

God smiled, and it was Spring! Love's wand had kissed the hardness from the river's heart, and was quickening the trembling pulse of young life in tree and flower. Each day Heaven's blue became more glorious and intense, and the carol of the birds more exultant. "How soon a smile of God can change the world!" The stately trees, with early violets peeping at their feet, stretched upward toward the Sun and brought their leaves to birth, and birds began to mate and bring their bits of straw and grass to corners snug between the forking branches. And when the day was done, and the long shadows darker grew, the men and women living here would pause, and gazing on the glory all round, would question what it meant. Again, the low, soft, sobbing sound sighed through the trees, filling them with restless longings, unconscious longings for a nearer knowledge of the sweet truths calling to them from their throbbing hearts.

And so Spring came and went, and Summer was at hand. The nodding clover trembled beneath the weight of the happy bee, seeking sweets in the depths of its thick, pink head. The robin now piped, and the woodpecker awakened strange echoes in the quiet nooks of the Island Paradise. With the whispering leaves about him, and the branch gently giving way beneath his weight, the dainty squirrel paused and wondered at the shining live things dashing to and fro in the sunny waters beneath; then, frightened by the sound of voices foreign to his world, he would dash away himself, happy, blithe and gay, and what stories the leaves and birds whispered together! Every morning the shaking green things would greet the Sun with dewy welcome, and at night, when clouds of glory hid him out of sight, they hung their heads in quiet rest and hope, and listened to the tale of something strange and sweet they hardly understood though told beneath their shadow. And on the water in those Summer nights, the same sweet tale was heard in ever old but always newest accents, and the stars looked down in sympathy, and the Star Angel called it good, and forgot his old pain for his lost ones in the gladness of his heart for the human joy he witnessed; the Heavens became aglow with the fire from his rainbow colored garments, then a mist of angels' tears of gladness curtained off the sight from the heart's eyes beneath.

Spring did not die, but Summer was born, and now Summer was ripening into Autumn. The leaves whispered their farewells more tenderly than before to the departing Sun, who came later and lived a shorter life each day. The butterflies, sweet fairy lives, chased one another more rarely, and only in the heat of the noon-day Sun. The fruit hung ripe and ready to be gathered on the trees, and the bee toiled drowsily homeward,—its Summer work was nearly over. A gentle quiet reigned o'er all. Slowly and peacefully the days passed, one by one, and human hearts still loved and hoped and trusted. The leaves alone yearned with the pain of approaching separation. Each morning they waited in trembling the arrival of the Sun, to flutter with passionate joy, kissed by its rays, until the twilight came. But colder grew the nights, and with the dawn, mists

and fogs rose up to hide the King of Lights from the expectant leaves beneath, and the day came at last when the Sun did not appear, but remained hidden beneath the mass of cloud and mist which the Autumn had brought in its train. And then indeed Hope seemed dead, and the forest trees mourned that their last good-byes were said. Then it was that Love's holy miracle was consummated. The little leaves awakened, cold and trembling, but a radiant glory seemed to fold itself about them. Every leaf was toned with golden yellow fire won from the heart of the Sun. And wondering dimly that their mission was fulfilled, they quivered, and some dropped to the ground, like beautiful dead butterflies. Then the meaning dawned, and they understood. They felt "the flush and the burning, and the passionate, tender yearning," and knew that they had loved! What was Death to them! Nothing could dull the glory of that radiant memory! They had loved, and were glad to suffer from the consuming fire which granted them for a short time, to replace the Sun and shed its radiance on the cold and tear-damp earth below.

And the human soul, bowed beneath the golden glory, was destined to come to the same knowledge through "its infinite passion and pain." With the passing of the days, the mist of parting and separation had come to it, and had left it waiting,—waiting till it should clearly know and understand that God knew best: that for the love that seemed gone, there was to come a knowledge of something which was higher and better, a veritable Sunlight of Peace.

As the golden leaves dropped noiselessly down in benediction on the weary head, a break came through the leaden sky, the fresh wind of Heaven blew away the mist, the ivory gates fell back at the fairy touch, and for a moment was revealed the fathomless infinite blue beyond, suffused with the rays of the hidden Sun.

"God's in His Heaven—All's right with the world."

ISOLA.

THE ELECTRIC BEAR-TRAP.

A few summers ago I was called to minister to the spiritual wants of a number of small mining settlements north of Lake Huron, a bleak, desolate tract of rugged hills and marsh-lands, dotted here and there with lovely lakelets and bristling with the blackened remnants of a heavy growth of pine timber over which the fire had swept.

My appointments included half a dozen mining villages on branch lines from the C.P.R., at distances varying from three to six miles apart. When I could, I got a lift upon one of the coal engines plying between the mines and the shipping station at Sudbury; otherwise I trudged on foot between my outlying posts. One of the camps has a new mine just opened, a meagre collection of buildings comprising only half a dozen board-and-felt shacks and two boarding houses, in addition to the pit-house and smelter.

One Sabbath evening, towards the close of July, I had tramped over to this mine and gathered the miners