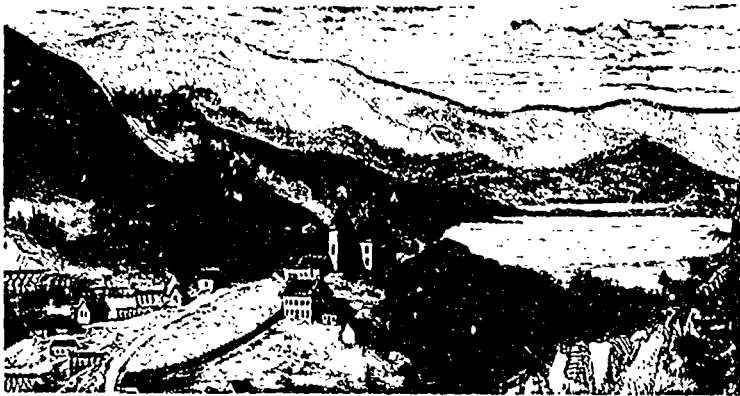




A MISSION STATION IN NEWFOUNDLAND. (See page 4.)

Arrived on the street, she was undecided as to which direction to take. "I may as well walk Mary's way," she thought, "I don't think I shall go in to-day, but I'll just walk around that way."

"Merry Christmas, Lou! Oh! I am so delighted that you have come!"

Lou started when she heard the greeting, for without noticing it she had arrived at Mary's house, and there she was sitting near the window, with the sash raised just a little to make herself heard.

"Merry Christmas!" Lou said, smiling brightly, and it was the first time she had smiled that morning. She had caught the gladness from her sick friend, and by the time she had entered the room had almost forgotten her disappointments.

"It is so good to see you again," Mary declared. "It seems such a long time since you were here last, and this morning I actually felt a trifle rebellious to think that while others could come and go as they pleased I had to depend on somebody to wheel me about the room. But I don't feel so now, Lou; I know God is very good to me. See the pile of presents that folks have sent in, and—oh, Lou! will you show me that new stitch that you spoke of the last time you were here?"

Like a happy child Mary chatted on while Lou gave her instructions on the latest crochet pattern. "Must you go now?" she asked an hour later, when Lou reached for her hat. "Well, I am so glad you came! I shall feel brighter all day on account of your visit."

With a light step and still lighter heart, Lou started down the street. "It is delightful to please one's friends," she was telling herself when she noticed that she was right in front of another friend's house. "That's where Mrs. Dobson lives. I've promised so much to call on her, that I'll just run in while I'm here, even if it is before calling hours."

She was met at the door by Mr. Dobson, who

said in surprise: "Why, how are you, Miss Lou? It seems good to meet a bright, young face to-day. My poor wife is quite sick, you know. Come up, will you, and see her?"

Lou went up stairs and found Mrs. Dobson in bed with intermittent fever. "Miss Lou, how kind you are! you have come like an angel of mercy. Could you sit by me for half an hour while George goes to the drug store for medicine? He's afraid to leave me alone, and I need it so much."

The young girl expressed her willingness to remain an hour, if need be, and Mr. Dobson went gladly on his errand. Then Lou bathed the invalid's head, and talked to her in a low, soothing tone.

Presently they were startled by the sound of a child crying in an adjoining room.

"That's Willie," said the sick mother in despair; "he's been so cross to-day. He was to go out, but of course his father can't leave me now, so he's disappointed. He doesn't seem to be well, either. He fell asleep ten minutes ago and George laid him down, thinking he would be quiet for awhile, but here he is again."

Willie then appeared, rubbing his eyes, which were red from much weeping. He was a pale, delicate-looking child of four years.

"So the little boy wants to go out," said Lou in a caressing tone, "how would you like to go with me, dear?"

By way of answer, Willie straightway went to Lou and nodded his head.

"Do you think he would go with me, Mrs. Dobson? I am alone and shall be glad of his company to lunch, and then wouldn't it relieve you a little, too? His crying must be very distressing to you."

Willie eagerly awaited his mother's decision. "Oh, yes," she replied, "he's not at all timid, and it would relieve me more than you can imagine, besides doing Willie good to get the fresh air, but how can I trouble you so much?"

"I don't mind the trouble in the least," Lou declared, "indeed, I shall enjoy it."

Thus it happened that Lou had company for Christmas, after all, and the little fellow who sat smiling beside her at the table seemed to be having such a good time that she unconsciously rejoiced in his gladness.

Happening to turn toward the window, she beheld a queer little specimen of humanity gazing in at them. She admitted the child, and was immediately greeted in this way: "Plaze, ma'am, me name is Kate Walsh. Me