

Deal Gently With Mother.

Deal gently with mother, O Time, as you pass
With your soft and remorseless, and fast
changing glances;
Smooth away the frown that was raven in age,
For the wrinkles therein were all pen-
cilled by you.

Deal gently with her, since in earnest or play
You've stolen the years of her youthhood
away;

May her days be serene as a sweet summer
eve,
And nothing be present to vex or to grieve.

You've chiselled deep lines on that motherly
face,
From her step so elastic you've taken the
pace;

Her firm you have broken with labour and
years,
And sealed very often her eyelids with tears.

Deal kindly with mother, O Time, while you
may,
And take her not from our circle away;
Break not this strong link in our family chain,
But may sue with us many years yet remain.

Crown her brow with sweet peace as you've
wreathed it with years,
Fill the eyelids with joy you have moistened
with tears;

Lift the burdens of care that have weighed
down her breast,
And give to her body a Sabbath of rest.

Down life's Western slope lead our dear
mother's feet;
May the sunset be calm, all resplendent and
sweet;

May angels swing open the portals of day,
That shall give us in heaven a mother for
aye.

—London Methodist.

BARBARA HECK

A STORY OF THE FOUNDING OF
UPPER CANADA.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER XVI.—A HOPE FULFILLED

THE slow convalescence of Colonel Pemberton was a time of rich spiritual profit and of deep domestic joy. More even than his wife or daughter, he seemed to like to have his son to wait upon him. And with the tenderness of a girl, if without his sister's deftness and grace, Reginald tutored his awkward hands to administer the medicine and the tasteful dainties prepared by his mother's housewifely skill to tempt the invalid's capricious appetite. And his strong arms could lift and move the pain-racked frame of the sufferer as no other could.

It was now within a month of Christmas. Not a word had been said by anyone with reference to the engagement of Blanche and Elder Dunham, although it was clearly understood by all. At last, one day, as Reginald sat by his father's bedside reading to him a sermon of Mr. Wesley's from the *Arminian Magazine*, the colonel abruptly said:

"My son, I wish you would ask Elder Dunham to spend his Christmas here."

"Are you sure it would be agreeable to you both, father?" asked the young man, who rather dreaded a collision between two strong wills like theirs.

"I have reason to believe that it will be more than agreeable to Mr. Dunham; and I have changed my views on a good many things while I have been lying here, so that it will be agreeable to me. I used him very unkindly the last time he was here; and I owe him the apology and from one gentleman to another, for an offence given."

"You will find he bears no malice, father," said Reginald; "I heard him warmly defending you against the

accusation of a low-bred fellow who bore you a grudge for having, as magistrate, sentenced him for sheep-stealing to the lock-up at Frontenac."

"Did you, indeed? I confess I am a little surprised at that, after the way I treated him."

"I will not see him myself before Christmas, as I must go to the other end of the circuit as soon as you are well enough for me to leave. But I can send word through Elder Loce, who preaches here next week."

"Do, and ask Mr. Loce to eat his Christmas dinner with us, too."

"Would you like to entertain your friend Elder Dunham at Christmas, Blanche?" asked the colonel later the same day.

"If I do, father," said the girl flushing and then turning pale, "it must be as his betrothed. I cannot forsake him. I love you dearly, father, and never more than now," and she flung her arms about his neck, "but the Bible tells us to forsake father or mother for husband or wife."

"It tells you right, too. Forgive me, Blanche; I have been wrong to come between your heart and a noble man. It was my love for you that made me do it. I have learned that true happiness consists not in houses and lands, but in contentment and the blessing of God. If any one had told me a year ago that Colonel Pemberton would give his daughter to a landless, homeless Methodist preacher, I would have resented it with scorn. But I see things differently now."

"O, father! you are so good, so kind," exclaimed the enthusiastic girl, renewing her caresses of her grey-haired sire. "But I gain more, than I lose—the priceless love of a true and honest heart. God will provide a home and living for us somehow, somewhere, as He does for the birds of the air, that sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns, yet our Heavenly Father feedeth them; and are not we more precious than they?"

"I wish I had your faith, Blanche. But you shall never want a home, my child, while your father has a roof above his head. And I have been an obstacle to your happiness so long, that I will keep you waiting no longer. If you wish to be married at Christmas, you have mine and your mother's consent; and God's blessing rest upon you"—and the old man's voice faltered, and a tear rolled down his silvery beard as he laid his hands in benediction on her head.

Blanche kissed the tear away and blushed a little, and with a woman's strange inconsequence replied, "This is rather sudden, father; I don't know what Darius"—what a name to fall soft as a caress from a woman's lips!—"will say."

"O, trust him," said the old man with a merry twinkle in his eye; "he'll not object, I'll warrant."

Reginald's letter, duly conveyed by Elder Loce, explained the state of affairs to Mr. Dunham, and speedily brought that gentleman to the Heck Settlement, to reach which he rode a hundred miles in two days. He stopped at his usual house, the house of the hospitable Hecks, to change his mud-spattered riding gear, and to don some fresh linen before presenting himself at the Pemberton Mansion.

"Right welcome, as you always are," said Dame Barbara; "but what brought you so soon? Sure your appointment is not for two weeks."

"The best business that ever brought any man," said the Elder, enigmatically, but he vouchsafed no further explanation.

"You'll not venture out the night again, and it raining, and you so weary with your long ride?" she rejoined.

"Yes, I must go over to the Mansion to-night," he answered laconically.

"To the Mansion, of all places in the world!" said Dame Barbara to Paul after he had gone, "when he hasn't been there for months and months. Whatever can it mean?"

Upon the sacred privacy of the happy meeting between the betrothed pair we will not intrude. As Mr. Dunham was brought into the sick man's room the colonel began his apology. "Forgive me, my dear sir, my unpardonable rudeness the last time we met."

"Not a word of apology, my good friend," said Mr. Dunham deprecatingly; "we both, I trust, understand each other better than we did; and this fair peace-maker," he said, looking expressively at Blanche, "has restored, I trust, the last vestige of misunderstanding between us."

"Yes," said Blanche, taking her father's and Mr. Dunham's hands in hers, "we are all good friends now and forever."

Elder Dunham could only spare a day or two, even on so joyous an occasion as this, from his manifold and wide-spread circuit engagements. But he did not leave without obtaining Blanche's consent that the Christmas festivities should celebrate also their wedding day.

This pleasant news Mr. Dunham communicated to his good friend, Dame Barbara, greatly to her delight and surprise.

"I suspected something was going to happen," was her very safe remark, "when you came post haste and would stay for neither bite nor sup, but it's up and away to the Mansion you must go. But I don't blame you now, though I confess I did a little then. Well, sir," she went on, "you're the only man I know good enough for Miss Blanche. God's blessing on you both."

The approaching event created an immense sensation in the settlement. It was the first marriage to take place within the bounds of Upper Canada, and the little community felt almost the interest of a single family in the auspicious occasion. It would be thought nowadays that scant time was given to prepare the bridal trousseau, but fashions were simpler in those primitive days.

Mrs. Pemberton's satin wedding gown, which had lain undisturbed in its fragrant cedar chest for years, was brought out, and when trimmed by the deft hands of Blanche with some rare old lace, made a dress of which even a modern belle might be proud, were it not for the "leg-of-mutton" sleeves, which we are afraid would create rather a sensation in a fashionable drawing-room.

Mamma Dinah and Aunt Chloe exhausted their culinary skill in preparing a banquet worthy of the occasion. The larder was crowded with partridge and turkey, with venison from the woods and noble salmon and whitefish from the river, and with all manner of confections and sweet cakes, that quite revived their recollections of the ample hospitality of their old Virginia home.

"It snowed within the house of meat and drink."

There was only one clergyman in Upper Canada who could legally perform the marriage—the Rev. Dr. Stuart, of the village of Frontenac—or Kingston, as it had now begun to be called. Of course, the colonel, as a magistrate, bearing His Majesty's commission, was empowered to celebrate marriages; but being a staunch Churchman, he would not think of his daughter being married except with the fine old service with which he had wedded her mother a quarter of a century before. The clergyman arrived the day before Christmas, with his lawn surplice and bands and prayer book, in the portmanteau strapped on behind his saddle. That night was devoted by the young folks of the neighbourhood to old-fashioned games and merrymaking in the great kitchen—map-dragon and corn-popping, and divining with apple seeds and peelings, and the like rustic amusements. In default of the English holly and Virginia laurel, the house was decorated by the deft fingers and fine taste of Blanche with the brilliant leaves and crimson berries of the rowan or mountain ash that grew on a neighbouring rocky ridge. Some fine old English carols were sung to the accompaniment of the colonel's violin, on which he was an accomplished performer—"Good King Wenceslas," "God rest you, merry gentlemen," "As Joseph was a walking," "I saw three ships come sailing in," and others that had come down from time immemorial, and translated to the Virginia plantations, had been sung by the loyal hearts of the planters as a sort of patriotic as well as religious duty.

Blanche's Christmas presents had a double significance as being also wedding gifts. From her father she received a splendid necklace of pearls that had been fastened by Good Queen Anne on his own mother's neck.

"Her Majesty never thought," he said, "that they would form part of the wedding gear of a Methodist preacher's wife in the backwoods of Canada. But I'll warrant, Blanche, that none of the Court dames of St. James's Palace were worthier to wear them than my own bonnie lass," and proudly and fondly he kissed her fair cheek.

From her mother she received a quantity of old-fashioned silver-ware bearing the family crest—a hart at gaze on a field sown with lilies, with the pious legend, "*Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum*."

"Make it your life-motto, my child," said that noble mother, whose own life exemplified the duty she enjoined. "So let your soul pant after the living God."

But more Blanche prized the gift of her mother's ivory-bound prayer-book, which she gave her with the words:

"Take it, my child. It has been a solace to me in many a trying hour; so may it be to you."

Mr. Dunham's gift was simple, but to her worth all the rest—a plain gold wedding ring. "It was my mother's," he said; "her last gift to me before she passed away from time. I can make no more sacred use of it than to symbolize my love for thee, endless as eternity."

Reginald gave her a handsomely-bound copy of Wesley's Hymns. "It's my liturgy and prayer-book both together," he said; "I never cared a