

CHAPTER XX.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY AT CONRAD.

So the winter quickly passed, and spring melted into summer, and then a growing plan developed in Faith's mind. She had not been able to crowd it out of her "heart-thoughts," as she called any ideas that kept making her think of other people. Even her rapidly developing artistic power could not prevent the silent, increasing, powerful pressure of an idea that she had also a mission to perform for the good of people in a certain peculiar way.

"I shall have to go home and talk it over with father before I can settle it right," she kept saying to herself all summer, and when fall was ushered in, and she could see the frosty mornings on the prairie, and call up in memory the sound of the prairie chickens out in the corn-fields, and see the great stretch of sky that was never possible in the smoky city, with its ugly piles of buildings, that shut out sun and air, then Faith grew really lonesome and homesick, and one day she resolutely told Miss Varney that she must go home for a little visit.

"I don't blame you, my dear. Go out home and breathe some fresh prairie air and photograph some Kansas ideas, and come back with them, and we will make our fortune."

"I don't know about getting photographs of Kansas ideas," replied Faith. "But I do know about the prairie air. And I'm going to get some."