

about the door. They had seen Mr. Johnston (their neighbor) coming, and had gathered one after another to have a chat.

'No, I will sit here, it will be cooler,' Mr. Johnston had said when they asked him to go into the house.

It had been very warm all day. But the sun would soon be set now and the work was done for the day. They were laughing and talking, and having a good time. Mrs. Doncaster, Charlie and Dan had been to the sand-hills picking berries, or, rather, looking in vain for berries to pick. However, they said when they came home, 'There are no berries worth picking, but we did not have our trip for nothing; it was worth all our trouble to see the trees and hills, they were just grand.' (We only have berries once in three or four years in Manitoba because the late frost kills them in the blossom.) The men began to talk about the crops, 'I wonder if this heat is going to hurt the crops?'

'Oh, no. I think it is just fine for the wheat. The nights are always so cool,' Mr. Johnston said. 'Your wheat looks good this year; let us go and look at it.'

So saying they went over to a fifty-acre field of wheat, and, walking through it, Mr. Johnston said, 'Again I tell you, Doncaster, you have a fine crop here; this ought to yield thirty-five bushels to the acre.'

'I hope it will,' Mr. Doncaster said, 'you see, we have had plenty of rain this summer, and no frost. Don't you think it will be ripe in two weeks?'

'Yes,' Mr. Johnston said, 'I am sure it will, and if we do have frost, it will not hurt this wheat now. But I must be getting home.'

In the meantime the sun was nearly set, and a few small clouds were rising in the west. There was an oppressive stillness in the air.

'Why, what is the matter to-night? It is getting warmer instead of colder. How fast the clouds are rising! How black they are! Will Mr. Johnston get home before the rain comes?'

'Oh, yes, he will have plenty of time.'

'Just look at that great black cloud, how it is spreading over the sky. Yes that low distant rumble is thunder. At every roll it comes near, and grows louder and louder. See that cloud of dust, that is the wind that always comes before rain.'

'It will be here in a minute—shut the door, quick. There it comes, it is all darkness now; let somebody light the lamp.'

The house is shaking with the fury of the wind, the dust is flying in through the cracks of the door. Outside the house everything is dark, except when a flash of lightning darts across the sky in zigzag streaks and illuminates the whole scene. A peal of thunder that seems right over the house makes everybody start and the dishes rattle. A few drops of rain and then! sounds what seems like a volley of small stones are hurled against the roof.

'Oh! oh! oh!' cry all the children.

'It's only hail,' says Mrs. Doncaster.

'Yes, it's hail, and the wheat will all be ruined,' said Mr. Doncaster.

It only fell for about three minutes, but Oh! the destruction it left in its path! The next flash of light showed the ground white. The air was cool enough now. It rained most of the night.

The next morning was clear and fine. The Doncaster family were up with the dawn, and out to see what damage had been done. Sure enough, the wheat was completely destroyed, and 'everything else.' The heads of the wheat were broken down and pelted into the ground and not worth cutting. The

garden things were all shivered to pieces. Sunflower stalks an inch thick were cut right off. The beans and cabbages were useless. The potatoes reminded one of the woods in the fall of the year when the leaves are falling, for the leaves were all on the ground and the bare stems standing above. The Doncaster family looked with dismay at the devastation. Alas for their blighted hopes! But their worst grief was to come, for when Mr. Doncaster went to feed his horses he found that one of them had been killed by lightning during the night—his best horse too, as is usually the case.

'Well,' said Mr. Doncaster, 'we will just have to begin again; we will have to do without the new granary we were going to build this fall.'

'And the new kitchen,' said Mrs. Doncaster. 'And lots of other things,' said the boys.

Then they all laughed, and said, 'Never mind, we are all alive and well, ourselves, so we have much to be thankful for.'

Thus through many dangers and difficulties and many beginnings over again, the Doncasters and many others are making homes for themselves in Manitoba and the North-West.

### Aunt Sarah's Discovery.

(By Harold Farrington.)

'If one straight line cross another straight line'—Frank Andrews slowly folded the paper on which he had written out his demonstration for the next day's lesson—'that's easy enough to see through—of course the vertical angles are equal!'

For a few moments he sat, silently contemplating the ever-changing fire pictures in the grate before him, listening at the same time to the musical click of his Aunt Sarah's fast-flying knitting needles. 'I—I don't see, if vertical angles are equal, why boys, born and brought up in the same town, who have had the same advantages, who've been to school together, and are cousins, aren't,' he said, finally. 'I mean in the eyes of their friends—but they're not!' and Frank looked for sympathy across the table, where his aunt was industriously working.

'You mean?' she began.

'Why, Tom, and—and myself,' interrupted Frank, watching a fantastic fire shape tumble to ashes. 'I don't know why it is, but Tom's a favorite with everybody, old and young, and I— Well, you know how it is! Now confess, Aunt Sarah; wouldn't you rather have Tom for company, ten times over, than me?'

'Each of my nephews has in my affections his own particular place, which it would be impossible for the other to fill,' replied Aunt Sarah, evasively.

'But you haven't answered me,' persisted Frank.

'I think I know what you mean, dear,' and the music of the knitting needles ceased, for this was one of Aunt Sarah's 'opportunities,' and it needed all her attention if it were to be wisely met.

Frank turned half-way round in his chair.

'I've made a discovery which I think you'd like to share,' and Aunt Sarah laid a hand lovingly on her nephew's shoulder.

'But it's nothing to do with what I'm talking about,' began Frank, impatiently.

'Everything in the world,' said Aunt Sarah, gently. 'It's a discovery of two very different characteristics in the make-up of my two boys, and if both possessed one of these qualities I think they would be nearly as equal as two verticle angles, in the estimation of their friends.'

'It's a quality, then; you've found it in Tom—not in me!' exclaimed Frank, positively. 'Isn't it so?'

'You remember when Tom was in, this morning,' said Aunt Sarah, thoughtfully, disregarding Frank's query, 'we were speaking of our last evening's musicale, and he told Elsie how accurately she pronounced the dialect in the little Scotch ballads she sang, and the pleasure it gave him. It pleased her—it couldn't help pleasing her—for it was merited commendation.'

'Do you recall what her brother said—and it was so unnecessary, too—last evening, as she modestly left the piano and took the empty seat beside him? I'm very sure he was proud of his sister's skill, and would have indignantly resented a like remark made by any one else.'

'I—I only said she flatted once on the high notes; that was all!'

'Yes; but it spoiled her whole evening, and I noticed tears in her eyes at the time. By whispering just a word of praise, for which there was abundant occasion, how happy she would have been made!'

'I—I didn't think to speak of her enunciation, her graceful touch, and the simple pathos in her rendering,' said Frank, slowly.

'Then, when Tom was last here to dinner, I noticed he spoke of your mother's custards—of how excellent they were, and it pleased her so much! To-day, at dinner, when she was tired and almost sick, her own boy complained that the soup was too salt, and didn't praise the delicious fruit pudding, though he passed his plate for a second helping.'

'Saturday, while watching your school eleven at their football practice, I recollect that their captain got almost angry because one of his men who did not hear the signals distinctly made a slight mistake; and not by a look even did he express any appreciation when the same fellow made a "dandy" run—I believe that's what the boys call it—and faultlessly kicked a difficult goal.'

'And that's your discovery?' faltered Frank, slowly.

'Yes; that one of my nephews is quick to speak his appreciation—praise, you may call it—but not extravagantly, of the commendable qualities and work of his friends, while the other—'

'Only criticises; and that's myself,' interrupted Frank, honestly.

'It's an excellent thing to encourage one another,' continued Aunt Sarah. 'You haven't an idea how much good it does one to know he's appreciated. It takes only a word or a look; and it pays.'

'That's what Tom does,' added Frank, slowly, 'and hereafter I think I'll imitate him, Aunt Sarah!'—'Wellspring.'

[For the 'Messenger.

### Trusting.

With simple faith I'm trusting,  
And waiting for the hour  
When I shall join my darling,  
My precious little flower.

My little flower that nestled  
So closely to my heart;  
My cherished little blossom  
From whom I grieved to part

God called him home to heaven,  
And left me here to mourn;  
Alas! how terrible the thought  
My being all alone.

Alone, yet not alone.  
For my darling one is near,  
An unseen presence prompts me on,  
And naught am I to fear.

P. M. WOODMAN