

to evildoers and a praise to them that do well." Many novelists have written about them, Sir Gilbert Parker, James Oliver Curwood, Agnes Laut, to mention only a few, but no one had a greater first-hand knowledge of their early struggles and strivings and triumphs than the dignified little man in the grey lustre coat poring over yellowing manuscripts and letters in the Provincial Library at Edmonton, insulated from the world by the urgency of his task.

It may have been Sir Cecil's industry which drove me to do some serious reading while I had the Provincial Library at my elbow. For years I had wanted to write an immigration story in the form of a novel. I wanted to portray the struggles of a young girl who found herself in Canada dependent upon her own resources with everything to learn, including the language.

I thought first of taking a Ukrainian girl as my heroine for it was easy to get books on the Ukrainian background, but I had been greatly attracted to Finland because of its advanced attitude to women. Finnish women received the vote and sat in parliament long before any other women, and I wondered about this and what quality of mind had brought it about. I knew, too, about the Continuation Schools in Finland, where boys and girls whose education had been neglected were sent after working hours at their employer's expense, with the result that illiteracy in Finland was being entirely overcome.

I had a Finnish girl in my kitchen at this time, a fine looking blonde with reddish hair, high cheekbones, even white teeth and a passion for cleanliness, dating back to a long line of steam-bathing ancestors. I knew about their soft-soap scourings and beatings of birch branches followed by rollings in the snow if the time happened to be in winter, and there is a long winter in Finland, and