



Temperance Department.

(For the MESSENGER)

JIM ANDERSON'S LEGACY.

(Continued.)

The interior of the farmhouse was scrupulously clean, but the furniture was scanty and of the most ordinary description. There were three rooms on the ground floor, two of them bed-rooms, while the other was the "living room," being very large. Outside of the back door was a small cooking shed. A ladder up to a trap door in the ceiling suggested a loft for storing away things, and perhaps attics for the accommodation of "shake downs" for casual visitors. Mrs. Anderson was a good-looking, cheerful little woman, and her four children were modest, healthy-looking boys, all under ten years of age.

It was not long before the thrifty housewife had her table spread with abundance of that Canadian farmers' great staple article of diet, pork and seasonable vegetables, as also a goodly supply of milk, custards, fruit, &c., which we enjoyed thoroughly.

After dinner, Miles Anderson took us over his farm. We traversed over a good many rocks before we came to any arable land. At length we came to a small patch of potatoes, and as I beheld them growing amidst that chaos of rocks, I could not suppress a feeling of pity for the poor farmer—who in a thankful sort of manner, praised up the advantages of his farm. By and by we came to another patch of land planted with corn, and after that another patch with wheat, and so on, till we came to the shore of the lake. I think poor Anderson must have exaggerated when he said he had twenty acres of arable land out of his hundred.

"You must have paid very little per acre for land like this," I said to Anderson, who had been showing off his farm to its best advantage.

"I have paid nothing for it in money, although I labored fifteen years for it, I may say. The farm was left to me by my uncle," replied Anderson.

"Labored fifteen years for a farm like this? Why you astonish me!" I replied.

"Ah," said Anderson, "there's a long story connected with that—a long story and a sad one—but I try to be contented with my lot. I make a living, and that's more than a good many people do; and I hope by the time my lads are grown up, I shall have something put by to give 'em a start in life. I am raising a good many sheep,—that pays better than anything else in these parts, but they are hard creatures to raise and need a good deal of care. I lost twenty lambs last year by the frost."

While I was talking to Anderson, Rawlings wandered away from us, and I noticed him straying on the top of a group of rocks looking around him. He soon came back, however, and we all returned to the farmhouse.

Mrs. Anderson had cleared away the dinner things and put the house in order during our absence and she now sat hearing her little boys read by turns out of the Bible. Not wishing to disturb the mother in her laudable occupation Rawlings, Anderson and I sat in the long porch that fronted the house, and fell into conversation upon general topics, which eventually led to the spiritual condition of the people of the neighborhood, and the sickness of the minister. Anderson seemed much interested in the subject of religion, and I was surprised to discover that he was a man of considerable knowledge. He was also a man of piety as could be seen by the reverential manner in which he had asked the blessing upon our late repast, and the tone of his conversation. A spirit of quiet contentment seemed to pervade his character, and I was surprised at this, because, from what I had seen of his worldly possessions, I should have thought he had much reason to be discouraged at the blank prospect of success which lay before him. I told the brightest sunshine his poor farm could never bring him independence, could never raise him from a life of drudgery. All the available bits of land upon his farm were already under cultivation and his eighty acres of rocks would yield him nothing but a scanty whiffing for his livestock—he could never hope to alter their sterile and unproductive nature. No to my notion, Miles Anderson's was an unenviable lot, and in the course of our conversation I endeavored to put into the event of his own testament.

"Would you not feel happier if you had a farm a little nearer civilization and more adapted to cultivation than this?" I asked.

"I might better say circumstances," said he, "but I should not feel any happier than I do amid these rocks. I was born upon this farm, rather the farm to which this once belonged, and there are circumstances connected with my life that seem to bind me to this locality. Indeed, I dare not leave it, for I have an indelible impression, instilled in you like to call it—that my mission on earth is right here among these rocks. I inherited this hundred acres from old Jim Anderson, my uncle, who left also, as an accompaniment, a most unusual and unpleasant bequest."

Here Anderson paused a moment, and with a saddened expression, stared almost vacantly upon the rock bound solitude that surrounded his humble dwelling. Something not unlike a tear seemed to linger in his eye as he continued.

"But the poor old man's brain was clouded, and I have forgiven him from the first. It turned out a blessing after all, all manner of blessings have come to me since then—a good and happy wife, healthy and happy children, and the little I can raise on the farm is of the best quality, and I have had an inward peace which is better than all other riches. I feel that I did my duty by him while he lived—struggled hard to reclaim him."

He paused again, and, turning to Rawlings, continued,

"Ah, sir, you don't know what comfort I took from your sermon this morning. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. I just needed what you said to refresh my spirit, which sometimes almost gives way when I think of uncle Jim's legacy."

"I am overjoyed to think that the Holy Spirit visited you through such a poor instrument," said Rawlings.

"You seem to speak of an additional legacy to the hundred acres. May I ask what it was?" said I rather nervously.

"It was his curse," replied Anderson, solemnly.

"His curse?" reiterated Rawlings and I simultaneously.

At this moment, Mrs. Anderson appeared at the house door and said, "Tea is ready, please come." As we rose to go into the house, Anderson said, in a low tone,

"It is a long story, and if you like I will come your to camp to-morrow and relate it to you."

We both invited him cordially. After tea Rawlings and I returned to camp where we found our faithful "Watch" on duty, and very glad to see us back.

We did not sit up very late this evening as Rawlings said he wished to be off early in the morning. After turning in, our conversation touched upon the events of the day. I could not help thinking about the curse that had been bequeathed to poor Miles Anderson by his uncle. I wondered what such an apparently good sort of a man could have been about to merit such a terrible thing from a dying man as a curse, and then I began to consider what importance could be attached to a human being's curse. The curse of a patriarch of old might have been something very terrible, but I questioned very much, whether, in this nineteenth century, any man's curse amounted to anything, beyond a sort of disagreeable impression upon the recipient. I asked friend Rawlings what he thought about it. After a moment's reflection he replied,

"Well, it all depends upon the circumstances of the case. The curse of a dying man or woman upon a murderer, seducer, or malignant enemy, must leave upon the recipient a certain vague dread of coming retribution, even without a verbal or documentary curse. Such characters must suffer periods of intense mental agony, which would be terribly enhanced by the curse of those they had injured, but, to my mind, an innocent person could live very tranquilly if a dozen curses were hurled upon him by man alone. You seem to forget that both you and I are at this moment the subjects of the most appalling curse that ever emanated from the human brain. It has been on our fathers for generations, our ancestors have gone down to the grave with it, and our children after—if we ever have any—will carry the curse also. Yes, we are badly cursed, you and I."

"I should very much like to know," said I, sitting up in my bed, "what man has had occasion to curse our forefathers and ourselves? As far as your own family is concerned, of course I cannot judge, but for my own family."

"Yes yes," said Rawlings, humorously, "very respectable no doubt. I merely refer to the universal curse of His Holiness the Pope upon all heretics."

"True, I forgot about that gentleman," said I. "Did you ever read the alarming details of that most diabolical anathema?"

"No, never," said I.

"Then," said Rawlings, "you had better do so and I warrant you will not soon forget it. The world contains nothing written that is more absolutely devilish. A glance at that heinous document alone is sufficient to keep me at any rate, out of Romanism. It is the sublimation of anti-Christianism."

"After that, friend Rawlings," said I "we had better go to sleep."

"So be it," replied he.

I dreamt about Miles Anderson's farm and spent a very busy night thereon, superintending the movements of a large number of work-people, dressed in white trousers and black coats, who continually ran about with wheelbarrows containing all manner of household goods, pianos, bedsteads, ticks, book cases, cooking utensils, but what struck me as being most singular was, the vast amount of newspapers and magazines that lay scattered about all over the farm, and my constant anxiety was to watch that nobody lit his pipe, for fear he might throw away a lighted match and thereby cause a great conflagration. Some such catastrophe would no doubt have taken place had I not woken up a little before sunrise.

I sprang out of bed, made a fire, put on the kettle and then jumped into the lake, where my friend Rawlings soon joined me. After a glorious swim we took breakfast and started upon our day's tour of observation. We took our skiff for the purpose of visiting some of the many islands that beautified the lake. The contour of the lake shore was exceedingly tortuous, and in consequence of the large amount of dead timber that lined the margin of the lake, it was at times difficult to gain a landing where Rawlings desired. He was unusually silent, but extremely watchful of the different rock formations which we passed thus morning. Sometimes he would say, "Hold on a moment," and then I would "back water" while he would stand up in the boat and scrutinize the landscape. Then we would row to the shore, and he would strike a rock with his hammer furiously, and picking up the pieces that he had broken, examine them carefully. Then he would turn round and gaze over the water to an island, and suddenly exclaim, "We must go to yon island." Away we would skim over the bosom of the lake. Arriving at the island Rawlings would dart off into the thicket and in a few moments I would hear the click, click, click of his geological hammer. Back again with more rock fragments, he would say, "Let us row to yonder point, I'm on the track." At the point it would be difficult to land, perhaps, and Rawlings would hop over floating timber, and perchance his foot would slip and down into the depths would he go,—only to rise again the moment after and scramble to the shore, where he would penetrate through tangled thickets and soon be lost to my sight. And there I would sit in the boat waiting for his return, which would not be sometimes for an hour. I would listen to the creaking of the thicket or the click of his hammer in the distance and at length hear a shrill sharp "Halloo!" from some point farther up or down the lake, where he had chanced to strike the water again after his ramble through the almost impenetrable woods. Then I would row up to the spot and take him on board again.

I was quite accustomed to my friend's vagaries in his geological pursuit, and, after a series of ramblings of the nature above described, I was not at all surprised to hear him this morning say, "We must go again to our starting point and take another direction." It mattered not to me which direction we took so long as I was pulling the boat and had my book and trolling line along. Boating was my passion, and as we always carried plenty of lunch with us, I never erred to return to camp until the shades of evening began to fall.

We now took the direction indicated by my friend, and by noon came to a point on the main shore of the lake, apparently about three or four miles from our camp. Here we landed upon one of the wildest-looking strands imaginable, and making a small fire, prepared a cup of tea and ate our luncheon.

"I want you to come along with me," said Rawlings, after we had finished our refreshments and had a merry chat. "I believe I am on the point of making a most important discovery, and we shall need a puck and shovel."

So I took a puck, while Rawlings shouldered the shovel, and away we started. I knew nothing of geology to speak of. I had nothing to do with my friend's survey,—I was only his friend and companion; but I dearly loved being asked by him to lend a helping hand occasionally,—because at times, when I would see him eluding away, tramping, climbing, searching and delving while I was doing nothing, I would feel as though I were a sort of drag upon his energies. I was glad, therefore, when, with a pick, I followed Rawlings into the chaos of rocks, brambles, burnt timber and wild undergrowth. He gave me a piece of rock and bid me be on the look out for similar outcroppings on our journey.

We had a signal about by which to find each other when separated. The difficulty of getting through the wood at first occupied all my attention, and it was some time before I attempted to make any examination of the ground. At one time, thinking a snake was at my feet, I made a spring which landed me between the limbs of a tree, where I hung

suspended and had great difficulty in extricating myself. There were two things I dreaded in going through these dense thickets, viz: snakes and hornets' nests. Nothing would make me jump higher than a snake, and nothing make me run faster than a swarm of hornets. Having constantly in mind these two evils, it is not strange that I paid little or no attention to geology until I arrived alone at a clear space of ground, where I suddenly came upon some of the same kind of rock that Rawlings had given me as a sample. I struck the rock with my pick and examined a piece more closely. It was exactly the same kind of rock as my sample. I shouted out at the top of my voice "Eureka," and very soon Rawlings appeared upon the scene.

"Ah!" cried he, as he gazed upon the rock, "you said correctly, 'Eureka,' you have, indeed, found it."

"And now that I have found it, what is it?" I asked.

"It is a very strong indication of a very large deposit of iron in this locality," and taking out of his bag a magnetic dip needle, he held it over the rocks. The needle stood perpendicular! He walked along, still holding the instrument, from rock to rock, into the wood, and still the needle pointed downwards.

"We will make a small opening just here," said Rawlings, pointing to a spot where the earth was a good deal discolored.

I fell to with my pick and made the earth and stones fly around. We made an opening half way up a large mound and shovelled away the debris until at length the pick struck against a solid rock. We cleared out all the dirt, and with one huge blow with the pick, broke off from the hard wall a number of black and heavy fragments of iron ore. There was no mistake about the iron deposit now: there it was, black, purplish-looking and almost pure. We went to work with a will and uncovered the vein, which we found to be about thirty feet wide.

"Here is an immense fortune for somebody," cried Rawlings, as he surveyed with satisfaction the result of his professional labors. It is the finest bed of iron I have ever discovered, but I am not altogether unprepared for this stroke of fortune,—the rock formations have indicated this for some days past, but I did not like to mention it. I wonder whose lot this is!"

"It is getting late now, we had better return to-morrow and make enquiries," I said.

"Let us cover up the hole before we go," said Rawlings, and suiting the action to the word, we both fell to and returned the debris to its original place, and scattered over the spot a lot of old timber, &c.

Returning to the skiff, we pulled merrily at the oars and were soon again at our camping place. In the excitement of the day's work we had forgotten the promised visit of Farmer Anderson, and it was not until he came in sight that we remembered it.

The supper being over, we spread our buffalo robes on the ground in front of the tent, and gave ourselves up to general conversation, which soon led to the subject of old Jim Anderson's legacy.

"Now, Mr. Anderson," said I, "this is a fine opportunity for you to tell us about the unpleasant legacy you spoke of yesterday."

"It is a long story, and I have never told it before to any one, but as you gentlemen seem interested, I will give it to you," said Anderson. So seating himself comfortably, he began as follows:—

"My father, Miles Anderson, and I, a brother, James Anderson, emigrated from Scotland over half a century ago. I have heard father say they brought a little money with them. After trying their fortunes in Lower Canada for a while, they came to Upper Canada, and after many adventures arrived at Toronto when it was but a small place. The two brothers then separated for a number of years, and when they came together again they determined to stick together for the future, and as time rolled on they came to those parts and took up three hundreds of acres of land. Do you remember seeing a fine stretch of farming land to the east of my farm yesterday?" he asked.

"Yes," I said, "I remarked it particularly."

(To be Continued.)

More Proof for Prohibition.—More proof for prohibition is found in the fact that the entire liquor interest of Massachusetts was found bitterly opposing the passage of the prohibitory law. Probably never before in the history of the movement has such a severe pressure been brought to bear upon members in any other matter of legislation. The traffic saw in the prohibitory law its death-knell. It saw itself out-lawed, and rallied all its political and financial strength to defeat it. Liquor politicians of both parties joined hands in unwholly alliance to continue the execution of this grand old commonwealth to the infamous traffic. Very, prohibition does prohibit, and none know this better than the liquor-men of Massachusetts.—*National Temperance Advocate.*