



"There's never a rose in all the world,  
But makes some green spray sweeter;  
There's never a wind in all the sky,  
But makes some bird wing feeter."

### Midsummer on a Western Farm.

Once more the pleasant midsummer time is with us—the richest, laziest time of all the year—when all one wishes to do is just to lie luxuriously in the shade and watch the beauty all around. And how beautiful everything is! The fresh and tender hues of spring are gone, but they are replaced by a richness and fulness of coloring equally delightful in its own way. It is hard to find words to describe the trees at this time, such masses of green they are, and yet so light and graceful. Even the willow-scrub, so hated of farmers, has its beauty, if one could only just view it from the standpoint of beauty and forget how it ruins pasture and hinders breaking. Walking across the prairie, one sees the willows stretching away on either side, like a very sea of feathery green. Then what flowers there are now—yellow, red, pink, blue, white—the whole country is bright with them! The wild roses are the sweetest of all, and the most abundant. They are everywhere, and of every shade of red and pink. Gaudy butterflies, as bright and varied in their hues as the flowers, flit about, and the big bumblebees buzz around, gathering their stock of honey and pollen.

Life is a pleasure to the animals these summer days. The cows wander slowly, browsing in the thick, long grass, or lie peacefully chewing their cud in the shade of the trees. The calves and colts are growing big now, and roam through their pastures, thinking that everything was made just for their enjoyment. The most energetic of the farm pets are the fowls. The turkeys wander for miles with their broods, seemingly on a crusade against all the grasshoppers of the country. The chickens stay nearer home, but are always busy and always hungry. The ducks, happiest of all in the heat, splash and swim all day in the water. Beasts and birds all seem so happy and contented that it is a pleasure to watch them.

And what about the farmer all this time? Does he too find rest and pleasure whilst his property enjoys itself so much? Well, pleasure he must find, if he is a true farmer. He must feel glad when he sees his animals so prosperous and happy, and sees things growing as they do. But rest does not come very often to the farmer. Spring work is over, it is true, also haying, but he has a garden, and weeds seem to think that they have as much right to grow as anything else this pleasant weather. He gets at them and hoes all between the rows, but he can't get those growing right among his plants in this way, nor can he thus thin out carrots and turnips which are growing too thickly. And so, with aching knees and back, the poor man crawls up and down long rows of vegetables, pulling out those miserable weeds. The sun roasts his back and burns his neck, and the perspiration trickles down his face, but "there's no rest for the wicked," or for the farmer, and he has to keep on. Then this is just the season when he has time to break new fields. Breaking wouldn't be quite such a task if it weren't for the willows; but they grow everywhere, and the farmer has to sally forth against them with brush, axe and grub-hook. He wonders as he works why willows had to be created. Then when he has cleared them off the ground to some extent, he perhaps sets bravely to work with an ordinary plow. He goes along smoothly for a few yards, and then the plow sticks; he shouts to the horses, they strain forward, and crash! the doubletree snaps. When the farmer investigates, he finds the plow caught on a willow root. Then he gets angry, and sets off to beg, borrow or steal the biggest brush-plow he can find. He hitches four horses to it, and sails

triumphantly through everything. But what work there is yet in store for him in picking roots off the field!

The farmer does not need to feel lonely whilst he is breaking or weeding. Clouds of friendly mosquitoes rise from the plants and soil, and fly along with him to keep him company. They sing around him, they settle on his neck, they crawl up his sleeves and under his hat, and he works nearly as hard at them as he does at the weeds. How picturesque he looks there on his knees, roasted and bitten, with streaks of earth from his fingers all over face and neck, where he has been slapping at those mosquitoes! When the pleasant evening comes, the farmer gets cooled off, but the mosquitoes don't get tired—they stay right with him. When the cows come home to be milked they bring fresh swarms with them, and there is nothing for it but to gather a heap of straw and green willows and make a smudge. The smoke does what nothing else can do—drives away the mosquitoes—and everything at last becomes peaceful as night comes on.

Can anything seem more peaceful than a calm summer night on the farm? The light fades slowly from the west; one by one the stars shine out overhead, and darkness gently settles down. All things seem hushed and still; hardly a sound is to be heard, except the singing of the frogs in some distant pool, and perhaps the breathing of the sleeping cattle in the farmyard. The trees stand out thick and black against the sky, and now and again a shivering whisper comes from them, as their leaves are stirred by some passing breeze. The farmer can appreciate this quiet calm, and often strolls round for a while to enjoy it. Perhaps he may have been at a football practice, and rides home through the still night. He has enjoyed the practice, the meeting his friends, the rush and excitement of the game—these things are all pleasant to him. But a different part of him seems to be touched as he rides homeward under the stars, or in the peaceful moonlight. Cares and worries pass from him, evil thoughts and temptations disappear, and for a time he feels as he would like to feel always—strong and pure in heart.

The evening football practices are intended to lead up to a grand match with the team from some adjoining district, and, of course, there has to be a picnic on the day of the match. The farmers' children anxiously watch the weather for several days beforehand, and they think it's almost too good to be true when the appointed day dawns bright and clear. The whole family is up early, and the "chores" are rushed through! Soon the horses are hitched to the wagon, and off goes the farmer with his tribe. The wagon jolts and bumps over the rough trail, and over the prairie where the trail has been fenced off. The farmers are out for fun now, and they enjoy themselves heartily. Football and baseball matches are played, and watched with great excitement. Swings and boats are provided—if there are trees and water near—and last, but not least, a great refreshment stall is set up, well stocked with lemonade, ice-cream, candies and fruit. The tables—or, rather, the tablecloths—are spread on the grass, and all deposit themselves gracefully around. Grasshoppers and ants make for the feasters, mosquitoes drown themselves in the teacups, and little bugs of all kinds hop wildly over tablecloths and provisions, but these things only make all the more fun—at a picnic.

In the middle of the afternoon, when the people are enjoying themselves, they are startled suddenly by a growl of thunder. They look up at the sky, and wonder how it was they didn't see that black cloud before it got so close. Then a few heavy drops begin to fall, and the picnickers make a wild rush for coats and umbrellas, and dry places under the wagons. The storm now comes on in good earnest, and the rain pours as if the whole cloud wanted to come at once. The lightning flashes, and the thunder roars and growls and rattles and bangs till the merry-makers have to shout to make themselves heard. But the storm is too violent to last long, and dies away nearly as quickly as it came on. The sun shines out again, the birds begin to sing, and soon everything is drying up again as fast as it can.

The picnic over, the farmers jog homeward again to their milking and calf-feeding. They won't have another holiday for a while, but this has been a pleasant one, and will give them something to talk over for some time. They will go cheerfully on with their work during the coming days, finding it hard and monotonous at times, no doubt, but feeling, after all, that midsummer is a very pleasant time on the Western farm.

A CANADIAN COUSIN.

Penhold, Alta.

The reporter was interviewing the western millionaire. "Is it true that you are going to endow a chair in that university?" "Endow a chair?" he thundered. "why, b'gosh, I can give a whole set o' furniture, an' I'll do it too. Say that in your paper! There ain't nothing cheap about me."

## The Children's Corner.

### Flowers.

Pretty little flowers,  
Growing everywhere  
In the fields and gardens,  
Oh, how wondrous fair.

Pretty little flowers,  
God has made them fair;  
Nothing else in beauty  
Can with them compare.

Lovely little flowers,  
Plucked by children fair;  
May their wondrous beauty  
Show God's love and care.

Penhold, Alta.

MRS. W. WHITESIDE.

### The King's Sons.

I have just read a story by Bishop Carpenter, which you might like to hear. It is too long for our Corner, but I will try to tell it in a shortened form. It is about a king who wished to find out which of his sons would be the best person to rule the kingdom after his death. So he sent them into the world, saying that the one who spent his money best would show himself worthiest to rule, and would be made king. To each son he gave a magic purse, in which twelve golden pieces would be found every day. Round the neck of each was hung a golden chain, with a pearl on it. "Take great care of these pearls," he said, "for they are tokens that you are sons of a king." Then he gave a magic mirror to each, saying, "Look into it every day, and when you see it look misty, and out of the mist rises the image of my face, then hasten home, for after that the magic purse will yield you no money."

The young men started off, and soon came to a place where three roads lay before them. As they wondered which to choose, three bright beings came to meet them.

"My name is Happiness," said one. "Let me lead you down this left-hand road to my dwelling-place."

"My name," said the second, "is Wisdom, and my home lies down this center road."

"My name is Love," said the third. "I make my dwelling with the good."

"Then," said the eldest son, "I will follow Happiness, since if I am to rule, I shall best rule by knowing the road to Happiness."

"I will choose Wisdom," said the second son, "since he is not fit to be a king who has not knowledge."

"And I," said the youngest son, "will choose Love, who makes her dwelling with the good."

The gold pieces came mysteriously into their purses each day, and for a long time the mirror remained bright, but at last it grew misty, and out of the mist came the image of their father's face. Then they hastened home, arriving on the same day, and the whole court gathered to hear their adventures, and to judge which of the three was worthiest to rule. The eldest had brought back a golden goblet set with precious stones. "This is the cup of gladness," he said, as he raised the goblet to his lips; but he put it down hastily and turned deadly pale. "It tastes like fire," he cried.

"Have you kept the pearl I gave you?" asked the king.

"I have lost it," was the sad answer, "I know not when, nor how."

"Yes," said the king, "and so it always is. Without the pearl of purity the goblet of joy soon turns to flame. The cup is not the cup of pleasure, but of shame and pain."

"It is true, my father," said the son. I sought selfishly, and have found sorrow."

The second son said, "I sought the power that would make a nation great. Knowledge is the parent of riches, and I have brought home this silver wand, which can turn everything to gold." As he spoke he stretched out his silver wand, with its sparkling diamond point, and touched the courtiers who stood around. Instantly they appeared to be dressed in robes of dazzling gold. He called for copper coins, and hundreds were flung at his feet. He touched them with the magic wand, and a heap of glittering yellow coins lay before him. The courtiers shouted joyfully, "He has done his work well, he must be king!"

But the king leaned forward from his throne, touched the coins and the courtiers' dresses with his golden sceptre, and the brightness died away.

"It is not really gold, my son," he said. "It might be called gold in other places, but it is only tinsel in the realms where your father is king."

Then the third son was told to show what he had brought back, but he answered, "I have brought nothing back. The money came every