

# LITTLE FOLKS

## In a Cranberry Marsh.

(By Anna E. Hahn in 'Forward'.)

It was the beginning of the fall term, and Emily Brown, the brightest member of the senior class of the village high school, had formed for the term many plans for work and pleasure. She was destined, however, to carry none of them into effect.

'It was not enough to be put to my wits' end about my other af-

were no small part of his not too large annual income.

'What will you do about it, father?' asked Emily.

'My other business must take care of itself eight or ten weeks, while I stay in the marsh and oversee the berry harvest. The Indians thereabouts will do the picking, as usual, and I must do with as little other help as possible, for such work takes ready cash, of which I have very little at present.'

ing for eight or ten long weeks in a cabin in a marsh, seeing only her father and the Indians, reckoning the cost of endless quarts of berries at so much per quart, and counting out endless pieces of silver to hard-looking red men in blankets and leggings, and worse-looking red women, with dirty pa-pooes dangling, Indian fashion, on their backs.

Nevertheless, she felt bound to offer her father her services, and he accepted them gladly. He was sorry to have her miss school; but under the circumstances, he thought best to let her do it. So Emily packed up her shabbiest boots and dresses preparatory to starting to the marsh, and they set out on their journey the very next day, for the berry harvest was pressing. When within a dozen miles of the marsh they had to change cars, and on its margin they changed again, this time climbing into an ox wagon that carried them to their temporary home.

As they jogged along over the rough corduroy road Emily gained her first knowledge of how and where cranberries grow. All about her stretched the marsh, a low, level, wet expanse of peaty bog, without trees or shrubs, but thickly covered with low, trailing bushes only a foot or two high, with long, slender stems now bending under their burden of delicate light green leaves and red, acid berries. These were the cranberry bushes, so called because their long slim stems resemble the long legs and neck of a crane.

The ground between the bushes was soft and spongy, but very deceitful in appearance. The surface seemed covered with a dry, grassy substance, but many steps could not be taken without sinking to the ankles in the soft bog. The wagon road was made of logs and poles laid closely side by side across it, making as level surface as possible, but very rough at best.

Here and there in the marsh were islets of solid ground covered with tall pines and other trees and vegetation. On one of these islets was Mr. Brown's cabin, a picturesque log structure, standing between two pines that lifted their tall green tops protectingly above it. Except for the loneliness it



THE INDIANS LINED UP FOR THEIR WAGES.

fairs,' she heard her father saying, one evening, to her mother, 'I must be troubled about my cranberry marsh, too, and that right at the beginning of the berry harvest. Now that the crop is ripe, the man who was to oversee the gathering and marketing of it has thrown up the job, and I know of no one to take his place.'

He was much troubled, for he had more than he could well do, without overseeing the gathering and marketing of the harvest of the cranberry marsh. However, the work must be carefully looked after, for the proceeds of the marsh

Now, Emily knew that the berries picked by the Indians were always measured by the overseer, who daily gave each picker a card, on which was recorded the number of quarts he had picked during the day. Every evening the pickers took these cards to the payer's desk and received the amount of cash due them. Emily was good at keeping accounts, and she knew that while her father looked after the picking and measuring of the berries, she could very well do the paying and book-keeping, thus saving him a considerable sum.

But how dreary it would be, liv-