
THE HOMESTEADERS

forests of the farther shore mingled hazily with sky and water. The point where he stood was a little bay, ringed with water-worn stones and hemmed around by the forest, except for one wedge of blue that broadened into the distance. He glanced about, as though expecting someone; he whistled a line of a popular song, but the only reply was from a saucy eavesdropper which, perched on a near-by limb, trilled back its own liquid notes in answer.

"I may as well improve the moments consulting my chart," he remarked to his undulating image in the water. "This thing of embarking on two new seas at once calls for skilful piloting." He seated himself on a stone, drew from his pocket the folder, and spread a map before him.

In a few moments he was so engrossed that he did not hear the almost noiseless motion of a canoe as it thrust its brown nose into the blue wedge before him. The canoe slid with its own momentum gracefully through the quiet waters, suddenly revealing a picture for the heart of any artist. Kneeling near its stern, her paddle held aloft and dripping, her brown arms and browner hair glistening in the mellow sun, her face bright with the light of its own expectancy, was a lithe and beautiful girl. In an instant her eye located the young man on the bank, and her lips moulded as though to speak; but when she saw how un-