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## THE MAIL A PAPER FOR THE PEOPLE. SECOND EDITION.

THE THREE CALLERS.

BY CHARLES SWAIN.

Morn calleth fondly to a fair boy straying  
Mid golden meadow, rich with clover dew;  
She calls—but he still thinks of naught save  
Playing and smiling—and waves him an adieu!

Whilst he, still merry with his bowery store,  
Dreams not that Morn, sweet Morn! returns no more.

Noon cometh—but the boy to manhood  
growing.  
Heeds not the time—he sees but one sweet  
form;

One young fair face, from bower of jasmine  
giving;

And all his loving heart with bliss is  
warm;

So Noon, unnoticed, seeks the western shore,  
And man forgets that Noon returns no more.

Night tappeth gently at a casement gleaming—  
With the thin firelight, flick'ring faint and low;

By which a gray-haired man is sadly dreaming;

O'er pleasures gone—as all life's pleasures go;

Night calls him to her—and he leaves his door.

Silent and dark—and he returns no more.

## THE BOY CAPTIVE; OR, LIFE IN THE GREAT FOREST.

BY C. LEON MEREDITH;  
Author of "Early Time Incidents," "Quaugh-  
cu ne-ga," etc.

INTRODUCTION.

When some of the grandfathers and grandmothers of the present day were children, there were, lying between the great prairies of the West and the Allegheny Mountains of the East, hundreds of thousands of square miles of dense forest bearing no traces of civilization save here and there along some of the river courses the pioneer's cabin, or the trappers' and hunters' hut; wild men and wild beasts, indeed, holding sway over almost the entire whole. It is of life in this great forest that I have to tell, and in narrating the adventures of the Boy Captive, who it no imaginary character, we will follow him through many interesting encounters, and from the incidents connected with his life among the red men, the young readers will learn much concerning the habits and customs of the American aborigines.

In our pleasant homes, surrounded by the comforts that are furnished only to an enlightened people, we can realize but little of the hardships endured by the men and women to whom we owe these blessings. Life at the time our story opens, near the close of the last century, was beset with constant danger, and the pioneer who barricaded his cabin at night had no reasonable certainty of seeing the coming up of the morrow's sun. And yet this life had a fascination that was almost irresistible. The great woods filled with game of almost every conceivable kind gave constant opportunity for sport of the most exhilarating character, and even the danger that beset the woodman on every hand added not a little to the lurements of forest life, for it brought into action a peculiar human characteristic, that of adventure, which is one of the strongest and most enjoyable elements in the nature of many.

The red men, divided into many tribes bearing different names, had been driven back from the shores of the Atlantic, slowly but surely, and they looked upon the pale faces, as they termed them, as aggressors, and in the spirit of revenge skulked around the white man's home until a favorable moment came and then, with tomahawk, arrows or bullets, massacred whole families, or seized and bore away to their habitations the luckless victims who fell into their power. By nature the disposition of the Indian was not as treacherous and cruel as he has been pictured, and as many who have not lived among them are led to believe, for their murderous acts have passed into history, while the thousands of really noble deeds have been forgotten. They believed themselves the rightful possessors of the hunting grounds they occupied, and the new claimants kindled from lurking sparks into living, burning fires all the subtle parts of their being, and yet borderers, such as Daniel Boone and a score of others, who were their most dreaded enemies were, while held as captives used with remarkable kindness and great consideration. They even became so proud of Boone that the tribe who had the honor capturing the great hunter boasted of him as their quick-footed brother, and trusted him so far as to allow him to go on hunting excursions.

Then while we see them terribly heartless at some periods, we find them showing forth qualities of the most noble nature at others. Of these diversities my young readers will get a more vivid idea by following the Boy Captive through his many adventures.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRAPPER'S HUT.

The sun had settled below the great ocean of verdure stretching away to the westward, and the dull twilight was fast deepening into darkness, when a lad some twelve or fourteen years old arose from his work of stretching skins upon spring bows, and going to the door of the cabin that stood on the margin of a stream in the midst of the wilds, placed his hand over his eyes, and gazing out into the uncertain light murmured: "I wonder why he does not come?" Leaning against the rude door post the boy stood silent for a little time, then starting as if awakened from sleep he shot out to meet some party whose approach-

ing steps could be faintly heard upon the pebbly bank of the creek not far away.

"Hi, oh, Phil, were you get-

ting lonesome, my boy?" an-

said a kind voice as the youth

caught the hand of a band

some featured hunter and

walked back with him to the cabin.

"Yes, a little lonesome," an-

said the boy. "You are

late to-night."

"I am, indeed. I have had

a long chase after a big brain,

and you know, Phil, I never

give up until I win, and this

great skin is the evidence of

my victory."

The boy took the large skin

from the shoulder of the hun-

ter and spread it out upon the

leaves in front of the little

moss covered habitation and

admired its immense size.

"Shot him three times, Uncle Lewis, and close to the

heart every time I should say,

for there are that many holes

made by the big balls of your

gun."

"Three times, Phil," an-

said the party addressed.

"The heart was what I aimed at,

and you know the shots

could not be far apart when

one spot was selected each

time."

"The ball holes form a perfect trian-

gle," said the boy without apparently noticing what the hunter had said; "A perfect triangle, and on both sides, indicating that the bullets went clear through the animal. Mercy, what a marksman, and what a gun, and, and, what a bear."

"Bring it in, Phil, and let us see

about having some supper; the long

tramp has given me an appetite as

sharp as a dressing knife. Come boy, come."

The lad arose from his knees and fold-

ing the great skin into a bundle carried

it into the hut.

After the evening meal was over two

appeared at the doorway again, and

seating themselves upon rude stools,

the elder with his pipe, and the boy with

knife and a few arrow rods, and talked

long of a matter of peculiar interest to

the latter.

The hunter was not above forty years

of age; his language and general de-

portment denoted that he had seen at

some time cultivated life, and had not

only been well educated but was endo-

red with a dignity that the forest life

could not take away. The boy at his

side had the same bearing for he had

been under the care of this man ever

since his earliest remembrance, and

had been taught to call him Uncle Lewis,

and that was all the name he

knew that he bore, and for himself only

Phil.

"Uncle Lewis," said the youth sadly

after a long silence, "you have never

told me a word of my parentage, and

why do you keep it from me?"

"Tut, my boy, I have told you often

that the time has not yet come for that,

but I will say this much, Phil, I am not

your uncle by blood, only by superin-

tending care. You have kindred living

both in this country and Europe, but

neither here nor there must they know

that you and I live. Uncle Lewis is the

only name you have known me by or

that the time has not yet come for that,

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