

CHAPTER II.

LEAVING FOR THE WEST.

My First Work.

FROM 1850 to 1860 quite a number of people in Cape Breton were induced to move to Upper Canada, now Ontario, and in the summer of 1855 father sold out, and prepared to embark with a party of others for the new promised land in the west. As the two largest families in our settlement were leaving, the school was closed, and the long teacher paid off. But the boat we were to go on could not be got ready to start at the expected time, and I was appointed to keep the school going till we left, some three weeks or so, as I was the most profound scholar in the place. I had gone through the arithmetic from beginning to end; I could parse in grammar, and actually write a letter to be sent by post! I was only ten years of age then, but got on all right, as children there were obedient to parents and teachers, and would do what they were told. I need hardly say that I was paid nothing for it, and I have often thought that this first experience on my own account was indicative of the way my labours have been rewarded the most of my life.