

life I simply disappeared; now I felt myself worthy of re-appearing in the circles that once knew me.

By the middle of December, by virtue of what we call hustling in this country, I had my grain all threshed, and the bulk of it in the elevator. I left my farm in charge of a young man in whom I had confidence; and one afternoon I found myself again nearing Winnipeg, after an absence of nearly six years. My objective point was England, and I had in my pocket a draft from a grain company on a Winnipeg bank for \$10,000. I walked down the street from the station, and though I met several whom I had once known well, none recognized in the broad-shouldered, full-bearded and plainly-attired farmer the neat, natty, slender, and elegantly moustached dandy of former years. Nor was the only change in myself. The streets were paved, and jangling horse-cars were rattling over them; the ramshackle buildings had been replaced by handsome business blocks; staring real estate signs did not stare me in the face wherever I turned myself. Looking down the side streets I could see that they had been built up for a mile back from Main street. The volatile and shifting sea of humanity that had striven for fortune on the curbstones of Winnipeg had flowed out, for, with very few exceptions, the faces were new to me. The effects of the boom had died out; Winnipeg had lived down its wild and wanton youth and had taken on the aspect of a great and solid city.

Next morning I went into the bank with my draft. I had known the manager well in former days, and appealed to him to identify me. It took him a moment to satisfy himself that I was the individual I claimed to be; then he invited me into his office and we had a chat about old times.

"I had not the slightest idea of your whereabouts," he said in the course of it. "Only the other day a man asked me where you were, and I said I thought you were in California. He wanted to buy that lot of yours on Main street."

After I left the bank I set out on a hunt for the offices of the law firms with which I had once been connected. The bank manager's remark had set me thinking. The firm had changed its name and its personnel considerably, but I found one member of it who remembered me. I said in effect to him that when I left Winnipeg I dropped all my real estate and I supposed I had lost most of it; but I wanted him to make a search of the registry and assessment offices, find out if any property remained in my name, and, if so, what incumbrances were on it. He set a clerk to work at once, and before night a list was handed me, showing that some five or six valuable properties still stood in my name. The mortgage company, knowing their risk to be fully secured by the land, had let the interest accumulate and had paid the taxes. In addition nearly a dozen lots had been sold by the city for taxes, but were still redeemable. Attached was a statement from which it appeared that the payment of some \$8,000 would restore all the property in an unblemished condition. I drew a check for this amount with alacrity, and thus found myself the possessor of Winnipeg property valued at considerably over \$50,000. This was a great windfall and put me in high good humor.

From the time I had left Winnipeg to turn farmer I had not heard a word of Helen Carruthers. I did not know whether she was living or dead, married or single. I had been so absorbed in my struggles with frosts and drouths and rains that even my passion lay quiescent. Besides, I knew that I could never bring myself to speak a word of love to her unless I first made a success of farming. I would not ask her to marry a man who had failed in everything undertaken. But now that my mind was at ease on this score, all the old feelings revived with double force; and I awaited with keenest eagerness the date of my departure for England, which I had fixed a day or so after Christmas.

It was the day before Christmas, and I was walking down Main street. I was taking no note of the crowds that were surging in and out of the stores, for I was thinking of a Christmas I had spent seven years before at Brayton Manor, when an avowal of love had trembled on my lips a score of times. Perhaps I had let an opportunity pass then that would never come again.

I stood on the curbstone, the fast falling snow beating into my face. Then almost unconsciously I started across Main street. Cabs were speeding down the street from the station, the Pacific express having just come in, and as one of them whirled by I saw through the glass door the face of Helen Carruthers. Next moment the carriage was speeding away southward, and I stood there in the centre of the street with the earth rocking under me. I heard an indignant cabman shouting at me to get out of the way, and

moved as in a dream across the street, and turned slowly southward towards the hotel.

I can remember as though it were yesterday the mental agony of that hour. Of course she was married. The same glance that had caught her face had shown me the outline of a gentleman seated beside her. How they came to be there did not interest me. It was enough that Helen Carruthers was married. I kept saying that over and over again, as I walked slowly down the street, but I could not realize the tremendous import of that fact for me. I had walked that same street years before, after my material fortunes had been lost, but then I had not been altogether wretched, for hope had been left me. But now black night seemed to have come down over my life.

I reached my hotel and looked at the register. There was a gentleman and his wife registered from a town in England near by to where the Carruthers lived, and this confirmed fears that were already a certainty. I went into the dining room when the doors were opened, and was looking aimlessly at a bill-of-fare that the waiter was holding before me when the head waiter ushered to the opposite side of the table a lady and a gentleman. One glance and I jumped to my feet with a suddenness that knocked the waiter half over the table. They were Helen Carruthers and her father!

But I hear my wife coming down stairs. How about the rest of the story? Why, you ought to be able to guess that. I spent a highly enjoyable Christmas that year, and shortly afterwards journeyed to England, having as *compagnons de voyage* Sir Arthur and Miss Carruthers, who were returning from a sight-seeing tour of the world. It was a very pleasant trip, but I did not enjoy it half so much as I did the return two months afterwards.

JOHN W. DAFOE.

Building Up a Library.

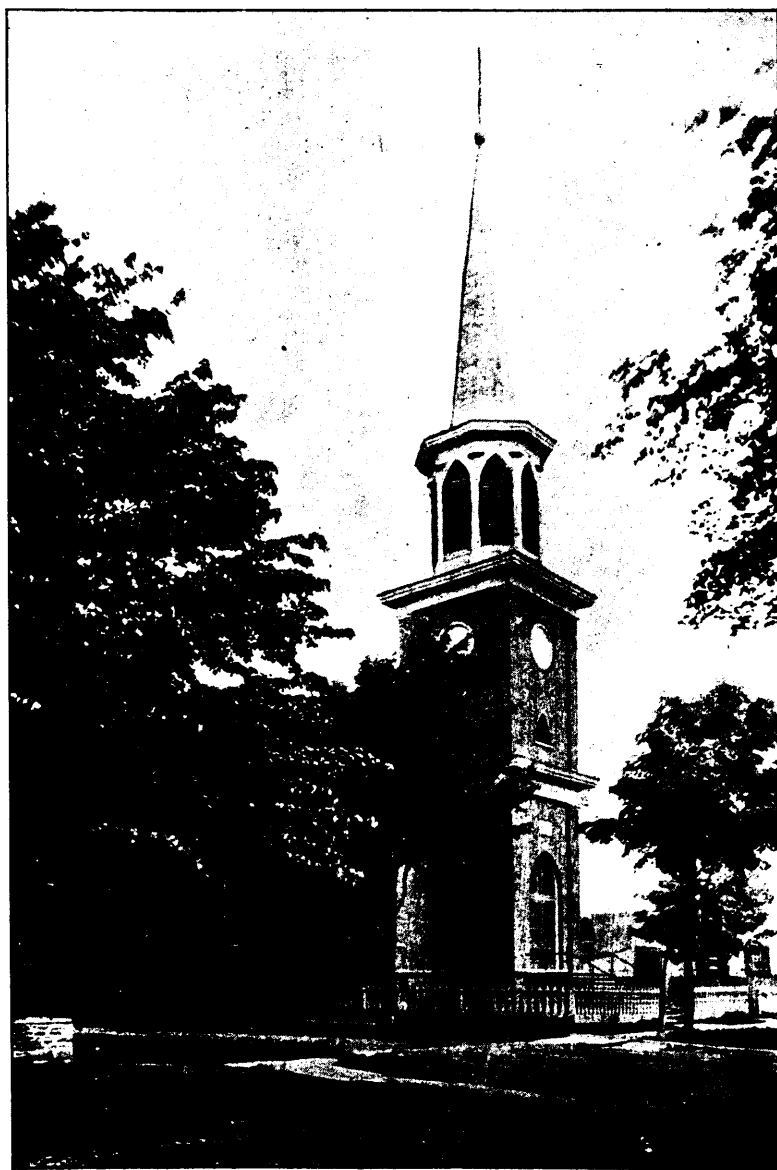
Mr. John Johnston, president of the Wisconsin Historical Society, recently presented that body with \$500 for the purpose of increasing its stock of rare and important books. The money was expended in England, and among the works purchased were three mammoth folio volumes beautifully illustrated entitled "Monuments of Mexican Art," a history and survey of the county of Kent, Stow's survey of "London and Westminster," a history of the County of Rutland, Smith's "New History of Aberdeenshire," two volumes, quarto, dated 1875, the standard work on Mr. Johnston's native county, Hulbert's "History and Antiquities of Shrewsbury," and Crostan's "County Families of Lancashire and Cheshire." The books are all peculiarly well suited for a library of an historical character, and their choice reflects credit on the secretary, who devoted the best part of his vacation to poring over bookstalls in London and other English cities in search of the required description of literary treasures.

The Clearing.

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

Stumps, and harsh rocks, and prostrate trunks all charred,
And gnarled roots naked to the sun and rain—
They seem in their grim stillness to complain,
And by their plaint the evening peace is jarred.
These ragged acres fire and the axe have scarred,
And many summers not assuaged their pain.
In vain the pink and saffron light, in vain
The pale dew on the hillocks stripped and marred.
But here and there the waste is touched with cheer
Where spreads the fire-weed like a crimson flood,
And venturous plumes of golden-rod appear;
And round the blackened fence the great boughs lean
With comfort; and across the solitude
The hermit's holy transport peals serene.
Windsor, N. S.

—Independent.



THE METHODIST CHURCH, PRESCOTT.