

NANCY CARTER'S THEFT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

BY E. H. N.

CHAPTER I.

One dark rainy evening in the latter part of October 182—, a young man carefully picked his way along a narrow street in Montreal which led him from the fur store of his employers, Messrs. Rickford & Hyde, to his boarding-house on the outskirts of the city. There was a firmness in his steps and an elasticity in his movements which betokened inward satisfaction, and few who knew its cause could have foreborne to congratulate him on it; for his had been a life of battle with the world, and on the success of this battle depended not only his own future career, but the welfare and happiness of his mother and sister, and he had that day been promoted to the head clerkship of the wealthy establishment he had just left, at a salary which would place them above want.

Harry Clifford's parents were English, and had left their native land in the hope of bettering their prospects, which were poor enough at home. They came out to Canada just at the close of the war of 1812-15, and Mr. Clifford soon obtained a situation in the Preventive service. His station was on the Canadian frontier, near the northern shore of Lake Champlain, and his services were attended with risk and danger. While out on a trip to watch some insignificant-looking boats which were daily passing up and down, without, as it seemed to him, a sufficient show of business, he was taken suddenly ill, and before he reached home had become too weak to converse for more than a few moments at a time. At times he seemed anxious to communicate some-

thing which appeared to him of great consequence, but immediately his thoughts would wander away to his home in England and scenes antecedent to his departure to Canada, and he died leaving the cause of his death a mystery.

By Mr. Clifford's death his family was left so destitute that they were forced to remove from their comfortable residence in the village of B—— to a more humble home in a back settlement, quite poor enough, Mrs. Clifford thought, to be within her means. Her neighbors were kind-hearted and friendly, and when she opened her school in a pretty little cottage gave her all the assistance and encouragement in their power. The district, however, was but thinly settled, and the earnings barely sufficed to support herself and her little daughter Susie, who, with Harry, for whom a friend had obtained a situation in the city, was all that was left to her in her new home. Under her many griefs her health rapidly drooped, and before six years had passed away she was quite an invalid, and was waited on by Susie, who, though young, was both her companion and comfort. Amongst her other friends was her landlord, Mr. Greely—Squire Greely he was called; and he was not only Mrs. Clifford's friend, but the friend of all who were in need.

The years had been long ones to Harry, while he had been unable materially to assist his mother and little sister; but now that his prospects had brightened and his hopes were realized, he could forget his trial and sorrow, and on the evening the reader makes his acquaintance, he was full of joy and joyous plans for the future. When, in his