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bor, scientific farming and unceasing perseverance brought him rich crops and prosperity. His sod shacks were replaced by frame buildings; his stock multiplied; prairie-fires never devastated his acres and as the years rolled by he found himself well-blessed by the Hand that favors the industrious, and never leaves the sad utterly forsaken.

Being abstemious and exceptionally thrifty, he was able to save and with his savings purchased farm after farm until a rumor went abroad that he was one of the richest farmers in the West. He employed many men; his farms were kept under his close supervision and were regarded as the best in all that district; so that when the farmers formed themselves into an association, they could find no man more capable of acting as president than Farmer Esmond. His popularity he had won in many ways; wherever a young homesteader, miscalculating the necessary expenses of a coming year found himself in a difficulty, the ever-helping hand of the President prevented him falling a victim to capricious land and implement agents; the poor alien striving to make a home on the prairie, obtained ready help from the rich farmer; it seemed as if the angel of blessing was continually leading him to help the poor, to raise the fallen, to cheer the stranger; and consequently the star of his popularity was always in the ascendant. The society in which he moved included the richest and

prosper; his ambitions had been realized; but what was this strange void within him — this deep, calling unto deep—that transient materialism failed to pacify?

And amidst the chill of despair that this brought upon him, his mind sped rapidly over prairie and mountain, lake and dell, to the almost forgotten scenes of Shanty Bay — to scenes of home, of youth's idle days, of affection and of love; and before his mental vision appeared the form of Letitia Hammond. Ah! where was she today? He well remembered the bitter parting, the tears, the passionate embraces; she did love him, and with that thought came the overpowering stream of reminiscence that flooded his soul with the bitterness of March. Yes! there was something that money could not buy and he longed for it!

To-morrow, however, he would be going to Ottawa to speak on behalf of the farmers, and on his return he would call at Shanty Bay and enquire concerning the girl he so loved. There was romance in the thought!

Seeing advertisements concerning an exhibition at Toronto of the paintings of Canadian artists, Everard Esmond decided to spend a few days in that city, ere proceeding to Shanty Bay. Having arrived at the city, he immediately directed his steps towards the exhibition and was soon admiring the products of Canadian talent.



A Winnipeg sweet pea garden.

noblest in all the West, so that when the association desired a capable and experienced man to represent them at Ottawa, the choice naturally fell on him.

At last he had acquired wealth, estate and honor; the blessings of half a nation were on his head; rich and poor alike thanked heaven for his exemplary life. Through all the West his name was known, and soon a speech at Ottawa would further extend his fame.

The threshing machines were in the fields, their muffled throb piercing the silence of the endless plains; the harvesters were busy bringing in the bushels of grain into the granaries, when Farmer Esmond drove out to scan the abundance that heaven had bestowed upon him again. His eyes surveyed meditatively the area, dotted so well with valuable stacks of wheat and oats. He was evidently reaping what he had sown. He had farms, wealth, position, and honor; what more could a man desire? Everything was favorable; yet this day a strange yearning had crept upon him—some unfathomable longing that golden corn and money could not satisfy. He was toiling alone—and for what? For that which could give his heart but little joy with the deeper desire saddening his soul.

Fifteen years before, he had left Shanty Bay; and during these years he had toiled patiently in order to

Amongst the pictures there was one in particular that drew his attention. The painting, entitled, "The Greatest Of All Is Love," represented a boy and girl playing on the shore of the lake, and both appeared as happy as sunbeams that seemed to be kissing the gentle waves.

Others passing up and down the long gallery paid little heed to the painting; yet the more he looked at it the more he admired it—for the girl was so much like Letitia Hammond. There was the same sweet face as in childhood's happy days, the same hand, same form, the same wealth of dishevelled hair falling profusely over the neat shoulders, the same gentle looks that fascinated him so much when they were together. The painting was superb! and it awoke memories of happiness and peace that for fifteen years had lain under the things that cannot satisfy craving affinity. Recollecting his feelings, he decided to purchase the picture. He called an attendant and desired of him the address of the artist. In a very short time he found himself comfortably seated in a large studio, where a middle-aged lady was busy on a new picture. Though in her features he read the unfailing evidences of hard toil and silent sorrow, yet there was much dignity and grace in her bearing; and the freshness of complexion that must have characterized her but a few years before still revealed itself with every smile and movement. He told her

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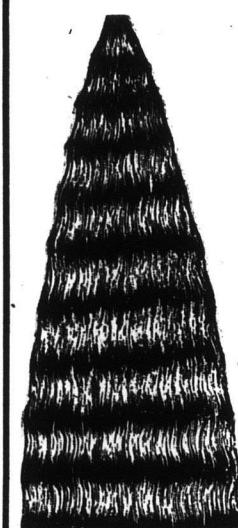
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