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THE SETTLER'S TRAGEDY.

“YES; that's a queer-lookin' place, now, ain't it? It's the best piece of land you've seen anywhere in this day's drive, and that's a good deal to say, and likewise, it was once the prettiest farm along this road. Why, sir, I mind the time when that porch was all a glory with roses, like a 'ouse in a hopera bouffe for all the world. An' right hin the front there, where you see all them docks an' mullen a-growin', that was chock full o' beds of Lunnun pride, an' chinay asters, an' roses, an' stocks, an' marigolds, an' sweet mignonette; you could smell the place a mile off of a summer's night. Ah! she was a fine girl, she was, that lived up there; an' a terrible story that 'ouse tells. It ain't just pleasant to be on the next lot to it.”

Mr. Wellbeloved, for I had stumbled in my Canada ramble on a person of that name, thus spoke of a log-house and lot which had attracted my curiosity. On one of the best stretches of arable land, lying well up the gentle swell of the valley, with a good exposure, backed by fine woodland, was—a singular sight in that raw, yet thriving settlement—a “concession” which seemed to have been swept by some spirit of ruin and decay. The log-house stood, but its roof was rotten; its slight porch had been shattered or displaced by snow; its windows remained unbroken, but one could see from the dragging paper blinds

which had once made them gay with color, that there was no housewife within to mend or change things; and all over the eight or ten acres of land which had been cleared about the house, there grew as high as the unremoved stumps a wealth of weed, such as is only the crop of absolute desertion and death. By this place, on one side, my friend Wellbeloved, at whose house I had drawn up for many a mid-day meal, tilled a thriving farm; the evidence was visible in the roll of ripening wheat dotted with the disks of the blackened stumps, and in the cattle that loitered from the sun's heat under the circle of young maples he had left in a corner of one of his fields where a spring welled up from among some boulders, and by the grunt of well-fed pigs which wandered down the roads and cooled their heated sides in the marshy bottom, where I found the road like a floating stage of logs. Moreover there was Mrs. Wellbeloved, a little weary-looking perhaps, for number nine in the cradle was “*the* bothersome child; that it was, God bless it, she had ever knew;” and two or three fine, strapping boys that came home to the noontide meal from some hoeing work at the back of the concession with an appetite for the pork and corn that made me envious.

Wellbeloved was a Londoner, and had been in Canada exactly six years. He was “just turned forty,” having married at