

grasses are nutritious and of illimitable abundance. Hay is cheaply and easily made. Trees are found along the rivers and streams, and they will grow anywhere very rapidly, if protected from prairie fires. Wood for fuel has not been very expensive, and preparations are now being made for bringing coal into market; of which important mineral there are vast beds further west, which will immediately be brought into use. The whole of the vast territory from the boundary to the Peace River, about 200 miles wide from the Rocky Mountains, is a coal field.

Water is found by digging wells of moderate depth on the prairie. The rivers and "coolies" are also available for water supply. Rain generally falls freely during the spring, while the summer and autumn are generally dry.

The drawbacks to production are occasional visitations of grasshoppers. This evil is not much feared; but still it might come.

Manitoba has already communication by railway with the Atlantic seaboard and all parts of the continent; that is to say, a railway train may start from Halifax or Quebec, after connection with the ocean steamship, and run continuously on to Winnipeg. It can do the same from New York, Boston, or Portland, and further, the Canadian Pacific Railway, as elsewhere stated, is now completed to the foot of the Rocky Mountains. The branch from Thunder Bay, on Lake Superior to Winnipeg, a distance of over 400 miles, is already completed. Other railways are chartered, and it is believed will soon be constructed.

The section of the Pacific Railway now opened to Thunder Bay will place the cereals and other produce of Manitoba in connection with Lake Superior, whence it can be cheaply floated down the great water system of the St. Lawrence and lakes to the ocean steamships in the ports of Montreal and Quebec, while the railway system affords connection as well with the markets of the other provinces as with those of the United States.

The Canadian Pacific Railway will be immediately and continuously pushed to rapid completion to the Pacific Ocean. It will be by far the shortest line, with the easiest gradients, and the fewest and easiest curves, between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and will constitute the shortest and best line for travel and commerce between Great Britain and China and Japan. This line of railway, passing through the fertile, instead of the desert, portion of the continent of America, will constitute one of the most important of the highways of the world.

#### HOMELY ILLUSTRATIONS OF FAITH.

**S**AM JONES was talking to a man of weak faith the other day. The doubter asked if Mr. Jones could not give him a demonstration of religion. "None," was the reply. "You must get inside the fold, and the demonstration will come of itself. Humble yourself, have faith, and you shall know the truth."

"In other words, I must believe, accept it before it is proved, and believe it without proof."

"Now, hold on right here. Out West they have a place for watering cattle. The cattle have to mount a

platform to reach the troughs. As they step on a platform their weight presses a lever, and this throws the water into the troughs. They have to get on the platform through faith, and this act provides the water and loads them to it. You are like a smart steer that slips around to the barnyard and peeps into the trough without getting on the platform. He finds the trough dry, of course, for it needs his weight on the platform to force the water up. He turns away disgusted, and tells everybody there is no water in the trough. Another steer, not so smart, but with more faith, steps on the platform. The water springs into the trough, and he marches up and drinks. That's the way with religion. You've got to get on to the platform. You can't even examine it intelligently until you are on to the platform. If you slide around the back way, you'll find the trough dry. But step on the platform, and the water and the faith come together without any trouble—certain and sure and abundant."—*Detroit Free Press.*

#### 24 O'CLOCK.

**W**IFE, wife, while down in town to-day,  
I heard by chance the strangest thing:  
'Twill come to pass, the people say,  
Tho' trouble it is sure to bring.  
Our timepiece there upon the wall  
Must go (it gives me quite a shock);  
You see 'tis of no use at all—  
'Twill soon be 24 o'clock.

We'll breakfast then at 18 sharp,  
At 19 I must take the train.  
What oddities! I can't help harp  
On what is sure to turn the brain.  
But Labour's wheels will still go round,  
On wages there will be no lack,  
Tho' this old world at last has found  
It has a 24 o'clock.

Tho' some folks learnedly may speak  
Of Greenwell time, and this and that,  
It is our century's strangest freak—  
A queer, diurnal tit for tat.  
We'er told the world improves with age,  
Our ship at last has reached a dock  
Where change in all things is the gauge;  
'Twill soon be 24 o'clock.

—*Norristown Herald.*

#### TOM'S GOLD-DUST.

**T**HAT boy knows how to take care of his gold-dust," said Tom's uncle often to himself, and sometimes aloud.

Tom went to college, and every account they heard of him he was going ahead, laying a solid foundation for the future.

"Certainly," said his uncle, "certainly; that boy, I tell you, knows how to take care of his gold-dust."

"Gold-dust!" Where did Tom get his gold-dust? He was a poor boy. He had not been to California. He never was a miner. When did he get his gold-dust? Ah! he has seconds and minutes, and these are the gold-dust of time—specks and particles of time, which boys and girls and grown-up people are apt to waste and throw away. Tom knew their value. His father, our minister, had taught him that every speck and particle of time was worth its weight in gold, and his son took care of them as if they were. Take care of your gold-dust!—*Temperance Record.*

A YOUNG and illiterate doctor, on being told that a certain patient was convalescent, said: "Why, that is nothing; I can cure convalescence in three hours."

#### FIGHTING FIRE—A TRUE STORY.

**C**OME here, Johnny, and let me brush your hair. Why, your father wouldn't know his little boy if he was to see you now. Oh, I do hope James will come back soon. My heart aches as I think of him and all my kindred so far away. It

is so lonesome here. Only these two little boys," and she gazed down fondly, though sadly, at her four-year-old Frank, taking his after-dinner nap in her lap, and master Johnny standing at her knee, "and no grown person to speak to. How I wish Mr. Matthews lived nearer."

Saying which, she sighed, and laying down her baby boy, went about her household labours. It was a strange place for Mary Sherwood to be in, gentle, sensitive as she was. It was on the border of civilization, where everything was rough and now. Here, in a half-finished farmhouse, on the bank of a pretty stream, with a background of heavy timber and a foreground of unending prairie, she sat alone with her babes.

Why was she here? A woman's devotion to a husband's health. One year ago his physician had said to Mr. S. that he must seek some absolutely quiet place or die. It did not take the wife long to decide. In a few months they were here, living in a log cabin, which had just given way to this unpretentious house. Here, free from all thoughts of literary labours, the husband and father was slowly gaining health. It was now fall, and business engagements had imperatively called him east.

No wonder, then, that she sighed. The days dragged heavily. Her husband and her father's home were 1,200 miles away. This was thirty years ago, when to travel from New York State to Iowa was more than a journey to Rome is now. It was hard, slow, weary work.

It was a pretty picture Mary Sherwood made that bright October afternoon standing in her doorway and straining her eyes across the prairie to catch sight of a human form at Henry Matthews' place a mile away. A delicate form, a sweet, refined face, and a weary, far-away look in her eyes. All about her tall black oaks stood like sentinels on guard. Only a moment, and she was gone to her work.

Woman on the frontier has little time for indulging in grief or reverie. Hers is a life of action. Only for a moment may you see this sad, wistful look. In hard work many a fair daughter of eastern parents has outgrown the bitter heartache and the fear of a lone frontier life.

Who could tell what an hour might bring forth! Surely Mrs. Sherwood had little idea of what was in store for her that same Indian summer day.

"Mother, I'm afraid," was the hurried exclamation of six-year-old Johnny, as he came rushing into the kitchen a few moments later.

"What's the matter, my dear little boy? Did you see a snake?"

"No, no-o-o, I heard a great noise like ten thunders, rumble, rumble, rumble; and a rabbit ran by me just as fast as he could go, and a flock of pheasants came and lit right over there, and they're all in a flutter. There, I can hear it now. Don't you hear

it now, mother? Rumble, rumble, rumble. What is it, mother? Don't you know?"

Yes! she knew—knew with a sickening sense of her weakness, danger and loss. It was the steady march of fire. It was rolling right on, up through the dark woods to the south. It was nearing her home; and unless she could do something it would soon lay in ashes all for which she and Mr. Sherwood had toiled all summer. But what could she do? No neighbour was in sight; no mortal ear could hear. Her babes were but a hindrance. Only God above and her right arm.

Mrs. Sherwood was a resolute woman. She had proved that when she decided to come west; she had proved it in a deadly sickness. She was now about to prove it again.

"Johnnie, wake up Frankie and bring him along, and keep close to me."

And the little six-year-old boy, with a sense of his responsibility, obeyed implicitly. At the same time she seized a water pail in one hand and a mop in the other, and keeping a watchful eye on the children, went out to fight the fire.

It is hard work to fight fire. Men seldom perform such exhaustive labour as while the excitement of a fire is upon them. Such work is harder for women than for men; and Mary Sherwood was a delicate woman, and bearing burdens only mothers know of. Nor was she used to severe labour. Her arm was not strong; she had been tenderly reared; nor did she weigh one hundred pounds. But if she had not the strength of some, she had what was better—nerve and pluck and quick wit.

The fire was making such headway, feeding on dry autumn leaves, that many a woman or man would not have dared to go near it. But she felt that it must be done, and so did it. Filling her pail at the creek, she rapidly dipped her mop into it, and then began to put out the fire. The fire ran rapidly along the ground, licking up the leaves, fallow trees and other debris. But the brave woman attacked it unflinchingly, and as fast as her mop touched it a little of the fire went out; and on the scorched and burnt ground the little boys stood, following her as she heroically met that line of fire, and stopped it.

Mrs. Partington could not wipe out the Atlantic Ocean with her mop. But there are times when a mop will quench a prairie fire. The fire of which we speak came from the prairie, swept up into the woods, and was now passing on the prairie beyond.

Here was a scene fit for a painter. That long line of forked flames, laughing, crackling, devouring, surmounting every obstacle, and hurrying forward faster and faster as the breath of the distant mountains began to be felt. And in their lurid glare a solitary woman battling that long, hot line of fire, alone, and conquering.

The minutes sped away into hours. The sun sank down and lingered at the horizon. Over and over again had she travelled the ever-lengthening distance to the creek to replenish her pail of water. The fire in the woods was all out. The house was all safe unless the flames should be turned by the rising western wind, and sweep down from the north-west.

But a new danger arose. For as it swept out to the prairie, Mr. Sherwood's