

was the last guest that he would desire; but it was not easy to say so.

"Philip speaks of my going as soon as you have settled what you are going to do, and I can leave you. He takes for granted that you would not like to leave England."

"I'm sure I don't know why I should stay here," said Mrs. Vining.

"I do not think the life would suit you," said Agnes.

"Why not? Nothing could be worse than staying here to be governess or companion. I would much rather go. I will go."

With much hesitation Agnes tried to hint that perhaps Philip might not like an uninvited guest; but at the first word Mrs. Vining grew indignant. "I do not think so ill of Philip as to imagine that he would refuse an asylum to his father's widow. If he does not wish me to remain in his house I can work as well in Canada as in England, and will leave it; but, at all events, he will give me a temporary home."

"He tells me that home is but a poor one for those who have lived as we have, and I fear you will not like it."

"Well, I can but try. I am not so fastidious as you seem to suppose."

Agnes gave up the point. She could not imagine how Louisa could persist, or think of presenting herself where she was not asked, and evidently not desired; but she saw it was no use to combat the fancy which had taken firm hold of her mind. She therefore put aside her misgivings as to what Philip would think, and set herself to consider ways and means.

CHAPTER II.

NEW SCENES AND IDEAS.

Philip Vining's house stood in a pretty spot enough. It faced to the west, and overlooked a broad sheet of water—an inlet of one of the great lakes. What is so beautiful as water? Who that has dwelt upon its shores and delighted in its ever-varying aspect, now lashed to storm by the fury of the winds, now blue and sparkling and dimpled into smiles by some passing zephyr, or again placid and peaceful as the face of a child asleep?—who that has watched a

Canadian sunset, when every glorious tint of the clouds above is reflected with added brilliancy in the smooth flood below, or has seen the sinking of a young moon, whose rays cast a diamond path over the dark water?—who, accustomed to such a feature in the landscape, will allow that any scenery can be complete without it, or refuse to admit that its presence will compensate for many absent charms?

The house stood at some little distance from the road, which wound along the shore and round the base of a steep crag or bluff of limestone rock, which, in one part, broken into natural steps, and overgrown with evergreens, invited ascent. On arriving at the top, the climber came out on a wide plain, covered with a dense scrub of spruce and juniper, which would have been quite impenetrable had it not been trodden into numerous little paths by sheep. The view from the edge rewarded the trouble taken in attaining it. You looked over the wide bay with its steep wooded islands; over the curves of the shore, here jagged with rock, and overhung with tufts of spruce and cedar, there meeting the water in a graceful sweep of gray pebbles and yellow sand; over a distant marsh, in summer gay with many blossomed water-plants, in autumn bright with golden rice-beds, and resonant with wild fowl; and over the far opposite shore, dotted with farm-houses and orchards, and a solitary spire.

The house itself was long and low, with a verandah in front. It was of wood, and had originally been painted of a pale yellow color, with verandah and shutters of bright green; but time had toned down—not to say faded—its brightness, and in several places the paint had peeled off from exposure to the sun. A noble elm tree stood before it, a silver poplar shaded the southern end, an orchard extended for some distance behind it, and a gravel path led through the grass from the steps of the verandah to the gate that opened on the road. The internal arrangements were much like those of most other houses of the kind—the type is a common one. A passage ran through the house from front to back, from which opened four rooms. The