

Askandaga is an Indian mission in the West—in a quiet, green place among the hills, where the summer mists drift slowly up, and daily disclose a forest-sanctuary, fresh and wild and sweet, with an air of unearthly peace about it. There are many stories about the old mission-place, but of them all this one most closely touches the members of our League.

One June day, some years ago, Jean de Valorsay, a Parisian aristocrat, found himself unexpectedly stranded in Askandaga. He was virtually stranded, because Benedikt, the Indian guide he deemed unequalled, could not continue their voyaging now, and de Valorsay would not go without him. For Benedikt could read Jean's moods as a woman might; he knew when to talk and when to keep silence—delightful qualites in a canoeing companion; the rifle and paddle were vassals to his keen eye and sinewy arms, and his manner was that of a gentleman: certainly Jean could not resume his tour without Benedikt. While still a day away from the mission, a loosened boulder had crushed Benedikt's foot, as he clambered up the rocky face of a cliff to see what lay beyond, and then Jean took command of their little expedition, bandaged the injured foot and paddled with a strong stroke that day. Fortunately, they were no long portages before them, and at sundown, at Askandaga' Benedikt's foot had felt the soothing effects of a herb-lotion, applied by Father Chamel, who was doctor, lawyer and magistrate to his people, as well as their devoted Praying-Man.

A year before this sojourn in Askandaga, Jean de Valorsay had become very tired of Paris. His ears, were wearied with talk of Zola and the Academie, of Dreyfus and the dossier. His friends, though they pretended to smile, had begun to talk with quickened breath of Mdle Conedon, the voyants, and her grim prophecies of France's fate. They could be moved by the ravings of a bourgeoisie, he said to himself, while they seemed to have temporarily lost interest in the hundred and one recherche amusements he and they