

The Maple Leaf Forever.

BY ALEXANDER MUIR.

In days of yore, from Britain's shore,
Wolfe the dauntless hero came;
And planted firm Britannia's flag,
On Canada's fair domain.
Here may it wave, our boast, our pride,
And joined in love together,
The Thistle, Shamrock, Rose entwined,
The Maple Leaf forever.

At Queenston Heights and Lundy's Lane,
Our brave fathers, side by side,
For freedom, homes and loved ones dear,
Firmly stood, and nobly died.
And those dear rights which they main-
tained,
We swear to yield them never,
Our watchword overmore shall be,
The Maple Leaf forever.

CHORUS.

The Maple Leaf, our emblem dear,
The Maple Leaf forever;
God save our Queen, and heaven bless,
The Maple Leaf forever.

Our fair Dominion now extends,
From Cape Race to Nootka Sound;
May peace forever be our lot,
And plenteous store abound,
And may those ties of love be ours,
Which discord cannot sever,
And flourish green o'er freedom's home,
The Maple Leaf forever.

On merry England's far-famed land,
May kind heaven sweetly smile,
God bless Old Scotland evermore,
And Ireland's Emerald Isle,
Then swell the song, both loud and long,
Till rocks and forest quiver,
God save our Queen, and heaven bless,
The Maple Leaf forever.

CHORUS.

The Maple Leaf, our emblem dear,
The Maple Leaf forever;
And flourish green, o'er freedom's
home,
The Maple Leaf forever.

"Probable Sons."

CHAPTER VII.

CROSS-EXAMINATION.

"Nurse, where is Miss Millicent? I haven't seen her for days. Fetch her in here this afternoon, and you go and get a little fresh air; I am well enough to be left alone now."

Sir Edward's tone was impatient; he was getting to the convalescent stage, and nurse found him a most trying patient. Nothing would please him, and he wearied both himself and her with his perpetual complaints.

"I think she would only worry you, sir; she has been asking me every day to come in and see you. I will fetch her at once."

Milly shortly appeared in a clean pinafore, her little face radiant with smiles. As she climbed up into the chair by the bedside and gently stroked the hand that was given her, she said with sparkling eyes,—

"Nurse says I may stay here all alone with you, uncle; won't that be lovely? May I give you your medicines, and be your nurse?"

"I can't promise that, but you may sit there and talk to me."

"What shall I talk about?"

"Anything you like. You never seem to be at a loss for conversation."

Milly considered for a moment.

"I've had so few people to talk to lately, you see; I generally talk most to Fritz. He understands, I'm sure, but he doesn't talk back. When will you be quite well again, uncle?"

"Not this side of Christmas, I'm afraid."

"Oh, dear, what a long time! But I'm very glad God has made you better. Nurse said it was a mercy you hadn't broken your neck. Do you know, uncle, I saw such a sad sight yesterday morning. I was down in the fir plantation with Fritz, and we came upon a dear little rabbit caught in a steel trap. Maxwell said a poacher had put it there, and he was very angry. The rabbit was quite dead, and his two hind legs were broken. Wasn't it dreadful? What is a poacher, uncle?"

"A thief—a man who steals game that isn't his."

"Maxwell says there are lots of poachers about. I'm so afraid he will think Tommy is one when he comes back. I do hope he will be careful, because if it's dark he might make a mistake. Wouldn't it be dreadful if he hurt his own prodigal son? And I ex-

pect Tommy will look very like a poacher. He is sure to have ragged, dirty clothes. If I was—" Here Milly paused, and gazed dreamily in front of her for some minutes in silence.

"Well?" inquired Sir Edward, looking at his little niece with interest as she sat in her big chair, her elbows supported by her knees, and her chin resting in her hands. "are you going into a brown study?"

"I was just thinking if I was a prodigal son—I mean a real one, not just playing at it as I do—I would rather be one of God's prodigal sons, than belonging to any one else."

"Why?"

"Because I would know for certain he would meet me and take me back. Nurse told me she had a cousin who ran away and made himself a soldier, and when he was sorry and wanted to come home, his father shut the door in his face, and wouldn't let him in. And then there's Tommy, I can't help s'posing that his father mightn't know him. But God can't make mistakes. It must be lovely just to run right into God's arms, and hear him saying, 'Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him.' I should love to have him say that to me."

Milly's little face glowed with pleasure at the thought, and she turned her expressive eyes towards her uncle, who lay with knitted brows listening to her.

"And supposing if God would not receive you; supposing you had stayed away so long, and had refused to listen to his voice when he called, and then when you did want to come back, you felt it would be too late, what would you do then?"

Milly smiled.

"Why, uncle, it would never be too late for God, would it? Maxwell said he would be glad to see Tommy if he came back in the middle of the night, and God would never turn one of his prodigal sons away. He loves them so that he sent Jesus to die for them. He would never say he couldn't have them back again."

Sir Edward said no more, and after another pause the child went on.

"I was asking Mrs. Maxwell the other day if she had some best clothes for Tommy when he came home, and she took me upstairs into his little room, and opened a long drawer, and told me to look inside. And there were his best Sunday coat and waistcoat and trousers, and a silk handkerchief with lavender in it, and a necktie with yellow and red stripes, and she told me they had been there for nine years, and she shakes them out and brushes them every Saturday. He didn't run away in his best clothes, you know; he left them behind. So they're quite ready for him. The only thing Mrs. Maxwell hasn't got is the ring."

"The what?" inquired Sir Edward amused.

"The ring!" Milly repeated earnestly. "Maxwell will have to say, 'Put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.' Mrs. Maxwell has got a pair of carpet slippers. I couldn't bear her not having any shoes ready for him, so we looked about and found a pair that are just too small for Maxwell, and I put them in the drawer my own self. Mrs. Maxwell says he won't want a ring, and that she thinks the Bible people dressed differently, and she said Tommy was a poor man's son; it wasn't as if he was rich. But I don't know; I don't like to think we have no ring for him. I suppose you haven't one, uncle, that you would like to give him?"

Sir Edward put his head back on his cushions and laughed aloud. Then, noting Milly's troubled face, he said,—

"Wait till Tommy comes back, little woman, and then it will be time enough to see about his ring, though I quite agree with his mother that it would be most unfitting."

"You have had the picture I gave you taken away, uncle," said Milly presently, her quick eyes roving round the room. "Ah! you've had it hung up on the wall. That's nice there. You can see it from your bed. Don't you like looking at it? Doesn't it make you feel happy?"

"I can't say it does," replied Sir Edward, glancing at the picture in question. "Why ought it to make me feel happy?"

"Oh, it's so nice to think he is just getting home after being away so long. I wonder if he was a great time walking back. How long do you think it takes one of God's prodigal sons to get back to him, uncle?"

"I should say a very long time indeed," said Sir Edward slowly.

"How long? Two days, or six hours, or a week?"

"It would depend perhaps on how long they had been away from him."

"It's rather hard to understand," said Milly, wrinkling her little brow perplex-

edly, "because God is everywhere, isn't he? And I should have thought he would have been close to them all the time. I was asking nurse about it, and she said that God was near them, only they wouldn't have anything to say to him, and did bad things and shut the Lord Jesus out of their heart, and let Satan in, and then God had to leave them till they said they were sorry. I suppose directly they say: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son,' then God just folds them in his arms and forgives them and takes them back again; isn't that it?"

"Look here, I think we have had enough of this subject. Talk about something else."

Sir Edward's tone was irritable; Milly's ready tongue obeyed.

"Nurse says it's so cold to-day that she thinks it will snow. Do you think it will? It is quite smoky by the river; nurse says it is a fog. I wondered where it all came from. Do you think it might be God's breath, uncle?"

As she was chatting on, suddenly there came a sharp knock at the door, and a visitor appeared.

"Thought I'd look you up, for I heard you were on the sick list. Good gracious! you have been pretty bad, haven't you? Will you put me up for a night or two? I expect you want a little cheerful company."

Talking volubly, Major Lovell—for it was he—came forward and looked with real concern on Sir Edward's altered face.

"I'm very glad to see you," said the latter heartily, holding out his hand. "Come and stay for as long as you like. I'm sick to death of my own society!"

"And is this the small party that arrived so unexpectedly when I was here before?" inquired Major Lovell, looking down at Milly, who still sat in the big chair regarding the new-comer with her large brown eyes.

"Yes," said Sir Edward, a faint smile hovering about his lips as he remembered his horror of her advent; "she is taking charge of me this afternoon."

Milly held out her little hand with all the grace of a duchess.

"I remember you," she said; "you were one of the gentlemen that laughed at me."

"I don't think I could have been guilty of such rudeness, surely."

"Now I think you may run away," Sir Edward said; "and tell nurse I will ring when I want her."

Milly obeyed, and confided to nurse that she hoped the "new gentleman" would not keep her away from her uncle. "For do you know, nurse, I like Uncle Edward so much better when he is in bed. He looks so sad, and speaks so softly. I wish I could sit with him every day."

Major Lovell was a distant cousin of Sir Edward, and there existed a warm friendship between them. The very brightness of his tone seemed to do the invalid good, and Milly was quite delighted to find that her uncle's visitor not only listened with interest to the account of her favourite games and pastimes, but insisted upon joining her in them, and the walls of the quiet old house rang again with merry mirth and laughter such as they had not known for years.

Upstairs in the sick room Major Lovell proved a wonderfully patient and skillful nurse; but there were times when all his bright cheeriness could not smooth the furrows in the invalid's brow, or take away the fretfulness of tone.

One morning Major Lovell came down from an interview with him with a puzzled expression of face. Catching sight of Milly in the hall, equipped in hat and jacket, he asked,—

"Are you going out with nurse?"

"No, nurse is busy—just by my own self, in the avenue, with Fritz. Do come with me."

The major consented, but with a graver face than usual, and then suddenly, very full of his own thoughts, said to the child,—

"I believe your uncle has something on his mind. It strikes me from different things he has let drop that he is turning pious."

"What is pious?" inquired Milly instantly.

"What is it? A pious person thinks every one wicked but themselves, and condemns everybody and everything all round them. They are most objectionable people, little woman, so mind you never take up that line, and the worst of it is that they are so satisfied with their own goodness, that you can't crush them, try as much as you may."

"And is Uncle Edward going to be like them?" asked the child, with a perplexed face.

"I devoutly hope not. I shall do all in my power to prevent it."

"What do pious people do?" questioned Milly.

"Do? They give tracts away and sing hymns, and pull long faces over very well-bound Bibles."

"I like singing hymns," asserted Milly emphatically; "everybody sings hymns to God, don't they? I listen to the birds, sometimes, and wish I could sing like them, and the trees sing, and the bees and flies. Everything seems to sing out of doors in the summer time, but they've nearly all dropped asleep now till next year. What hymns do you sing, Major Lovell?"

"Bless the child! what do you take me for?" and the major laughed heartily as he spoke, then, with a twinkle in his eye, he went on gravely,—

"I shall begin to think that you are pious if you don't take care. What else do you do besides sing hymns?"

"I have a Bible," said Milly solemnly, "and I just love it."

"And what makes you love such a dry book as the Bible? You can't understand a word of it."

"Oh, I can, Major Lovell, it's beautiful. I love nurse to read and read it to me. It tell about Jesus, you know, and I love Jesus, and he loves me. And it has such nice stories in it."

Major Lovell gave a long, low whistle. "Ah!" he said, shaking his head comically at the little figure walking by his side, "I'm very much afraid you may be at the bottom of it all. Do you read the Bible to your uncle? Do you tell him that he has been wasting his life and not fulfilling the end for which he was created, in fact, that he is a wicked sinner? For that has been the substance of his talk with me this morning."

"Uncle Edward is a very good man," Milly replied warmly. "I don't know what you mean, Major Lovell; don't you read the Bible?"

"What will you think of me if I tell you I don't?"

"Perhaps you know it all by heart? I expect that is why."

"I rather think I don't. You must not begin to catechise me too severely. Who has brought you up in this pious fashion?"

"I'm not pious, you said they were horrid people, but I thought all the grown-up people read the Bible, except people like Jack."

"Who is Jack?"

"He was a prodigal son, one of God's prodigal sons."

"And what are they, may I ask?" Milly did not answer for a minute, then she stopped short, and said very solemnly, raising her large, dark eyes to the major's face,—

"I wonder if you're a prodigal son. Uncle Edward said there were some rich ones. Have you run away from God, Major Lovell?"

"Oh, come now," said the major, pinching her cheek good-naturedly; "I didn't bargain for this when I came out with you. You must keep your sermons for some one else. Come along to the stables with me, and I will give you a ride."

In an instant Milly's gravity disappeared, and a little time afterwards she was laughing gleefully as she was being trotted round the stable-yard on a large bay mare; but she said to her nurse when she came in,—

"Major Lovell is very nice, but very funny, and I can't always understand his talk, he says such difficult things."

(To be continued.)

SHE HAD A GRANDMOTHER.

Down in Salem the other day a bright little girl was sent to get some eggs, and on her way back stumbled and fell, making sad havoc with the contents of her basket.

"Won't you catch it when you get home, though!" exclaimed her companion.

"No, indeed, I won't," she answered; "I've got a grandmother."

Bless her heart! she knew what it was to have a grandmother: a genuine, lovely, precious, darling old grandmother—a grandmother to sympathize with one when one is in trouble, to heal aches and pains, and even to take scoldings.

It has been a long, long time since the writer of this had a grandmother. Indeed, she was a tiny girl when the dear grandmother went home to heaven, and there is only a faint recollection now of how very dear and precious a genuine grandmother can be. The first Bible verse her baby lips ever uttered and the first hymn were taught by that dear old grandmother. The verse was, "Suffer little children;" and the hymn, the one that begins, "Loving Jesus, gentle Lamb." Blessed is the child who has a genuine grandmother!