







poetry.

SIMON BEARING THE CROSS.

Oh, make us, Lord, for Thy dear sake,
With willing hearts the cross to take,
And bear it after Thee each day...

LIFE IN THE PRAIRIE LAND.

(From Sharpe's Magazine.)

There is a large creek about four miles away;
and on this lone woman hangs her last faint hope.
The wind will not befriend her, and she can only hope...

Now, when the time grew short, and the hot breath
of her relentless foe rushed fiercely around her,
she addressed herself rapidly to the care of her little ones...

The fire had crossed the creek, and was tearing its
way, like an infuriated demon, up the plain.
A few minutes must decide her fate; she fell on her knees...

Scarcely had she taken this brief survey, and noted
the nearer approach of the flame, when the dog came
bounding to her side, and, with the most earnest petitions...

"Merciful God! what have you done! we shall
all be consumed—there is no hope now!" He stood
at her feet; there is no hope now!

A drizzling rain was falling when she reached the
spot, and threatened to increase. It would be impossible
to preserve the fire long; but pushing the brands together...

With filtering steps the unhappy woman gathered
her little ones, and prepared to leave their cheerless
bed. But whether should they go? There was no house
within many miles.

others was impossible. Her only resource was to
search the wasted wood and plain for roots and nuts,
or whatever might be left to support life, till her husband's
return.

Bending her steps, therefore, towards the smouldering
ruins, the soothed and warmed her children,
and set out with the generous dog to search the grove
for food.

During the day she had found a few of the groundnuts,
which grew quite abundantly in the edge of the grove;
with these she fed her little ones; and parting with
nearly all her clothing, wrapped them in the scant
covering...

At intervals, for several hours, the winds bore to
her aching ear, the short querulous barking of the
small prairie wolf, and once or twice her very blood
curdled when the shrill, dismal howl, by which the
large grey wolf summons his neighbours for an attack...

The cold winds howled around her thinly clad frame,
and chilled it to the core. The noises one by one
died away, and, spite of the horrors of her condition,
a drowsiness stole over her which she could scarcely
resist.

It was stupor rather than sleep that locked her
faculties till the cry of fire recalled them. The fire was
diminishing; the sun was up, but he looked coldly
through a mass of leaden vapour that was crowding
up the south-eastern sky.

Her own desire for food was gone; she would have
loathed the most tempting viands. But when the
little ones hung upon her garments, and begged for
bread, she summoned her fainting limbs to one more
effort; and, taking a direction which had not been
tried before, she found, after a long and painful search...

"The rain increased, and their drenched garments
gave the chilling blast redoubled power. The embers
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shaking group. Like the pangs of death grew the
mother's agony!—as certain and relentless!

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strain his intense feelings, and accommodate his
progress to the slow motion of the tired cattle. Night
drew on before the desolation of his home was revealed
to him.

When within about a mile, he should have discovered
the house, but all was a level waste! Unable
longer to endure the torture, he sprang forward, leaving
the animals to follow as they chose. He flew, he
shouted, and the dog bounded to meet the well-known
voice.

A group of perishing children, an infant corpse,
a dying wife! and all, all gone wherewith to administer
ever the decent ceremonies of such a period. Oh,
how bitterly his heart cursed the day when he treated
the treacherous beauty that invited him there!

She had begged that her tomb might be made on
the site of the burned cabin. And there, when he
had watched two days and nights by her unsheltered
corpse, and hewn a rough coffin to receive her and her
untimely babe, she was deposited.

The grove has since retired and left the tomb alone
—a bold and solitary mark on the high line of the
horizon. The plain below is still unchanged. It is
the same rich green expanse in summer; the same
black howling waste in winter.

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