

The Family Circle.

SOME TIME.

Last night, my darling, as you slept,
I thought I heard you sigh,
As to your little crib I crept,
And watched a space thereby;
And then I stooped and kissed your brow,
For, oh! I love you so—
You are too young to know it now,
But some time you shall know.

Some time, when in a darkened place,
Where others come to weep,
Your eyes shall look upon a face,
Calm in eternal sleep.
The voiceless lips, the wrinkled brow,
The patient smile shall show—
You are too young to know it now,
But some time you may know.

Look backward, then, into the years
And see me here to-night—
See, oh my darling! how my tears
Are falling as I write,
And feel once more upon my brow
The kiss of long ago—
You are too young to know it now,
But some time you shall know.

THE PARSON'S EXPERIMENT.

The small parish at Fallowdale had been for some time without a pastor. The members were nearly all farmers, and they had not much money to bestow upon the support of a clergyman; yet they were willing to pay for anything that could promise them any due return of good. In course of time, it happened that the Rev. Abraham Surely visited Fallowdale, and as a Sabbath passed during his sojourn, he held a meeting in a small church. The people were pleased with his preaching, and some of them proposed inviting him to remain with them, and take charge of their spiritual welfare.

Upon the merits of this proposition, there was a long discussion. Parson Surely had signified his willingness to take a permanent residence at Fallowdale, but the members of the parish could not so readily agree to hire him.

'I don't see the use of hiring a parson,' said Mr. Sharp, an old farmer of the place. 'He can do us no good. If we've got any money to spare, we'd better lay it up for something else. A parson can't learn me anything.'

To this it was answered, that stated religious meetings would be of great benefit to the younger people, and also a source of real social good to all.

'I don't know 'bout that,' said Sharp, after he had heard the arguments against him. Sharp was one of the wealthiest men in the parish, and consequently one of the most influential. 'I've heard tell,' he continued, 'of a parson that could pray for rain, and have it come at any time. Now if we could hit upon such a parson as that, I would go in for hiring him.'

This opened a new idea to the unsophisticated minds of Fallowdale. The farmers often suffered from long droughts, and after arguing awhile longer, they agreed to hire Parson Surely upon the condition that he should give them rain whenever they wish for it, and, on the other hand, that he would also give them fair weather when required. Deacons Smith and Townsend were deputed to make this arrangement known to the parson, and the people remained in the church while their messengers went upon their errand.

When the deacons returned, Mr. Surely accompanied them. He smiled, as he entered the church, and with a graceful bow, saluted the people there assembled.

'Well, my friends,' he said, as he ascended the platform in front of the desk,

'I have heard your request to me, and strange as it may appear, I have come to accept your proposal; but I can do it only on one condition; and that is, that your request for a change of weather must be unanimous.'

This appeared very reasonable, since every member of the parish had a deep interest in the farming business, and ere long it was arranged that Mr. Surely should become the pastor of Fallowdale, and that he should give the people rain whenever they asked for it.

When Mr. Surely returned to his lodgings, his wife was utterly astounded upon learning the nature of the contract her husband had entered into; but the pastor only smiled, and bade her wait for the result.

'But you know you cannot make it rain,' persisted Mrs. Surely; 'and you know, too, that the farmers here will be wanting rain very often when there is none for them. You will be disgraced.'

'I will teach them a lesson,' quietly returned the pastor.

'Ay—that you cannot be so good as your word; and when you have taught it to them, they will turn you off.'

'We shall see,' was Mr. Surely's reply, as he took up a book and commenced reading.

This was a signal for his wife to desist from further conversation on the subject, and she at once obeyed.

Time flew on, and at length the hot days of midsummer were at hand. For three weeks it had not rained, and the young corn was beginning to curl up beneath the effects of the drought. In this extremity, the people bethought themselves of the promise of their pastor, and some of them hastened to his dwelling.

'Certainly,' returned Mr. Surely. 'If you will call for a meeting of the members of the parish, I will be with you this evening.'

With this the applicants were perfectly satisfied, and forthwith they hastened to call the flock together.

'Now you'll see the hour of your disgrace,' said Mrs. Surely, after the visitors had gone. 'O, I am very sorry you ever undertook to deceive them so.'

'I did not deceive them.'

'Yes, you surely did.'

'We shall see,' responded the pastor.

'So we shall see,' added the lady.

The hour for the meeting came around, and Parson Surely met his people at the church. They were all there—most of them anxious, and the remainder curious.

'Now, my friends,' said the pastor, arising upon the platform, 'I have come to hear your request. What is it?'

'Ay—rain—rain,' repeated half a dozen voices.

'Very well. Now when will you have it?'

'This very night. Let it rain all night long,' said Sharp, to which several others immediately assented.

'No, no, not to-night,' cried Deacon Smith. 'I have six or seven tons of well made hay in the field, and I would not have it wet for anything.'

'So I have hay out,' added Mr. Peck.

'We won't have it rain to-night.'

'Then let it be to-morrow.'

'It will take me all day to-morrow to get my hay in,' said Smith.

Thus the objections came up for the two succeeding days, and at length, by

way of compromise, Mr. Sharp proposed that they should have rain in just four days. 'For,' said he, 'by that time, all the hay which is now out can be got in, and we need not cut any—'

'Stop, stop,' uttered Mrs. Sharp, pulling her worthy husband smartly by the sleeve. 'That is the day we set to go to Snowhill. It *mustn't* rain then!'

This was law for Mr. Sharp, so he proposed that the rain should come in one week, and then resumed his seat. But this would not do. Many of the people would not have it put off so long. 'If we can't have rain before then, we'd better not have it at all,' said they.

In short, the meeting resulted in just no conclusion at all, for the good people found it utterly impossible to agree upon a time when it should rain.

'Until you can make up your minds upon this point,' said the pastor, as he was about leaving the church, 'we must all trust in the Lord.' And after this the people followed him from the place.

Both Deacon Smith and Mr. Peck got their hay safely in, but on the very day Mr. Sharp and his wife were to have started for Snowhill, it began to rain in right good earnest. Sharp lost his visit, but he met the disappointment with good grace, for his crops smiled at the rain.

Ere another month had rolled by, another meeting was called for a petition for rain, but this time the result was the same as before. Many of the people had their muck todig, but rain would prevent them. Some wanted the rain immediately—some in one, some in two, and some in three days, while others wanted it put off longer. So Mr. Surely had not yet occasion to call for rain.

One year rolled by, and up to that time the people of Fallowdale had never once been able to agree upon the exact kind of weather they would have, and the result was that they began to open their eyes to the fact that this world would be a strange place, if its inhabitants could govern it. While they had been longing for a power they did not possess, they had not seen its absurdity, but now that they had, in good faith, tried to apply that power, under the belief that it was theirs, they saw clearly that they were getting beyond their sphere. They saw that Nature's laws were safer in the hands of Nature's God than in the hands of Nature's children.

On the last Sabbath in the first year of Mr. Surely's settlement at Fallowdale, he offered to give up his connection with the parish; but the people would not listen to it. They had become attached to him and the meetings, and they wished him to stay.

'But I can no longer rest under our former contract with regard to the weather,' said the pastor.

'Nor do we wish you to,' returned Sharp. 'Only preach to us and teach us and our children how to live, and help us be social and happy.'

'And,' added the pastor, while a tear of pride stood in his eye, as he looked for an instant into the face of his now happy wife, 'all things above our proper sphere we will leave with God, for *He doeth all things well.*'—*Sylvanus Cobb, Jr.*

Wherever the sale of drink has been prohibited—and prevented—among savage or semi-civilised tribes, there the sale of other goods has multiplied exceedingly. Every temperance movement is good for every honest trade but that of brewing and distilling.

TRAVEL IN ALBERTA.

If signs were trustworthy, I should have been much elated over the auspicious weather that ruled on the day of our departure for La Biche. Truly it was a beautiful morning, with the temperature some twenty degrees below zero, and a glorious sun, which touched the ice-covered bushes and trees with sparkling brilliancy; and when we started on our 175-mile drive, all Queen's Hotel, and, I judged, half the town, turned out to bid us God-speed. We had two good horses and a strong box-sleigh, and our load was not heavy, so that I expected to make good time. I had taken only enough provisions from Edmonton to last us to La Biche. There was much that I could have taken, of course, in the way of canned vegetables, meats, etc., and which might have saved me from many a meal of the oftentimes unpalatable stuff which I secured from post to post. But I was going into the country for a purpose, and not for a picnic. I knew perfectly well that I could not carry a sufficient supply to last until I had covered the 900 miles that lay between me and Great Slave Lake, because of the impossibility of securing enough dogs and sledges to freight it, and I knew that even if I could eat as a civilized man until I reached that point, I should be obliged, when I began my journey into the Barren Grounds, to abandon all hope of eating well, or even plentifully, and live or starve as do the Indians on their annual hunt in that region. Besides, the greatest essential to the success of my trip was speed. I had set out to make my bison-hunt, to get into the Barren Grounds for the musk-ox, and get back again to Great Slave Lake on snow-shoes—an undertaking that had never before been attempted, and which every one assured me I could not carry out. It meant snow-shoeing nearly 1,900 miles, and left no time for leisurely travelling; but I was determined to accomplish what I had planned if it lay within human possibilities; and thus it was that we took no unnecessary freight from Edmonton, for civilized food is so considered in that great North land. Tobacco was the only article of which I took a greater supply; but tobacco is not considered freight up there; it is always a solace, and becomes on occasion a stimulant when there is no meat, and an irresistible lure to facilitate intercourse with the Indians.

It was well we had a stout sleigh, for, much to my astonishment, the snow seemed not more than a foot deep anywhere, while in the road it had been worn down by much travel, and the rocks were numerous and aggressive. We made twenty-two miles by noon of the first day, and took our dinner at Fort Saskatchewan, the most northerly post of the North-west Mounted Police. Up to this point of the day's journey the road had been plain, and the country not unpleasant to the eye. In fact, in some parts it is rather pretty, of a general rolling character, fringed with small timber, mostly of the poplar variety, though pine is fairly abundant. It looks like, and is, in truth, a grazing country more especially, though the horses and cattle I saw en route were rather poor—a condition to be probably expected in a land where everything is new and settlers lead a hand-to-mouth existence, as all settlers do. An Edmonton enthusiast—I think he must have had property for sale—assured