

is it?" and Sarah ended her laugh with a shower of tears.

But Mrs. Neal did not weep; she even brightened up at the sight of her home. It was a place of rest, and she strained her eyes to catch a glimpse of her dear boys. For nearly a year had they been separated from her; and no mother will wonder that the log-cabin where they resided looked like a very palace in her sight.

As they neared the house, Andrew came out with a water-pail in his hand, and, seeing the wagon, he bounded up the rough path to meet them. "I knew you would be here to night," said he, as he leaped into the carriage, and tore away the veils of first his mother, and then Sarah, to kiss them.—Walter met them at the door, assisted his mother to alight, and led her gently in.

"Have you become dignified, sister?" said Andrew, offering his arm; but, before Sarah could take it, he had thrown it round her waist and was bearing her along, struggling and screaming, to the house.

"Come, Andrew, none of your pranks, my son," said his mother, smiling; but let us see some specimens of your cookery."

"Now for a nice supper," said Andrew, as he whirled his round table into the middle of the floor. Light wheat loaves, warm fritters, fried fish, caught from a neighboring pond, and a bowl of maple syrup certainly formed a nice supper, even without the roll of rich yellow butter which Andrew mysteriously took from a covered basket.

"That then was the errand that sent you across the woods so early this morning?" Said Walter.

"It was," replied the happy cook
"And now, mother, let me set your

chair, and let us see you at the head of the table once more."

After the tea-table was removed, and the little furniture arranged neatly around the cottage, Mrs. Neal requested Walter to unlock the chest, and take out the large Bible.

Andrew sprang up, with a glance of triumph at Sarah, and arranged the stand, and laid the family Bible upon it.

"Husband," said Mrs. Neal, gently, "let us begin our first housekeeping in this country by imploring the blessing of God;" and she drew a chair toward the stand for him.

Poor man! how easy it would have been then for him to have returned from the path from which he had so widely strayed! Long after, when his soul was bowed with affliction, did he look back to that auspicious evening, and wish he could recall it. But a strange diffidence had taken possession of him. It had been so long since he had prayed he knew not what to say; beside, what right had his wife to dictate to him? And so he just answered, in a sullen manner, that he was tired to death, and walked into the back-room, and threw himself upon the bed.

Andrew and Sarah again exchanged glances, and then both of them looked at their mother, wondering what she would do next. Walter sat down by his mother's side as though he would gladly assist in bearing the cross that seemed all thrown upon her. Mrs. Neal opened the Bible, and, in a weak, tremulous voice read the eleventh and twelfth psalms. She then bowed, with her children by her side, and committed them all to the care of their Heavenly father; praying that they might each be enabled to