The Rise and Fall of the Prophet.

CHAPTER I.

AND it came to pass in those days that there arose in the land of the Canada-ites a prophet, and his name was Wiggins.

The same lifted up his voice and prophesied, saying: Beware, ye men of New England, ye Canada-ites, and ye dwellers in the West; for, behold, in the third month and the tenth day of the month there shall come up a storm, great and terrible, the which shall be attended by fearful winds on land, yea, and direful shipwrecks by sea, and the same shall continue for several days.

And the fame thereof went abroad throughout the land; and the land was filled with weeping and wailing, and great lamentation.

And Wiggins published an almanack with full predictions of the storm, and the sale thereof did bring him in many shekels of silver. And the common people heard him gladly, yea, and the Gloucester fishers refused to go down to the sea in ships during the period of the storm.

And in the country of the prophet there lived a wise man who spake unto himself, saying, Go to, I will build me an ark in the which to launch forth upon the waters when the floods do come, I and my household, my sons and sons' sons, and so forth, and I will place the ark upon the housetop. Verily, it will be an exceeding cold day for them that do not likewise.

And he did so.

CHAPTER II.

Now it came to pass that, on the tenth day of the third month the skies were darkened, and it did rain from the morning until the even.

And the heart of Wiggins was glad within him, and he did smile, saying, Verily, thus is my prophecy fulfilled.

But on the following day the sun arose, and it was pleasant. And the heart of the great prophet waxed sore within him, so that he did use language most emphatic.

And he said unto the people, Go to, the storm of yesterday was not mine; behold my storm has been delayed; lo! it will surely come on the morrow or the day following. And the people trembled.

And Wiggins stayed all night upon the housetop, if, peradventure, he might see the skies darken; but behold, not a cloud could he perceive. And the stars looked down to gladden his heart.

And when the next day did dawn clear and beautiful with no sign of the fearful winds on land and the direful shipwrecks by sea, the mighty prophet did swear an awful swear, and gnashed sore with his teeth. But still the heavens were clear.

And he went out and spake again to the multitudes, even to the Canada-ites, and to the Herald and Globe correspondents, saying, Behold, now know I that the storm on the tenth day was my storm; for have ye not read of the awful blizzards at the West on that day? Yea, verily.

And they laughed him to scorn; nevertheless there were many that still believed on him to this day.

And the Gloucester fishers still refused to go down to the sea in ships until the days of the storm were ended.

And the days passed by and no floods came, yea, not even a drop of rain fell on the ground from the eleventh day even unto the nineteenth.

And when the time had passed, the great and mighty prophet Wiggins did subside, and was heard no more; yea, and the days did come when even the memory of his name did perish from among men.

And the wise men of Canada, when they saw that the storm was over, did point at him who built the ark, deriding him and saying, Thou fool! now is it an exceeding cold day for thee, in that thou didst not get thy sail.

And he straightway took down the ark from the housetop, and did make it into an habitation for fowls, as it is unto this day.

A. E. L.