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one from another. Letitia played well, but she waltzed even better, as Neville found out later in the afternoon. At the end of one of the dances Letitia introduced him to her brother Edgar, who was paying great attention to one of the sailor hats. It all seemed very delightful and informal to Neville, and he looked forward to having a very jolly time at Alberta.

III.

LIEUTENANT NEVILLE called upon Mrs. Roy the following week. Alberta etiquette made this almost obligatory, for Mr. Roy had called upon all the officers, collectively, as soon as the *Stronghold* arrived at the station. Neville received the kindly welcome from Mrs. Roy which she extended to all young fellows away from their homes. She seemed to him a comely, motherly woman, and he at once felt at ease in her house. The intimate love and confidence that existed between her and Letitia was charming to see. The boys seemed to belong to them equally, so prettily did Letitia enter into her mother's feeling of responsibility regarding them. Neville was in a mood to be impressed by so pleasant a picture of family life. The Roys gave few formal entertainments, but they were very hospitable in their own way; and Neville made it so frankly apparent that he enjoyed his visits that he was soon cordially invited to visit them whenever he pleased. He had been sufficiently long on board ship to appreciate every homely detail. He found it delightful, for instance, to watch Mrs. Roy dispose of a big basketful of the boys' socks. Neville had had experiences of his own of darning, and he inspected the mended heels and toes with the interest of a connoisseur. Possibly Letitia might have been blind to Neville's gifts and graces if she had grown up side by side with him. It is difficult for a young fellow to pose as a hero before a girl who knows exactly what place he took in his school examination, or who has seen him treated by mother and sisters as though he were a very fallible mortal. Heroism, and genius, and all the other qualities that bring a woman to her knees, are generally found by her in some one outside the intimate circle. It was not a difficult task to idealize Neville. He had a fine tenor voice, and he sang

 Bid me 'o live, and I will live
 Thy protestant to be;
 Or bid me love, and I will give
 A loving heart to thee,

Mrs. Whyte
etty girls, all
hats. They
nce that Ne-
o distinguish

with a fire and abandon that alone took Letitia's heart by storm. The duets which they practiced together brought them into still closer harmony.

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An acquaintance like this is not to be reckoned by weeks and months. Love, under favorable circumstances, is capable of a tropical growth. Unfortunately neither Neville nor Letitia stopped to consider the nature of the plant they were nourishing. But never had there been such a beautiful summer in Letitia's remembrance of Alberta. Never had she felt so glad and gay. How beautiful was life! How dear were her brothers! How intoxicating the sunshine and the flowers! A charming haze enveloped the mountain-tops and made their outlines vague and indistinct. So it was with the future, Letitia dreamily thought. It spread itself out in the distance, fair and unknown, and Letitia had no desire to unveil it.

Neville came and went. There were garden-parties every week at Judge Whyte's. There were occasional afternoon dances on board the *Stronghold*. There were picnics by boat and by carriage. Mrs. Roy, anxious mother as she was, saw no cause for alarm. She looked perhaps a little closer at the future than Letitia did, and her heart, by and by, began to ache, as the thought of a possible separation from her daughter occurred to her. There was, however, in Letitia's manner a reserve, a guardedness, a coyness, an inexpressible something, visible in her otherwise frank intercourse with Neville, that had prevented the nearer approach of lovers in the past, and that made Mrs. Roy feel by no means certain how the young people would shape their affairs. Neville had won her heart, and she wished him success. That he desired it she did not doubt. As the summer days passed quickly away Neville had less and less time, and perhaps less desire, to analyze his feelings. Everything was very jolly. The Roys were a delightful family; while, as for Letitia, she was out and out the prettiest girl he had ever met. He was not so frank with himself in acknowledging the disappointment that possessed him whenever Letitia was unexpectedly absent from a gathering; or, if he was aware of it, he took pains to attribute it to some other cause. "You lost nothing by not being at the Simcoes' the other evening," he would observe to Letitia the next time he saw her; "it was very flat." Some feminine instinct, perhaps, prevented Letitia from expressing her surprise. The Simcoes' dances were generally looked upon as social events beyond criticism, and Edgar had enjoyed himself as usual.

The pyracanth berries turned red; dahlias and chrysanthemums succeeded the roses. The mists were blown from the mountain-tops by the light evening breezes. The future, too, began slowly to unveil itself in the shape of rumors that the *Stronghold* was to go south before winter, and that the *Spitfire* would take