

did not care to fish; it was too dirty work for him. Neither did the remaining ladies show any appetite for it; but Mr. Errol and the veteran manned the lately constructed pier, and beguiled some bass that came seeking shelter from the sun beneath it. While the gentlemen were thus engaged, the colonel lying on his back near Marjorie's fishing ground, indulging in a second cigar, the two ladies strolled away, followed by Muggins, to look for more flowers. After they had gone about a hundred yards to the right, the dog ran on before them, barking furiously. Mrs. Carmichael clutched her companion's arm and stood still. "It may be a wild beast, Cecile, or some of those terrible men. Let us go back at once." But Miss Du Plessis calmly answered, "It may be only a bird or a squirrel; dogs often make a great fuss over very little." So they stood and waited.

Muggins' barking ceased. The reason was apparent in the sound of a gentle voice they both knew, saying, "Poor Muggins, good doggie, has he come back again to his old friends?" It was the voice of Matilda Nagle, and she seemed to be alone. Taking heart, the two ladies went in its direction, and, guided by Muggins, who came back to lead them, they descended to a little bay with a sandy beach, where, in the skiff, sat the woman they sought. She was neatly dressed, and wore a large straw hat. When they greeted her, she showed no astonishment, but invited them to enter the skiff and see the pretty place she had back there. Miss Du Plessis hardly cared to accept the invitation, but the curiosity of the older lady was aroused and she pressed her companion to comply. Bringing the bow of the skiff into the shore, Matilda told them to enter the boat and walk back to the stern. When they had taken their seats, the stern was depressed, and the bow floated clear of the sand. Then, with every motion of an accomplished oarswoman, she rowed the skiff along the shore, altogether out of sight of the other picnickers in scow and on pier. After a few strokes, she told her companions to lower their heads, and, ducking her own, shot the boat through what had seemed a solid bank of foliage, but which was a naturally concealed channel, out into one of the loveliest little lakes eye ever rested upon. No fire had touched its shores, which were wooded down to the sandy margin, the bright green foliage of the hardwood in the foreground contrasting with the more sombre hues of the pines and hemlocks beyond. In little bays there were patches of white and yellow water-lilies, alternating their orbled blossoms with the showy blue spikes of the Pickerel weed, and, beyond them, on the bank itself, grew many a crimson banner of the Cardinal flower. Another little bay was passed with its last rocky point, and then a clearing stood revealed, void of stump or stone or mark of fire, covered with grass and clover, save where, in the midst of a little neglected garden, stood the model of a Swiss chalet. "Do not be afraid!" said the woman, catching sight of Mrs. Carmichael's apprehensive look; "there is nobody in it or anywhere near. We are all alone; even Monty would not leave his work to come with me." Thus reassured, the party landed, gathered a few late roses and early sweet peas, and then proceeded to inspect the chalet. The whole building and everything in it was in admirable taste, even to the library smoking-room, which was only disfigured by ugly spittoons and half-burned cigars. Many books were there, chiefly on chemistry, geology and mineralogy, and there was a large cabinet full of geological specimens, betokening much research and abundant labour in their preparation and classification.

The whole thing was so unexpected, so surprising, that the picnic ladies had to rub their eyes to be sure that it was not a dream; but their astonishment was increased when the woman turned to the younger one and said, "I know you are Miss Du Plessis, for I heard you called so at Bridesdale." Miss Du Plessis answered that she was right. Then Matilda said, "This is all your land, and of course, the land carries the buildings with it. I have forgotten a great many things, but I remember that, you see. So Tillycot is yours too; besides I do not want to stay here any more. Good-bye, I am going home to Monty." At first, the two ladies were afraid she was going to take the skiff away and leave them in the house, but she did not. In spite of their entreaties, she walked quickly up the grassy slope at the back, and disappeared in the forest beyond. "Is it not wonderful?" asked Miss Du Plessis. "Come, Cecile, hasten back, or those poor people will be starving," answered the more practical Mrs. Carmichael.

On their return to the skiff, the presiding matron, while Miss Du Plessis rowed, unfolded a long piece of yellow leno she had picked up in one of the rooms. The channel was quite visible from, what may now be called, the Tillycot end, but when the passengers ducked their heads and emerged, they saw there would be difficulty in finding it from the other side. Accordingly, Mrs. Carmichael bade her companion keep the boat steady, while she stood up, and fastened the strip of gauze to two saplings, one on either side of the opening, making a landmark visible immediately the point was passed that intercepted the picnic party from their view. Rowing round this point, the two travellers appeared, to the astonishment of the fishers on punt and pier. The colonel was stretched out on the grass asleep, and Marjorie, having deserted her minnows, was tickling him about the ears with a long blade, greatly enjoying his occasional slaps at the parts affected, and his muttered anathemas on the flies.

"O'm thinkin', Mishtriss Carrmoikle, it's gettin' toime fer the atin' an' drhinkin', wid your lave, mum; but fwhere did yez foind the skiff?" Brief explanations followed

to the veteran and Mr. Errol, who were at once put under orders, the one to light a fire and produce the tea-kettle, the other to fill two pails with clean water, and put a piece of ice in one of them. Soon the colonel and Marjorie came to help, the cloth was laid, the sandwiches, chickens, pies and cakes, placed upon it, and everything got in readiness for the home-coming of the punt. "O Aunty," said Marjorie, "this would be so lovely, if only poor Eugene were here too."

"So it would, dear," answered the sympathetic aunt and mother, "but we must try to make the best of it without him."

The kettle boiled under Mr. Terry's superintendence, the tea was infused in the little Japanese tea-pot, and the colonel, taking from his waistcoat pocket a silver whistle that had done duty for a cavalry trumpet in former days, blew a signal for the information of the punters. In a minute they arrived, bearing two grand strings of fish, only the strings that went through the gills of the bass were hazel twigs. Then there was washing of hands without soap, Mr. Bigglethorpe showing his companions how to improvise a substitute for Pears' by pulling up the pretty little water-lobelia and using the unctuous clay about its spreading roots for the purpose. All sat about the table-cloth, Mr. Perrowne said, "For what we are about to receive," and the *al fresco* repast began. Mrs. Carmichael dispensed the tea, and was displeased with Mr. Errol for declining a cup just then, because he was busy with a corkscrew and an ale bottle. Mr. Perrowne joined him with another; but the fisherman said ale made him bilious and his name was not William. So Mr. Terry produced his special charge, and treated the colonel first, then Mr. Bigglethorpe, and finally his honoured self. The boys, as the matron had termed the two clergymen, seemed to be happy with their beer, somewhat to his sorrow. "It takes mighty little, cornel, to shatishfy some payple, but there's aall the more av it for the rishf us."

Miss Halbert said that Basil had eaten ten sandwiches, two plates of chicken, and an extra drumstick in his hand, a whole pie, and she couldn't count the cake. There were also some empty beer bottles at his feet. He said he was perfectly ashamed of Fanny's appetite, and would have to petition the Bishop for an allowance from the mission fund, if she was going through life at the same rate.

"If we only had ouah deah boy with us, Cecile, what a pleasu he would be," remarked the colonel in a personal way, that caused even the stately Miss Du Plessis to blush.

"Eugene would be better than the whole lot," added Marjorie, with an injured air, and added: "If some people I know hadn't been pigs, he would have been here, too." Mrs. Carmichael called her niece to order, and told the gentlemen they might go away to their pipes and cigars, while she and the young ladies put away the things. The black bottle trio adjourned to a shady nook by the shore, and carried three tumblers and a pail of iced water with them. The bottle revealed its neck from Mr. Terry's side pocket. The colonel handed his cigar case again to Mr. Perrowne, who selected a weed, but could not be prevailed upon to fetch a tumbler. Mr. Errol also declined the latter, having the fear of Mrs. Carmichael before his eyes; but, withdrawing a short distance in his brother clergyman's company, he filled the Turk's head, and said he felt twenty years younger. All sorts of banter and pleasant talk went on between the smoking gentlemen and the working ladies. Mr. Errol distinguished himself above his brethren by bringing up water from the lake and by carrying painfult of dishes down to it, for which he received great commendation. Mr. Perrowne had his ears boxed twice by Miss Halbert, it was said, for cheek. Mr. Terry was called upon to deliver up his sacred charge, but demurred. When the ladies made a raid upon his party to recover it, he fled, but Marjorie caught him by the coat-tails, and the spoil was wrested from him, although not before he had poured himself out a final three fingers in his tumbler. Filling it up with ice-water, he drank to the success of the picnic, and especially to absent friends. Mr. Bigglethorpe had been so long fishing in the sun that he thought a rest would do him good. Accordingly, he lay down on his back with his hat drawn over his eyes, and composed himself to sleep. Finally, the clergymen went over to where Mrs. Carmichael was sitting with Miss Halbert and Marjorie, while Miss Du Plessis, having had a chat with Miss Carmichael, invited her uncle and the veteran to go for a row in the skiff. At first, these gentlemen were disposed to decline, but, when they learned that there was something to be seen, they changed their minds, and accompanied her and Miss Carmichael to the shore.

The colonel was entranced with the little lake, the clearing, and the chalet, as were Miss Carmichael and Mr. Terry. It was decided that a guard, in the form of a caretaker, should be put over the place as soon as possible, and it was suggested that Timotheus and Tryphena would make an ideal pair of guardians. While much of the land round about might be cleared to advantage, it was agreed that the wood around Tillycot lake should be left intact, save the breadth of a road to the main highway. Then they fell to discussing Rawdon, a man plainly of extensive reading, of scientific attainments, of taste in architecture and house-furnishing, and yet an utterly unprincipled and unscrupulous villain. "One would think," said Miss Carmichael, "that the natural beauties of a place like this would be a check upon evil passions and the baser part of one's nature." But the colonel answered, "In the wahah, Miss Cahmichael, I have seen

soldiehs, even owah own soldiehs, wilfully and maliciously destyoying the most chahming spots of scenehy, without the least pohfit to themselves or matehial injuby to the enemy. The love of destyuction is natuhal to ouah fallen human natuhe." Mr. Terry corroborated this statement, and added, "Faix, it sames to me there's jist two sarts an' koids av payple in the wurruld, thim as builds up an' thim as batthers down. For moy paart, I'd later build a log shanty an' clane a bit land nor pull a palish to paces." Miss Du Plessis assented, but drew attention to the fact that Rawdon had cleared, built up, and beautified the place, and improved his mind on the one hand, while he was warring against society and law, robbing and even murdering, on the other. "Mr. Errol said once," rejoined Miss Carmichael, "that there are two opposite natures, an old man and a new, in all human beings, as well as in those who are converted, and that no contradiction of the kind is too absurd for human nature." "Mistah Ehhol is quite right, my deah Miss Mahjohie, as all expehience attests. Bret Hahte has shewn it from a Califoahnian standpoint. I have seen it in times of wahah and of peace, bad men, the bent of whose lives was destyuction, risking evehything to save some little memohial of a dead mothel or of a sweetheah, and good men, the regular couhse of whose cahheah was to do good, guilty of an occasional oubuhst of vandalism."

"Thru fer yez, cornel, ivery bit. There was a little whipper-snapper av a Shunday Sheool shuperintindent out in a lake, about a hundrid moiles from the city, wid some dacent lads; and, afore they knowed where they was, the cratur had sit a foine grane oisland a-foire for the fun, he sid, av sayin' the blaze. O'd loike to have had the shuperintindin' av him fer foive minutes."

The explorers were making their way back to the skiff when the colonel, who had gone back for his handkerchief which he had dropped, said: "There is a pehson coming down towahds the house, a woman appahently." Miss Du Plessis looked up the hill, and saw who it was. "It is Matilda Nagle," she said; "see, she is going back again." At once Miss Carmichael ran up the hill after the retreating figure, and, as she was a good runner, and the poor wanderer was tired, she soon overtook her. Taking both her hands in her own, and kissing the woman, she said: "Come with us, Matilda, and we will drive you home." The half-witted creature responded to the caress, and allowed herself to be led to the boat. "I lost my way," she said. "It is a new road I had never been on before, and I got turned round and came back here three times, and I am very tired." The colonel and Mr. Terry made her enter the boat before them, and then Miss Du Plessis and the veteran rowed the party back to the picnic ground, Miss Carmichael, at her friend's suggestion, removing the landmark put up by her mother as they passed out of the channel. At once Matilda was taken to the shady retreat where Mrs. Carmichael and Miss Halbert were, and all the ladies waited upon her with what was left of the eatables and drinkables, in spite of Mr. Perrowne's appetite. Then, Mr. Terry and Mr. Bigglethorpe went after the horses, and harnessed them to the waggon. The fisherman came back to summon the party and help to carry the baskets. Mr. Errol and Mr. Perrowne agreed to row the punt back to the Richards, and walk the rest of the way, as the addition of Matilda to the company would make riding uncomfortable if they did otherwise. The picnickers were safely seated, the baskets and the strings of fish stowed away, and the Colonel again took the reins for his party of nine. The two clergymen returned to the scow and paddled home, singing songs, one of which Mr. Perrowne gave in genuine cockney style to a Primitive Methodist hymn tune.

"Oh we was rich and 'appy once,
And we paid all we was due,
But we've sold our bed to buy some bread,
And we hain't got nowt to do;
We're all the way from Manchester,
And we hain't got nowt to do.

"Oh, him as hoppresses the poor man
Is a livin' on humin' lives,
And will be sarved in tothoher land
Like Lazarus and Dives;
And will be sarved in tothoher land
Like Lazarus and Dives."

Mr. Errol applauded the song, but thought it was hardly right to put a hymn tune to it. He said he "minded an auld Scotch song about the barrin' o' the door." So he sang:—

"It fell about the Martimas time,
And a gay time it was then O,
When our guile wife got puddins to mak',
And she biled them in the pan O,
The barrin' o' oor door, weel, weel, weel,
And the barrin' o' oor door, weel."

Thus, lightening the journey, they arrived at the last lake, said how-d'ye-do to the Richards, and tramped home. "How are you feeling now, Mr. Errol?" asked his comrade. "Man, it's just as I tellt ye, I'm renewin' my youth."

It was just about six when the pedestrians arrived at Bridesdale. Mr. Newberry had been there, anxious about his charge, and had joyfully hailed her appearance in the waggon. Mr. Bigglethorpe insisted on going home; so, after a whispered consultation with Miss Halbert, Mr. Perrowne offered him the doctor's carriage, if he would call in and tell Dr. Halbert that his daughter and all the Bridesdale people were safe, which he agreed to do. The colonel and Miss Du Plessis were up with the dear boy, whose name and virtues Miss Carmichael could hardly hear mentioned with civility. Marjorie fairly wept over the leave-taking of Mr. Biggles, but commanded herself suf-