

The Family Circle.

CANADA'S BIRTHDAY.

With head uplifted towards the polar star,
Our country, of the nations latest born,
Stands with feet buried 'mid the vines and corn,—

One hand outstretched the Atlantic's waves to bar,—

The other, to the setting sun afar,
Rolls back the wide Pacific towards the morn :
And yet, methinks, distracted and forlorn,
She looks from things that were, to things that are,

With doubtful eyes that, all uncertain, sweep
For one wide horizon, as if searching there,
For the strong love, to make her pulses leap
With one strong impulse !—Wayward pas-
sions tear

The heart that should be fixed in purpose deep,
And cloud the eyes that should be raised in prayer !

Oh, God of nations who hast set her place
Between the rising and the setting day,
Her part in our world's changeful course to play ;

Soothe the conflicting passions that we trace
In her unrestful eyes ; grant her the grace
To know the one true perfect love that may
Give noble impulse to her onward way,—

God's love that doth all other loves embrace !
Gird her with panoply of Truth and Right,
In which she may go forth, her fate to meet,—

Ithuriel's spear,—to crush, with angel
might,

The brood of darkness lurking at her feet,
With faith to nerve her will and clear her
sight,

Till she shall round a destiny complete !

—"Fidelis," in The Week.

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MARJORIE'S CANADIAN WINTER.

BY AGNES MAULE MACHAR.

CHAPTER IV.—CONTINUED.

'Just bring the Bible to me, Alan,' said Dr. Ramsay. 'You know I was out at prayer-time, and so were Alan and Marjorie.'

So the Bible was brought ; the doctor read his favorite evening psalm, 'The Lord is my Shepherd,' and then, in a few simple, earnest words of prayer, commended all present, and all dear ones distant, to the care of that good Shepherd whose vigilance never sleeps.

As Marjorie laid her tired head down on soft pillows, she could not feel herself so far away from home. She could scarcely realize, indeed, that that very morning she had awoke in her old familiar room, and had breakfasted with her father, between whom and herself there were now so many miles of distance and darkness. But she felt as if the consciousness of a father's loving care were around her still, and with this restful feeling in her heart she quickly fell into a sound, almost dreamless sleep.

CHAPTER V. IN MONTREAL.

Marjorie was awakened next morning by the scratching of Robin's little paws, he having come to look for his young mistress in this strange house. Then she became conscious of the sharp patter of fine snowflakes against the window glass, and looking out between her curtains, saw a pale misty grayness with white puffs of drifting snow whirling through it. At first she could not remember where she was. Then she heard children's merry voices in the distance, and began to realize the new circumstances of her life. Just at first the tears rushed to her eyes as the thought came of her father, and how long it would be before she should see him again. But the interest of novelty counteracted the touch of pain ; and before Marion's gentle tap sounded on her door, she was half dressed. Marion was watching to go down with her, and not far off was Millie—her Aunt Millie's namesake waiting for an introduction. She was a year or two younger than Marjorie, with a strong likeness to her father, and a good deal of cleverness and ambition in her eager face.

From the hall downstairs came ringing shouts of laughter, which Marjorie soon found came from Jack and the two youngest children, who were watching with great amusement the introduction of Robin to Nero. The

staid, dignified, but good-natured Newfoundland looked at the little intruder with evident surprise, but with a tolerant, patronizing air, while Robin, who was more than half-disposed to snarl and quarrel, after the manner of small terriers, seemed gradually to take in the situation, and reconciled himself to be patronized, though evidently much relieved when Marjorie appeared and gave him an opportunity to retire gracefully.

Jack was nearly as old as Marjorie, but somehow seemed much younger, despite his greater height. He was much plainer than Alan, and rather awkward, if not shy. He and his sister Millie always 'hunted in couples,' as their father expressed it. They were always together when it was possible for them to be so. Millie went to the grammar school with her brother and kept up with him in his classes, notwithstanding his seniority. Jack had long made up his mind to be a doctor, and it was Millie's secret ambition to be one too ; and then she and Jack could go into partnership together 'to kill people,' as Alan unfeelingly put it when this secret had incautiously leaked out.

The two youngest were Norman, a sturdy eight-year-old in knickerbockers, and little Effie, the household pet, who was only six, and, as everybody declared, a little image of her mother. Mrs. Ramsay was already in the dining-room, and called them all into prayers.

'Your uncle is not up yet,' she said to Marjorie, when she had given her a warm kiss of greeting. 'He was called out late last night, and was out most of the night. Such things often happen in doctors' families, and we have to breakfast without him when they do.'

Marjorie felt disappointed. She could not have believed that the absence of the doctor's genial presence could have made such a difference. Mrs. Ramsay indicated an appropriate hymn, which all sang together very sweetly ; even Effie's childish voice accompanied her mother's ; and then followed the reading and the simple prayer, the whole lasting only a very few minutes, for, in the opinion of both Doctor and Mrs. Ramsay, brevity is one of the essentials of devotion where children are concerned. The simple little service closed with the reverent repetition of the Lord's Prayer by the servants as well as children. To Marjorie, accustomed to so small a family, in which such had not been the practice, this hearty little household service was a very pleasant and impressive novelty.

Then followed breakfast, while the clatter of so many lively tongues was rather bewildering. Marjorie was kept busy answering questions : whether she liked snow ; whether she had sleighs in New York, or toboggan slides ; whether she could skate or snow-shoe ; or had ever been in a toboggan ? Norman generously offered to take her down in the small toboggan which was the joint property of himself and Effie, and which they expected to use in a day or two, on a children's slide in a neighboring field ; while Alan and Jack discussed the merits of the various slides ready, and the new ones about to be prepared for the approaching carnival.

'There will be plenty of snow for them soon,' said Mrs. Ramsay, 'if this snowstorm lasts all day. But you won't get out much to-day if it does, Marjorie. You will have to amuse yourself indoors, I fear. And now, children, it's time to be off to school.'

None of the little Ramsays minded a snowstorm unless it was very bad indeed. Even little Effie got on her striped blanket suit and blue tuque, in which she looked a charming little picture, and trotted merrily off with Norman to the school, not very far away, which they attended. When they were all fairly off, Mrs. Ramsay went to attend to her housekeeping, and Marion who did not go to school now, but only to one or two special classes, conducted Marjorie on a tour of inspection of the house and the things in it which she thought would specially interest her cousin. One of these was a fine large photograph of her father when a young man, which Marjorie had never seen before, and at which she could scarcely stop gazing.

They finally found their way into 'the study,' a cosy room half-full of books, where the children learned their lessons, and practiced on the old piano, and followed the various pursuits that interested them out of school hours ; and where they could make 'a litter' without detriment to the order of the rest of the house ; being always expected, however, to put away their books and toys when not using them. Here Marion and Marjorie established themselves with some mending, in which the latter offered to help, and here Mrs. Ramsay by and by joined them, Dr. Ramsay looking in also for a few minutes when he had had his breakfast. This room had a window looking toward the 'mountain,' which, however, in the snowstorm appeared only as a somewhat dim sketch in black and white, the dark pines above weirdly contrasting with the white clouds of snow-drift. The wintry world without made the indoor comfort all the pleasanter, and Marion and Marjorie had a long talk over their work till the latter felt as if she knew her Cousin Marion almost as well as her Aunt Millie.

Mrs. Ramsay held a sort of family council with the two girls as to the best plan for Marjorie's studies. It was too near the Christmas holidays now, to be worth while to begin attendance anywhere till they were over. Dr. Ramsay believed in a thorough grammar school education for girls, from the beginning, but his wife could not quite reconcile herself to what she called his 'advanced' ideas, and had a great preference for placing a girl growing into womanhood under the care of cultivated women, with companions of their own sex. She had had her own way with Marion, who was not particularly intellectual, and had no ambition in the way of higher education ; but Millie was totally different, and Mrs. Ramsay had the good sense to see that it was best to let her follow her bent. 'After all,' Dr. Ramsay would say, 'since Nature has made our girls so different, why should we want to trim them all off on one pattern—like a box hedge ? "Variety is the very spice of life," and I like both my Marion and my Millie, each in her own way.' So Marion had been educated mainly on the old-fashioned plan, while Millie already, at eleven, planned for herself a professional education and a professional career, though, fearing to be 'chafed,' she was not given to talk freely on the subject. Mrs. Ramsay knew that her brother shared, to a great extent, her 'old-fashioned prejudices,' though he had always taken a personal supervision of Marjorie's education ; and as she herself had no desire for the novel experience of a high school, it was decided, to her satisfaction, that after Christmas she should enter the same school that Anna West attended, and where Marion still continued to take lessons in music and painting.

The snowstorm continued unabated during the day. Norman and Effie came home with cheeks glowing with exercise and fun, and wanted to begin a snow 'fort' and 'robbers' cave' in the yard at once. 'Jack and Jill,' as Jack and Millie were often called, brought home jubilant reports of the depth of the snow, and declared that there would be enough for snow-shoeing and tobogganing to-morrow. Marjorie found the afternoon pass quickly enough, between reading the 'Adventures of Amyas Leigh'—in which she had become profoundly interested—watching her Cousin Marion paint a china cup, intended for a Christmas present, and making acquaintance with the little ones. They soon found out she could tell stories : and she had to ransack her brain for all the old griffin and fairy tales that her father used to tell to her on winter evenings.

'And don't you know any bear or Indian stories ?' Norman wanted to know, when at last the supply seemed to run short. Marjorie confessed that she did not, whereupon Effie volunteered to tell her the story of the Three Bears, from her nursery book, and told it very amusingly, too, in her own quaint little way.

'I'll tell you what, Cousin Marjorie,' said Jack, who had been standing by, 'you just ought to get Professor Duncan to tell you some of his stories. He knows lots and lots ; all about the Indians, and Champlain, and priests—Jesuits they were, you know—that

came to try to convert the Indians, and how they went and lived in their wigwams till they were almost dead with cold and hunger, and how they killed and burned them.'

'Burned the Indians ?' asked Marjorie, shocked, but yet with an association of ideas connecting the Jesuits with the Inquisition and the persecution of the Waldenses.

'Jack,' exclaimed Millie, with a touch of scorn, 'how you do tell things upside down ! No, Cousin Marjorie ; these Jesuits weren't like that. They were awfully good, brave men, and they were always risking their lives among the savages, and some of them were killed and burned with the greatest barbarity. You must get Professor Duncan to tell you about Isaac Jogues.'

And Millie, having thus elucidated the matter to her own satisfaction, subsided again into the book she was devouring.

'Who is Professor Duncan ?' Marjorie asked Jack.

'Oh ! he's a great friend of ours.'

'Of father's, you mean,' interpolated the critical Millie, without raising her head.

'No ; of all of us,' insisted Jack. 'He often comes to see us, mostly always on Sunday evenings ; and he's splendid, and never gets tired of telling us things ; and he knows an awful lot. They say he's an author,' continued Jack, mysteriously.

'So is Uncle John, isn't he, Cousin Marjorie ?' inquired Millie.

Marjorie was a little taken back. It had never occurred to her to consider her father in the light of an 'author,' though of course she knew that he wrote a great deal.

'Yes, I suppose so,' she said, secretly much pleased to find his reputation so well sustained.

Next morning was clear, bright and bracing. The sky was blue, the sun shone on the new-fallen snow, making it sparkle till it was fairly dazzling. The 'mountain' rose, a glittering rounded mass of white, relieved by the inky blackness of its leafless crest of dark pines above. The merry music of the sleigh-bells seemed unceasing, and contributed to the general exhilaration. The children were all in the merriest mood, and were discussing toboggans and snow-shoes, snow forts and Christmas-trees, all in a breath. Alan belonged to a snow-shoe Club already, and went on long tramps, and it was one of Jack's ambitions to do the same.

Dr. Ramsay offered to take Marjorie in his cutter, for a drive about the city, when he went on his morning rounds, and Mrs. Ramsay arranged to meet her, with Marion, at one of the book stores, in order to go on a shopping expedition to get Marjorie a fur cap and some other needed outdoor wraps, among which Alan had specially requested that a blanket ulster, tuque and sash should be included, for he should want her to go tobogganing with him often, and she must have a tobogganing costume.

So she was well muffled up, temporarily, in Millie's warm fur cape and blue 'cloud,' and stowed herself away in the doctor's cutter, with great satisfaction. Chester needed no urging to dash off to the tune of his own bells, and they were soon gliding down Beaver Hall, across Victoria Square, and along Great St. James Street with its massive stone buildings, and then between the queer tall French houses of the narrow Notre Dame Street, growing more and more French in aspect and speech as they went eastward. Dr. Ramsay pointed out the banks, and the beautiful post-office, which made Marjorie wonder when there would be a letter from her father, and the stately church of Notre Dame with its two tall towers ; and the market-women going in and out ; and to Marjorie it all seemed like pictures out of books that she had read long ago.

'Look, Marjorie,' said her uncle, as they were obliged to thread their way more slowly along the narrow, crowded street, 'that is the entrance to the Old Gray Nunnery. Some of the oldest buildings in Montreal are there, going back almost to the time when it was first founded as Ville Marie ; that was its old name. You must go in some day and see the little old church, and hear the story of my favorite heroine, the benevolent Marguerite de Bourgeoys, and see her picture, with the kind sensible face—the face of a true woman.'

(To be continued.)