

CHAPTER III.

STARTING OUT INTO THE WORLD.

An Irreparable Loss.

ON the home farm we had over fifty acres cleared and under crop within six years after locating on it as bush land. We still lived in the hewed-log house with a big chimney built of stones and clay at one end and a bed room partitioned off at the other end. We also had a large cedar log barn. The cleared land was divided into five and ten acre fields, and well fenced with split rails, mostly rock elm and ash. The big stumps took about ten years to decay so as to be pulled out, but the older fields that were first chopped down were getting freed of the smaller stumps, and could be ploughed very well. The land was remarkably good, and we had made a fine, clean and highly productive farm of it.

But just as we were getting into fair circumstances, and looking forward to better days, mother took ill, and died in a few months. She had apparently been as strong as usual until she was laid up. But the hard work and anxieties of the first years in the backwoods had told upon her constitution and health. For there were eight of us at last to be looked after,