

The sugar-making was a hot and wearisome occupation, but the result was a good store of sugar, molasses, and vinegar.

"Besides gaining a little money with my pen," writes Mrs. Moodie at about this time, "I practised a method of painting birds and butterflies upon the white velvety surface of the large fungi that grow plentifully upon the bark of the sugar maple. These had an attractive appearance; and my brother, who was a captain in one of the provisional regiments, sold a great many of them among the officers, without saying by whom they were painted. One rich lady in Peterborough, long since dead, ordered two dozen, to send as curiosities to England. These, at one shilling each, enabled me to buy shoes for the children, who, during our bad times, had been forced to dispense with these necessary coverings. How often, during the winter season, have I wept over their little chapped feet, literally washing them with my tears. But these days were to end. Providence was doing great things for us; and Hope raised at last her drooping head, to regard with a brighter glance, the far-off future. Slowly the winter rolled away; but he to whom every thought was turned, was still distant from his humble home. The receipt of an occasional letter from him was my only solace during his long absence, and we were still too poor to indulge often in the luxury."

The spring brought work. Corn and potatoes must be planted, and the garden dug and manured. By lending her oxen to a neighbour who had none, Mrs. Moodie obtained a little assistance; but most of the labour was performed by her and Jenny, the greatest jewel of an old woman the Emerald Isle ever sent forth to toil in American wildernesses. A short visit from the captain cheered the family. In the autumn, he expected, the regiment to which he belonged would be reduced. This was a melancholy anticipation, and his wife again beheld cruel poverty seated on their threshold. After her husband's departure the thought struck her that she would write to the Governor of Canada, plainly stating her circumstances, and asking him to retain Captain Moodie in the militia service. She knew nothing of Sir George Arthur, and received no reply to her application. But the Governor acted,

though he did not write, and acted kindly and generously. "The 16th of October my third son was born; and a few days after, my husband was appointed paymaster to the militia regiments in the V—— district, with the rank and full pay of captain." The appointment was not likely to be permanent, and Mrs. Moodie and the children remained at their log-cabin in the woods during the ensuing winter. Malignant scarlet fever attacked the whole family; a doctor was sent for, but did not come; Mrs. Moodie, herself ill, had to tend her five children; and when these recovered, she was stretched for many weeks upon a bed of sickness. Jenny, the most attached of humble friends, and a greater heroine in her way than many whom poets have sung and historians lauded, alone kept her suffering mistress company in the depths of the dark forest.

"Men could not be procured in that thinly-settled spot for love nor money; and I now fully realized the extent of Jenny's usefulness. Daily she yoked the oxen, and brought down from the bush fuel to maintain our fires, which she felled and chopped up with her own hands. She fed the cattle, and kept all things snug about the doors; not forgetting to load her master's two guns, 'in case,' as she said, 'the rebels should attack us in our retreat.'"

What says the quaint old song? that—

"The poor man alone, when he hears the
poor moan,
Of his morsel a morsel will give,
Well-a-day!"

It were a libel to adopt the sentiment to its full extent, when we witness the large measure of charity which the more prosperous classes in this country are ever ready to dispense to the poor and suffering. But doubtless the sympathy with distress is apt to be heartiest and warmest on the part of those who themselves have experienced the woes they witness. It is very touching to contemplate Mrs. Moodie walking twenty miles through a bleak forest—the ground covered with snow, and the thermometer far below zero—to minister to the necessities of one whose sufferings were greater even than her own.