

# THE MAPLE LEAF

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## SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

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### CHAPTER I.

"You won't do it if I can help it, papa!" said a laughing voice, and the next minute May Arlington had taken the pail from her father's hands, and was pumping it full of the delicious old well water herself. "I put your spectacles in arm chair on the shady side of the varandah; and there's that article in the *Guardian* about the Methodist Minister's Convention you wanted to read, so leave me to do this, now," and the old man, with a "thank you, daughter, what a blessing you are, child," turned away and went to this favorite spot on the cool verandah, there to while away a restful hour or two of reading, interspersed with a dreamy nap once in a while. Truly he needed the rest; to look a his silvery beard and slightly stooped form, one would think him too old to do what he did around the farm. For he cared for the horse, Dan, the pet of the family, who would whinny with delight and rub his satiny nose against the old man's cheek, when he came to feed him in the early morning. He attended to the garden, and many a hard day's work he did out there in the hot sun. Then

there were the numberless chores to do around, that any one knows who has lived in the country. He had just got through and was pumping some water for the house, when our story opens.

And now as he sat there with the cool breeze fanning his cheek, truly, he thought, God had been good to him. Though there had been a good deal of hard struggling in early life, a good deal of sorrow, when his faithful loving wife had died at the early age of thirty-eight, still he could say with truthfulness, and thankfulness in his heart, that God was good. And he did say it now, with fervor, when he looked at his daughter May, as he watched the grace of her movements, the exquisite loveliness of her face, full of laughing joy and flushed with exercise, her sunny hair, which glinted in the sunlight and then her blue eyes as they met his, and he began industriously to look for his spectacles, which he had already put on. May brought the water into the house, and then looked out of the open window at her brother Ben, ploughing in the field below the house. After finishing what she was about, and with a last glance at the spotless kitchen to see if by chance there was anything yet undone, she took a book