

had, worked early and late in this hope, only to find, after fifteen years of unrelaxed struggle, that the Government still refused them the titles to their homesteads. Here Rodney had been born. He began early to share the hard labor and the privations of pioneering and had grown up to the age of fifteen. Discouragement, resulting from the conviction that they would never have their home "free," and the exposure to the extremes of the severe climate broke down Thomas Merton's courage and health. After a lingering illness, which had lasted through the winter, he died, leaving Mrs. Merton and Rodney to finish the hopeless struggle for a home as best they might.

During previous winters, Rodney had been under the instruction of the local priest and had made rapid advancement in studies of which most boys of his age knew little or nothing; but this fall he had been obliged by his father's illness to do almost a man's work. In addition to cutting the wood and doing all of the chores, he had managed to keep quite a successful string of traps in operation, and when he drew his pack of pelts on his hand-sled, down to the Hudson Bay post it seemed almost large enough to buy out the whole stock.

But as Leveque the local agent in charge, told him that there were forty dollars due the company from his father, after crediting up the furs, he went home with a heavy heart.

"We've got to pay it off some way, even if you have to work it out," his mother had said, in the