold and silver jewelry were displayed; and in the Council Chamber the Fine Arts: paintings in oil, drawings in water colour, chalk, pencil and crayon; embroidery, chenille and raised worsted work; musical instruments and costly furniture presented a gorgeous display. What impresses one is the large range of quality products in many lines no longer manufactured in the province, the number of exhibitors in the fine arts, and the fact that there were prizes offered and awarded for provincial literature. Altogether there were 1,260 exhibitors, with a total of 3,010 exhibits. In the fine arts there were 95 exhibitors of 164 articles, and 15 prizes were awarded. In the fine arts, ladies' department, there were 175 exhibitors of 231 articles for which 27 prizes were awarded. In the field of provincial literature 18 competed, sending in 21 manuscripts. In this department six prizes were awarded, and special mention made of a deserving essay on *The Natural and Industrial Resources of Nova Scotia*, which did not get a prize because of some controversial matter it contained. Of the six prizes awarded one went to James Ross of Rawdon for an essay on *Agricultural Capabilities of Nova Scotia*, another to James Thompson of Windsor for an essay on *Orchard Management*, two to Miss Jennings of Halifax for a Moral Tale, *The White Rose of Acadia*, and a poem *Autumn in Nova Scotia*, one to an anonymous poem

on the History and Scenery of Nova Scotia, and lastly one to Charles Fennerty, Sackville, N. S. for his poem *Betula Nigra*—The Black Birch—a tree 24 feet in circumference, 60 feet high and estimated to be 1,000 years old.

I have not space to discuss the merits of these poems or essays; but I must quote four stanzas from the *Betula Nigra* to illustrate how the provincial exhibition expressed the confidence of Nova Scotians of that date in their intellectual and physical resources, and their hope of successful rivalry in the world of industry:

And we, their sons, what work have we  
Achieved within one century!  
The facts shall briefly tell:  
Look round upon this crowded mart;  
These works of industry and art,  
Perchance, shall answer well.

Look round upon the scene again;  
These products of our fair domain  
A single year hath brought;—  
Oh may it be, this treasured store  
Shall make us love our country more,  
And prize her as we ought.

If so, the patent good achieved  
Shall realise the hope conceived  
By him who pens this lay;  
Then shall our children rise, and tell  
The blessings which to them befel  
On this auspicious day.

Then strong, in self-reliance strong,  
Undaunted shall we march along,  
With conscious pride possess'd,  
That in the great industrial strife,  
With which the modern world is rife,  
She shall not be unblest.

Between 1837 and 1854, in addition to the literary outbursts of Haliburton and the ephemeral essays, poems, historical sketches and political pamphlets that appeared in the ever-increasing number of newspapers, three or four new magazines had come and gone, such as the *New Monthly Magazine* of 1842, *The Mayflower* or *Ladies' Acadian Newspaper* of 1851, and *The Provincial Magazine* of 1852. All had short lives, but all had illustrated the aspiring spirit of Nova Scotians who wished to have a literature of their own, made in Nova Scotia.



In 1858 Rev. Geo. W. Hill of King's College lectured on *Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotians*. In this inspirational lecture he enumerated more than a score of distinguished native sons who had made honorable careers in Great Britain, Canada or the United States and, although he excluded from his list all resident Nova Scotians actually engaged in their work, he did not forget Haliburton and Cunard then living in England, or Dr. J. W. Dawson, the Principal of McGill, Donald McKay who was designing clipper ships for the Americans, or Edward M. Archibald, British vice-consul at New York. As Howe was still engaged in practical politics, his name was not mentioned, but in that same year the Annand edition of the *Speeches and Public Letters of the Hon. Joseph Howe*, in two large volumes, was published in Boston, and henceforth would be placed on the library shelf beside Haliburton, so that the English-speaking world could judge between them.

Two years later Joshua Willoughby, a school-master, inspired by Rev. Dr. Forrester, published the first school history with a definitely patriotic purpose, and called it *The Land of the Mayflower*. In 1838 John H. Crosskill had published a small Geography and History of Nova Scotia, and in 1842 C. B. Owen had published another; but both were dull and lifeless as compared with *The Land of the Mayflower*.

After referring to the patriotism of the various peoples of Europe in the fashion of Goldsmith's *Traveller*, Mr. Willoughby continues: "Why should not the children of the Land of the Mayflower love their pine-clad hills and smiling vales? It is a country filled to overflowing with the most precious gifts of nature. There is no country on earth where the inhabitants enjoy more freedom or where they can live more happily." He adds that, if any do not love it, it is because they have not taken the pains to become acquainted with the nobler features of a country "unsurpassed in the elements of greatness by any other beneath heaven's azure concave."

By 1860, then, Nova Scotians were obviously Nova Scotia conscious, and awaiting a suitable opportunity to demonstrate their resources to the world. This opportunity came in the International Exhibition of 1862. For more than a year they prepared their exhibits and offered a prize for the best essay on *Nova Scotia and her Resources*. Thirteen manuscripts were submitted, all of merit, and it was with difficulty that the judges selected that of Thomas F. Knight. This together with a de-

scriptive catalogue of the exhibits was published in quantity and sent to London, along with an apple  $17\frac{1}{2}$  inches in circumference, and was much in demand, thereby enforcing the object lessons of the excellent and varied exhibits. I need only say that Nova Scotia received 32 medals and 11 honorable mentions, to show that at last all could overcome the inhibitions of the colonial mind and believe in themselves, having won the approval of the metropolis. Their only regret was that they could not exhibit, except statistically, their fishing and mercantile marine, which boasted a ton of shipping for every man, woman and child in Nova Scotia.

If I have read our history aright, the characteristic effusions of the spacious days of Nova Scotia were controversial pamphlets, political, religious or educational, and conventional poetry dealing with moral or sentimental subjects, nature or natural phenomena, or passing spectacular events. None of the poetry was very musical or very profound, while the controversial note in the prose writing, except in the odd historical or descriptive sketch, was very marked. By far the best literature was political, with the exception of Howe's lectures on Eloquence and Shakespeare, and the keynote was optimism. But, although we refer to those days as our golden age, I should like to insist that our ancestors placed their golden age in the future and looked to their children's children to attain unto it. Therefore, the lesson which I derive from this study is that we also should see our golden age in the future rather than in the past; and, as I glance at the writings of the present generation, I see much to justify that faith. Apart from the productive scholarship of our universities, which had not got their stride in the spacious days of Nova Scotia, and THE DALHOUSIE REVIEW, which has already had a longer life than the combined lives of all the purely literary magazines hitherto published in Nova Scotia and has published more original contributions than all of them, within the last decade alone Nova Scotians have published more books of merit than the entire generation of 1837 to 1867. Moreover, when I recall the cumulative poetical compositions, the charming nature studies, the descriptive travelogues, the armchair essays, the antiquarian researches, the biographical studies and the autobiographies, I feel that, with the exception of Howe's political orations, and Haliburton's satirical essays, in number and variety of literary productions we have already entered upon an age more golden than the spacious days of which I have spoken.

# AMERINDIAN

FREDERICK NIVEN

WESTWARD, between the level plains and the Rockies, there is a strip of rolling country that often reminds Englishmen of the Wiltshire Downs and Scotsmen of the hills of Galloway. That strip of the Far West is always a haunted domain to me. In 1754 Anthony Hendry—or Hendey—adventured so far, and was impressed by the character of the natives he discovered. There went Colonel Macleod over a century later, in the darkest days of these people, after the buffalo had been slaughtered. Being told by the Government that he would have to exercise his discretion with the savages, he took the Government at its word and opened a sort of soup-kitchen for the sullen and starving thousands at the old fort that bears his name.

Always I have that sense of ghostly frequentation in that region, always a feeling as of going out of to-day into the past. On my last visit I alighted from the train at the station at which Frederic Remington (whose paintings of Indians many know) and Julian Ralph alighted close on fifty years ago to visit these people. The place is not greatly changed since their day. The little prairie town lies to one side of the railway track, with its cattle corrals and its grain elevators much as they saw it, save that now there are "gas pumps" by the side of the wooden sidewalks, and the signs of "Garage" are more in evidence than the old ones of "Livery Stable." From the windows of the Indian agent's office, where I presented myself once again for permission to visit my Indian friends, I looked across the prairies and saw the Rocky Mountains in their ancient serenity, lying along the west, the colour of smoke under a sky that was of a blue like the inside of mussel shells.

Obviously the raising of cattle and horses is more to the Indians' taste than agriculture, but those of the new generation are adapting themselves to the machine age. They run their motors. They run their complicated big combine harvesters with efficiency. Some of the young men are actually coal mining, working on coal seams that crop out here and there in the river banks. On the Blackfoot Reserve the coal-getting is under the direction of a supervisor from Scotland. Two Churches are in rivalry to proselytise them, and they talk among them-

selves often about that rivalry. I had a chat with one on the subject. He was a convert to one faith, his wife to another. They grew weary of the bickering and wrangling of the rival religionists for the spiritual possession of their son, and solved the problem by sending him to a white man's non-denominational school in a neighbouring town.

Visiting their homes, you can see that their own old religion is not dead. Beside the stove, if the floor is of earth, you will note a small rectangular indentation in the ground with leaf-ashes in it. If the floor is of wood, you will see perhaps a small cheese-box half filled with gravel and atop the gravel similar ashes. Beside the indentation—or box—you will notice a forked stick with charred tips. These two tips, or prongs, are simply and cleverly crossed, making tongs.

Sweet-grass leaves are kept in a small sack of deerskin or of cloth. The wooden tongs are used to take a red ember from the fire to ignite in that indentation—or box—a strewing of some of the dried and sacred leaves. As the sweet smoke of incense rises from them, the pagan makes his morning prayer to the Mystery, the Demiurge, Manitou—God. He would surely be a mad missionary who desired to put a stop to that! Sometimes you will see, if you are up and about early in the day on the reserves of the Blackfeet, or the Kainu (the Bloods), or the Peccuni (the Piegans), a man come out of his cabin or his tipi and hang a deerskin bundle on a tripod—eastward, to the rising sun. That is his "sacred bundle", his "medicine." Still, annually, these Indians conduct their ancient sun-dance ceremonies—shorn now of the barbarous rites of old, but with the humane and sacramental ones piously retained.

Those who look on the Indian as a mendicant by nature do him an injustice. A clerk at one of the prairie agencies put the matter to me thus: "We practically force them to say, 'Give, give.' In one generation we have taken everything from them, and given them relatively little in return. If you have read the terms of our treaties with them, you know that. They are not by nature beggars. They are hospitable by nature, as the records of the old explorers tell us. The marvel to me is that they are as friendly to us as they often are, and that they are adapting themselves to the changed conditions as they are."

Of one of the Indians I saw, the agent of his reserve told me later that it worried him sometimes to know how he existed, for he was one of those who are too proud to ask. When I was visiting him, the door abruptly opened and an old man I

had known for some years, one of the chiefs, came in looking for me. He laid his hand on my shoulder, and told me in the sign-language (for he has no English) that we were friends, that he had heard I had come again to visit his people, and that he wanted to give me an Indian name.

"*Apasto*" he said, and in the sign-language informed me, "I call you the man who talks with his hands;" then looked round for one of the juniors to translate the word to me, in speech, for full certainty that I understood.

"He says", the young Indian began, as always they begin when interpreting, "he gives you an Indian name—*Talking by Signs*. You are the white man who comes to see us and knows the old sign-talk. That is your name now: *Apasto*."

After that, moving about on the reserve, several times I heard them, talking together, speak the word *Apasto*. The news was going round that I had been given an Indian name.

On my last day among them I assuredly had the impression of having gone back far into the past. I had been visiting in an extreme corner of the reserve, and on the way back saw many Indians converging to a lonely knoll. When they arrived at it they left their horses, their wagons, and walked up the incline. There were old women wrapped in bright shawls or striped blankets; there were young girls in high-heeled shoes and short dresses, and the colour on their cheeks was rouge from Woolworth's. There were old men in moccasins and young men in cowboys' boots. All walked slowly, decorously. They were going to a funeral.

I saw a coffin on a wagon going up the slope. In the old days they used to wrap the dead in deerskins and elevate them, on such knoll-tops, on scaffoldings. In the plateau air the bodies, wrapped so, practically mummified in time. Now they bury their dead, but do not like to bury them too deep. The spirits must get away. They put into the grave many treasures of beadwork, gewgaws loved by the dead while yet alive, and culinary vessels for the vague journey.

☞ I got out of the car and, hat in hand, stood there. They all know, nowadays—a people themselves, by the way, of many rituals and observances and courtesies—that a white man takes off his hat in sign of deference, or respect, or courtesy; and courtesy from white folks (perhaps all the more because of its frequent absence) they greatly appreciate. A wind blew across the wrinkled land. A small creek twisted through the ravine, the coulee, with subdued gurglings.

The coffin was carried to the grave, and a high, haunting, melancholy keening arose. In a crease of the slope three women, bowed, wrapped in their blankets were making the ancient lamentation, wailing, and calling to the spirits that another spirit had passed out of the body to them. In a few years, no doubt, that high crying will be heard no more. The earliest explorers must often have heard it. It rose and fell, rose and fell, plaintive and very old, as out of the distant ages. And then (for the woman who had died was nominally a good church-woman) the parson arrived in his car along the two ruts that were a road there. The keening fell away, but seemed still to be lingering, echoing round and round the big blue dome, as he got out of the car and, with the wind billowing his cassock, opened a little book and began to read: "Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live. . . ."

The young Indians who had dug the shallow grave commenced to shovel the earth over the coffin, the beadwork, the blankets. One of them had not his hair cut short, but wore it braided in the old-time fashion. The plaits, one on each side of his head, swung pendulum-like as he bent and rose at his shovelling.

Sun Calf, an old friend, moved a little closer to me.

"Glad you come," he whispered.

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. . . ."

It was all over. The mourners turned away. We moved from the grave.

"Everybody—some day," Sun Calf whispered to me. Tears were in his eyes.

"Yes, everybody—some day," I said.

As I drove back to the agency, I seemed still to hear that high crying of the mourning women. It had a haunting quality. These rolling prairies heard it ages before Anthony Hendry came that way. It remained in my ears, lingering with the parson's voice ("The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all evermore. Amen!"), blending with the sound of the wind whistling shrill—keening also, it seemed—through the grass tufts on the hill-tops.