

"If I let you in, will you promise me to only come once a week?"

"I guess that would suit me," said the minister.

"Well," I have just been thinking that if I can save five or six visits a week by it, I'll let you in. I don't want you for ever hangin' about the place."

"Thank you," and Mr. Hilton smiled. "I brought my violin around; thought your wife might like to hear some music."

Five minutes later the minister softly opened the door and entered. One quick glance took in the condition of things. The house was untidy and dirty. The remains of the dinner were scattered partly on the table and partly on the floor. The ash pan in the small stove had not been emptied for days, and its contents had overflowed with dismal results. It was a miserable place. A bed stood in one corner of the room, and the hot afternoon sun poured in through the uncurtained window upon its occupant.

The minister stooped over the bed and looked at the woman. He saw a frail, delicate creature, with white, pinched face and snowy hair. The loneliness and misery of her life had formed hard and bitter lines on a face that had once been fair and sweet.

"I'm so glad to see you, Mrs. MacDonald."

The woman's face softened. "You're the minister, ain't you?" she inquired. "John said as how you had been coming so often. Well, I'm kind of glad to see you. It gets lonesome here sometimes."

The conversation soon died away, for the woman seemed loath to talk. The minister took his violin and began to play softly, "My Ain Countree." He played it once, then seeing the eager interest in the pale face, sang it softly.

"My sins hae been mony, an' my sorrows hae been sair, But there they'll never vex me nor be remembered mair;

For His bluid shall make me white, and His hand shall dry my ee',

shall dry my ee', When He brings me home at last to my ain countree."

He played a little longer, then, rising, bent over her with a smile.

"I must go now. I am coming again next week, if I may."

The woman's face had softened, the hard lines relaxed, but she only said, "You'll play?"

The minister nodded and passed out.

The summer passed and the people of Murray began to discover that their minister was made of "the right kind of stuff." He knew every man, woman and child in the neighborhood, and everyone knew him and loved him. He won their love by various methods. He joined in the games of the children, told stories, sang songs; he cared for the babies, to the relief of the tired mothers, he talked



Trapped at Last.

with the men, learned to make hay, examined machinery, and worked in the field. It took months to win the trust of his people, but they yielded at last, and gave lavishly the love and sympathy he desired. And every week (according to promise) found him by Mrs. MacDonald's bedside. He brought her books and magazines; he sang and played for her. And so at last she opened to him the hidden fountains of hopes and desires. With tears coursing down her pale face she told him of the years of hopeless suffering and misery, and tenderly he told her of the place where sickness is never known, and of the great Physician. One beautiful summer evening he sat by her, telling her of the beauties of the world outside, and the preparations for the coming Sabbath. "You should just see the church," he



Rainy Creek Log Church, 20 miles south west of Lacombe, Alta.

said, "everything decorated with flowers and leaves and grain. We have an arch of evergreens behind the pulpit, and a great many growing plants besides. We are to have special music, too. A friend of mine is coming from the city to sing."

The sick woman raised herself on her elbow and looked wistfully out of the window.

"How I would like to go, just to be in God's house once more before I die; and it won't be long now."

"That's just what I came for," said the minister eagerly. "I want to take you; I've planned for it. Mrs. Cairns is coming to get you to come with me."

The woman lay back on her pillow, two crimson spots burned on her cheek.

"You want to take me. Why?"

"Because you want to go. Isn't that reason enough?"

The woman shook her head.

"I want to know why you do it. You've come here all summer, and why do you care?"

The minister's fingers lay cool on her forehead as he asked:

"Would Christ care?"

"I think He would."



The first day of Deer Season, 20 miles south west of Lacombe, Alta.

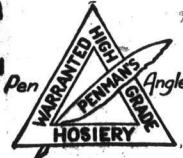
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