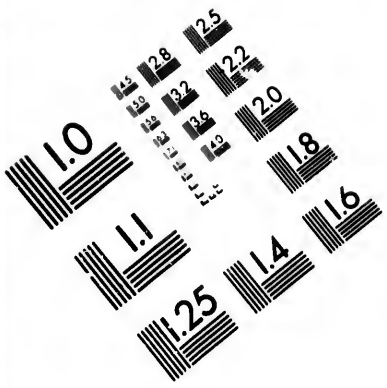

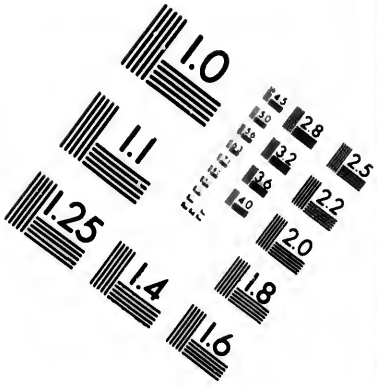

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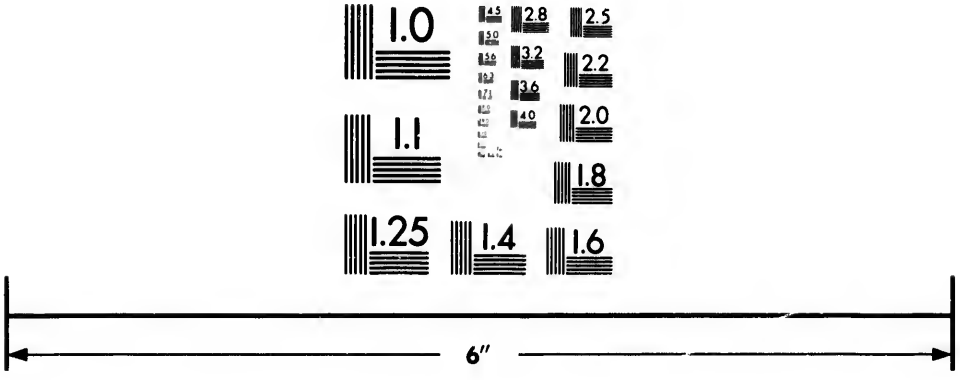

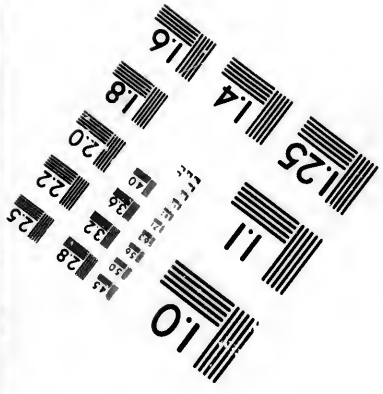

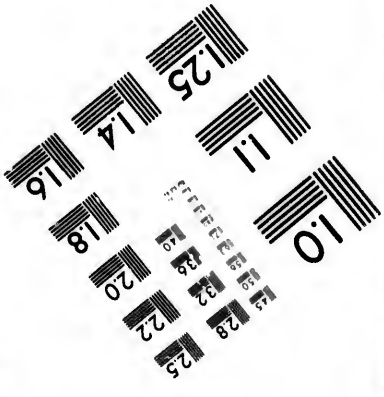

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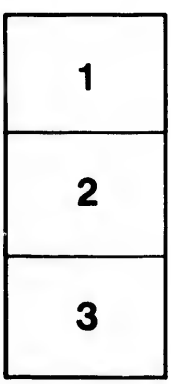

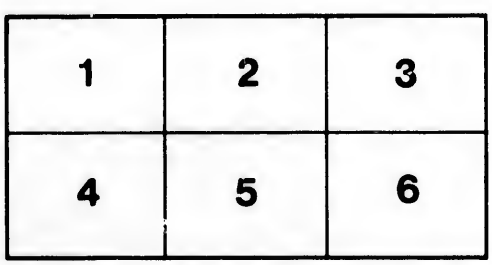

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LIFE IN GLENSHIE,

BEING

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF ELIZABETH RAY, SCHOOL-TEACHER.

A Tale.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"My Young Master," "Casting the Lot," "In Search of the Supernatural," &c.

Montreal:
JOHN DOUGALL & SON, PUBLISHERS,
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1878.

LIFE IN GLENSHIE.

BEING THE RECOLLECTIONS OF ELIZABETH RAY, SCHOOL TEACHER.

Chapter I.

I am sitting lonely, musing,
Midway pausing on life's track,
Looking onward, looking upward,
But too often looking back.

The school is dismissed, the scholars are gone, the last echoes of their footsteps have died away, and I sit here enjoying the luxury of being alone.

I want to enjoy it too, for the time may come when I shall not be able to dismiss my cares at four o'clock.

I enjoy my leisure, but I enjoy my work also, thoroughly enjoy it, not so much that I like it, which I do—I like it well—as that I have no one to oversee, to direct, or take audible notice of my blunders. I never could do my best under the eye of a censor. Whatever I was trying to accomplish when I became conscious of a spectator was sure to be a grand failure.

Aunt Henderson once undertook to teach me how to make butter into rolls, called in the north "mescuns." The more she directed my efforts, the more she explained to me how very far from right was every attempt I made, the more she lamented my awkwardness, the more bewildered I became, conscious only of the terrible blue eye watching me, until I ended the matter by dropping the precious golden butter on the dairy floor, and fled, taking with me a stinging box on the ear.

Perhaps the remembrance of many mortifying failures owing to this dreaded *eye-shine* makes the sense of freedom which I now enjoy—the power of planning and executing without supervision, so precious to me.

I stand alone in the world, and success or failure lies before me; I have no one to help me to succeed, or to divide the blame with me if I fail. It lies upon me to prove, first to myself, then to others, that I am able to do that which I have undertaken. So in a position I never dreamed of occupying, in a country new and strange to my youth and inexperience, I sit in my log palace alone, looking dreamily through the little window across the bit of green to the alder-fringed Grace river. My new dignity and responsibility have such a sobering effect on me that I feel my girlhood slipping away—I feel old. I look, not at the prospect, but at the road pictured by memory, over which I have travelled, which has brought me to Glenshie, where I find myself teacher

of School Section No. 2. I see on that road a lonely little figure for whom I have a great deal of pity. I always did pity myself a great deal, perhaps because no one else seemed to see the necessity of doing so.

I was a child of the Manse, my father being Presbyterian minister of Grey Abbey, in the County Down. The Manse was a stone house, not very large or very new, one gable end covered with ivy, a great shelter and building place for the little brown sparrows. I was such a mere child when I left Grey Abbey that my recollections of it are fragmentary and dim, but delicious as glimpses of fairy land. I remember the little orchard at one end of the Manse, fenced in by a low moss-grown stone wall. In my memory it is always steeped in sunshine that is ripening and mellowing ruddy apples. There were two trees trained against the wall on the sunny side. Often in my dreams I am back again in the old orchard gathering the delicious pippins that grew on them. At the other end of the Manse, the ivied end was the garden, which had a summer-house formed of beech trees clipped into the form of a little temple. There was also a large rose tree growing close to father's study window, in which every year a pair of blackbirds built their nest. I remember how tame they were; how we could part the clusters of creamy white roses and peep into the nest where the mother bird sat without frightening her away.

It was but a little way from the Manse to the old grey church in which my father preached. Our family was small—papa and mamma, Walter and I, and our rosy, fat maid-servant, Jane Geddes—prized in our house both for her working ability and her name, which papa said was historical. It pleased him to think that she was a lineal descendant of that Janet Geddes who flung her creepie stool into history.

Walter and I had not always been the only children; there were three little graves in the churchyard where slept three Manse babies that died in infancy. I do not know when or how the knowledge came to me, but I knew that mamma was not my very own mamma. Far away in the dimness of the past I see a white face on the pillow, and bright dark eyes that look at me with a look I have never seen in other eyes. I see myself, a tiny mite of a child, lifted up on the bed for the last look, the last kiss, the prayer that commits me to the care of the All Father. I always believed that I remembered this scene, although Aunt Henderson said it was impossible—that I had heard some one talk of it, and fancied I recollected. Aunt Henderson was father's sister; she came to see us once a year regularly. Mamma made no difference between Walter and me, but aunt Henderson did; when she came she petted my brother a great deal, but always found fault with me. She was the great trial of my young life.

Mamma said to her once: "Mary Ann it is not right to make such a difference between the children."

"I cannot help it, Helen," she answered.

"Why?" asked mamma.

"It is impossible for me to take to the child; she frightens me, staring at me with those great eyes of hers."

"Well, I like the child's eyes," said mamma.

"Well, I don't, Helen—they are too like her mother's."

"They are very fine eyes, nevertheless. Did you dislike her mother so much?"

"It was a very unsuitable match," said aunt.

"Why?" asked mamma.

"Every why," retorted aunt, with a snap. "Only think, she had really an O to her name; though we never mention it," she added, dropping her voice.

"Indeed!" said mamma, as if she were at a loss to know what to say.

"To think of him, a minister of the gospel—one of those whose fathers

came over from Scotland to Kilinchy with the sainted Livingstone, marrying a thoroughly Irish person, of whose family or friends we knew nothing," said aunt, with virulence.

"Was she a Roman Catholic?" enquired mamma, with a little hesitation.

"She was an Episcopalian; and whatever others may think, we and our fathers saw little difference between Popery and Prelacy," aunt replied.

"I never knew anything about her," said mamma. "Walter is very reticent about the past, and I respected his reserve, and never cared to enquire. I do not even know where he met with her."

"She was governess at Lord Rudolf Fitzgerald's. The family had a cottage by the sea at that time, and spent some months every summer there. From some whim or other, for they were Episcopalians, they attended Walter's ministry. He was then a licentiate of the Kirk, and was preaching on trial at Grey Abbey here. The family seemed to take a great fancy to Walter, paid him a good deal of attention, invited him often to the cottage—and all that. Lord Rudolf himself has often driven over to fetch him. He consulted him on spiritual matters—in short, made an intimate friend of him. Well, the end of it all was, he married the governess, with Lord Rudolf's full approval, but not with mine. No one can ever say I was reconciled to the match."

"She did not remain with him long?" said mamma.

"No, not quite four years; she died of consumption."

Just then mamma noticed that I was in the room. I had been sitting quietly in a corner with the Pilgrim's Progress in my lap. She looked at aunt, and then sent me up-stairs for her work-basket, and I heard no more of this mysterious dead mother at that time.

That evening, when my father was sitting with us, they fell to talking about the coming over from Scotland. I think papa had been away at some meeting commemorative of that great event. However that may be, he brought the *Ulster Times*, and read to us—and father's reading was like music—a long piece of poetry about the coming over, written by Mr. McComb, of Belfast. I remember the lines—they recall to me the sound of my father's voice, and, indeed, they were the last he read in my hearing:

"Two hundred years ago there came from Scotland's storied land,
To Carrick's old and fortress town, a Presbyterian band.
They planted on the castle wall the banner of the blue,
And worshipped God in simple form, as Presbyterians do.
Oh, hallowed be their memory who in our land did sow
The goodly seed of Gospel truth two hundred years ago!

"Two hundred years ago was heard, upon the tenth of June,
On Carrick's shore the voice of prayer and psalm with solemn tune:
'Do good in Thy good pleasure, Lord, unto Thy Zion here;
The walls of our Jerusalem establish Thou and rear.'
Thus prayer and praise were made to God, nor dread of earthly foe
Dismayed our fathers in their work two hundred years ago.

"Two hundred years ago our church a little one appeared,
Five ministers, and elders four, the feeble vessel steered.
But now five hundred pastors and five thousand elders stand
A host of faithful witnesses within our native land.
Their armor is the Spirit's sword, and onward as they go
They wave the flag their fathers waved two hundred years ago.

"Two hundred years ago the dew of God's refreshing power
On Oldtown and on Antrim fell like Israel's manna shower;
The waters of the six-mile stream flowed rapidly along,

But swifter far the Spirit passed o'er the awakened throng;
God's presence with his message went as living waters flow,
And thus His Spirit blessed our sires two hundred years ago.

"Two hundred years ago, afar, no Gospel sound was known,
The heathen man, unheeded then, bowed down to wood and stone;
But better days have dawned on us—our missionary band
Are publishing salvation now on India's golden strand,
And to the sons of Abraham our sons appointed go,
To Judah's race, rejected, scorned, two hundred years ago.

"Two hundred years ago was seen the proud and mitred brow
Frowning on Scotland's envied Kirk as it is frowning now;
But enemies in church and state may threaten stern decree,
Her ministers are men of prayer, her people still are free;
Nor threat, nor interdict, nor wile of legislative show
Shall change the men whose fathers bled two hundred years ago.

"Two hundred years ago o'er graves the blue-bell drooped its head,
The purple heather sadly waved above the honored dead;
The mist lay heavy on the hill, the lav'rock ceased to soar,
And Scotland mourned her martyred sons on mountain and on moor.
And still her's is a mourning church; but He who made her so
Is nigh to aid her as He was two hundred years ago.

"Two hundred years ago the hand of massacre was nigh,
And far and wide, o'er Erin's land, was heard the midnight cry.
Now Presbyterian Ulster rests in happiness and peace,
While crimes in distant provinces from year to year increase.
O Lord! their bondage quickly turn as streams in south that flow,
For Popery is the same it was two hundred years ago."

Papa read with the trumpet tone of triumph in his voice, aunt and mamma were enthusiastic listeners, and when he had finished reading they broke forth into praise of the verses, their writer, and the event commemorated.

Then the conversation turned to Scotland, its heroes, martyrs and bards—to the great men, giants on the earth, who stood in the forefront of the battle, and counted not their lives dear unto them in their zeal for the Lord's truth and the people's liberties.

While they talked of these things a part of me rejoiced in my Scottish ancestry, and my small share in the hereditary glories of Presbyterianism, while another part went out secretly after my dead mother and the despised O's and Macs from which she sprung.

From such conservations as these I got some knowledge of the men whom my father delighted to honour—Wishart and Patrick Hamilton, who for the truth's sake passed through the fire to Him whom they loved; Knox, that warrior of the Lord, who, warring not on his own charges, was able against all odds to stamp his own individuality on a nation and make the lines true:

"A virtuous populace shall rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around the much loved Isle;"

Peden and Cargill and Cameron of the "days of darkness and blood," when the ministers of the word were hunted like the partridges on the mountains, when, like Nehemiah's builders, they wrought with one hand in the work and in the other held a weapon; saintly Samuel Rutherford, who did not build his nest in any of this world's trees, and many another noble name.

And there were living men of whom my father said, they were worthy to st and in the place of the mighty dead.

A great Scottish minister called Chalmers was the chief of these; and there was a Mr. McDonald, surnamed Ferintosh, I did not know why, and our own Dr. Cooke, of Belfast, whose name was

a household word among us. I cherish these grand names as relics of those dear old days when my childhood's home was the Manse of Grey Abbey.

While playing in the garden during this visit of aunt Henderson, Walter suddenly dropped his little spade and said to me:

"Don't you think, 'Lisbeth, that God's a Presbyterian?"

I thought a little about it before I answered him, for Mr. Willey, of Kilwarlin, the Moravian minister, came to our place sometimes on Bible Society business, and father said of him: "He is an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile." So I said to Walter: "Many people who are not Presbyterians say 'Our Father.' I hope he is Our Father to all who call on him. He will be, too, if they call on him in spirit and in truth."

This was the home out of which I looked with eager questioning eyes on the little world into which I was born; and a quiet, thoughtful, semi-Scotch world it was.

It was not customary at the Manse to allow the children outside of the garden or orchard alone. I remember, on one occasion, papa and mamma being with us, playing on the sands by the shore, and wondering that I did not find shells like those on the mantelpiece in the best parlor, which I held to my ear to decide whether the tide was coming in or going out whenever I got an opportunity. It is like a dream to me that Walter ran away the first day he got into trousers, with the intention of going to sea like Robinson Crusoe, and that afterwards we were forbidden to go outside of our own boundaries when alone.

We sometimes went with papa or mamma to see Mr. Martin, the elder, who lived on a farm quite near us. We used to get curds and cream there, and were taken to see the guinea hens, and were chased once, and terribly frightened, by the large turkey.

I liked best of all to go to see Granny McLean, who lived in a little thatched cottage beyond our garden—a cottage white as snow, with lattice windows, having small lozenge-shaped panes set in stripes of lead. She had a wee bit of garden, sweet with southern-wood and thyme, and gay with sweet-williams, holly-hocks, wall-flowers and roses. The beginning of my great intimacy with Granny McLean was this: she had taken me into her garden to "pou a bonnie posy" for my mamma, she said, when a gay party of ladies and gentlemen on horseback swept past at a canter along the public road.

I looked after them with admiring eyes as long as the fluttering habits and streaming plumes of the ladies remained in sight.

"I wish I had a pony of my own," I said to granny,

"You would need a habit, too," said granny.

"Yes, I would like that also," I answered.

"I will give you a pony and habit when my ship comes in," said granny with a smile

"Have you a ship coming in, granny?" I asked

"Oh, yes, dear, I have a fine ship sailing to me from somewhere, I know."

"When will it come in?"

"Whenever the winds are fair."

"Will it be soon?"

"Keep a good look out, dear. When the winds are not contrary the ships will come in."

"Will my pony surely come with it?"

"Certainly," said granny.

"What will it be like?"

"Whatever you wish, my dear."

"Well, if it's all the same to you, granny, I would like a bay pony, with a light mane and tail—a long tail you know—and a dark blue habit, and a hat with a feather in it."

"Well, dear, as sure as my ship comes in, so sure the bay pony will be on deck for you."

I never told any one about the pony I expected to get when granny's ships came in, but I often pictured to my mind how surprised papa, mamma and Walter would be when the pony arrived. In our walks I never came to any place where there was a good view of the sea without looking if Granny McLean's ship was coming in with every sail set, and a bay pony on deck for me.

This was the first of my "great expectations." Long afterwards, when I read some simple lines ending

"How many watchers in life there be
For the ships that never come over the sea,"

they brought to my mind my watching across the sea, my frequent calls at granny's cottage to ask, "Has the ship come in yet, granny?" and the hopeful expectancy that never grew discouraged with the answer "Not yet, dearie, not yet."

CHAPTER. II.

Truly our joys were limited and few,
But they sufficed our lives to satisfy,
That neither fret nor dim foreboding knew,
But breathed the air in a great harmony."

JEAN INGELOW.

Since I have been grown up I have heard and read a great deal about the gloom and austerity of Puritan sabbaths; speaking from my own childish memories, I must say our sabbaths were the nicest times we had.

Mamma was all our own on that day. Child-like, we loved stories, but there were no stories to us like Bible stories told by the tender mother voice. Mamma had the faculty of word painting in a great degree. We realized the scenes she described in simple words as if we were looking at them. We spent part of every sabbath, in imagination, upon the hills, under the palm trees, by the wells of the Holy Land. We sat by Abraham under the oak of Mamre, in the tent door, when he entertained angels; stood by him, looking down over the plain of Jordan, "fertile and well watered even as the garden of the Lord," towards wealthy, wicked Sodom, and listened breathlessly while he took it upon him to plead with God for the guilty cities. We wept for the woes of the goodly youth who was separated from his brethren. We watched with Miriam by the river's brink, over the floating cradle which held the beautiful babe, who had arrived at that age when healthy babies "caper and crow" too much to be easily hidden. We lingered under the shade of the mighty cedars of that goodly mountain Lebanon,

"Where like a glory the broad sun
Hangs over sainted Lebanon."

Away in the waste howling wilderness we wandered with Jehovah's freedmen until they learned discipline and obedience. We followed them into the Promised Land, and were glad when righteousness exalted their nation, and sorry when they, for their sins, were left to the power of their enemies.

Walter, boy-like, preferred stories out of Judges and Kings of the wars of the Lord, stories of success and triumph or strange adventure. He liked to hear of the grand army marching round Jericho. I sympathised with the trembling anxiety of those in that beleaguered city, whose only hope for life and liberty depended on the good faith of the spies who caused the scarlet line to be bound in the window. We knew of the great battles from the battle by the waters of Merom to the battle of Ramoth in Gilead. We never wearied of hearing about the handsome and valiant young lad, who, before he had disobeyed and been rejected, went to look for the asses and came home an anointed king. Jonathan, and not King Arthur, was our ideal of a stainless knight. No feat of arms seemed so great to us as the defeat of the whole Philistine

army by Jonathan and his armorbearer at Michmash. We did not know which to admire most, the victorious youth of the fair countenance, who stood before the King with the head of the Philistine in his hand, or the unselfish displaced heir to the throne, who was so noble that he loved him as his own soul. We wept with Esau when his exceeding bitter cry came too late; we mourned for Saul, forsaken and doomed, when he hopelessly set the battle in array on the fatal and fated field of Gilboa. We wondered at the mighty work undertaken by a captive and a slave, when he planned, and carried out his plan, to build the city of his father's sepulchres in spite of the malicious opposition of the mocking heathen.

No scene in the "Arabian Nights" equalled in magnificence, to our imaginations, the gorgeous splendors of Shushan, the palace. We admired no heroine of history so much as that fair Queen, who, after waiting on the God of Israel for three days in fasting and prayer, went in to the King, royal in apparel, exquisite in beauty, to plead for her people, saying, "If I perish I perish."

Mamma showed to us where these heroes and heroines of the Bible got the power to do and suffer. We got wrought into our nature a belief in God as the God of wonders, the Hearer of prayer, the Mighty Deliverer when all earthly hope failed.

The historical Jane often told us stories of fairies, giants and dwarfs, witches and warlocks, by the kitchen fire on winter evenings; but she always ended her stories by saying, "And there was a great pie made, and I got a piece of the pie for telling the lie." This ending destroyed the pleasure her stories gave us. Though they were very wonderful, we wanted stories which were true.

There came a time of great trouble to the Manse shortly after Aunt Henderson went home. Mamma was not to be seen, and Doctor Young, white-faced, large-nosed, and pompous, went out and in solemnly, with his shiny black hair and his shining black clothes, looking very like a tame raven, while strange women took possession of the house, and tip-toed round, speaking in scared whispers. When we asked any questions Jane stilled us with threats of being sent to Mr. Martin's (the elder) if we made any trouble. This threat caused us to take refuge in papa's study, where papa sat silent and anxious.

Then a time came when we were dressed in new black clothes, and taken into the best room, all ghostly with white drapery, and saw our mamma, still and white, with two little babes beside her.

There was a funeral, another grave added to the three that were already in our part of the grave-yard, and the Manse seemed desolated forever.

How we did miss mamma every moment, and long for her to come back again!

When I could not sleep at night, but lay in my little room in the ivy-covered gable end, listening to the wild winds shaking the ivy, I thought of mamma; I remembered how she, out of her pitiful heart, used to say when the winds raged: "Lord, take care of the poor souls at sea;" I thought of how good and kind and patient she was, how the very beggars mourned for her as a friend; I thought, also, of the times when I was naughty and disobedient till my heart was sore.

I often lay looking into the darkness, saying to myself, "If I could only see her once again to tell her how sorry I am that I ever was naughty, how lonely we are without her, how much we loved her," until a great awe and dread would creep over me, and then I would cover up my head and sob myself to sleep.

My father seemed to miss mamma

more than any of us. He got thin and pale, and was silent and preoccupied. He was much away from home about this time at public meetings. We did not know in the least what the frequent meetings were about, we only knew that they were of vast importance, that the welfare of the church and the world depended on some things being done, and others prevented. We knew that our father was away battling for the Lord, and we received him when he came home like a returning conqueror.

It was a sad coming home for papa. We noticed that his eye always sought for some one, and then he remembered, and stepped softly as on the day of the funeral.

Jane complained that he ate next to nothing, and seemed to have lost interest in every earthly thing.

He was kinder to us than ever, and indulged us more than Jane thought was right, but he was absent minded and sorrowful continually.

I heard father's people, Mr. Martin, the elder, and the rest who came to the Manse, say to Jane often: "You must be very thoughtful about the minister, Jane, as we are sure you are. He does not get over his grief, and he is ageing fast. He never was to say a strong man; he should go away a little for rest and change."

I do not know how long it was after mamma's death that papa was away from home for some days. He was at Lisburn, at an ordination I think, and afterwards he was going to some important meeting that was to be held in Belfast.

While he was away the Rev. Mr. Willey, of Kilwarlin, with his son, came to the Manse. Mr Willey wanted to see papa about a Bible Society meeting. He intended to leave a message with Jane, but she, fearful of making a mistake, invited him into papa's study to write it, and sent his son, little Willie Willey, out into the garden to play with us until he had done so.

While we were gathering gooseberries off the particular bush that Jane had given over to us, Willie told us of the new railway opened between Lisburn and Belfast. He showed us some pins rolled out quite flat and thin, like little daggers—fairy swords he called them. He said that he arranged them on the rail, and after the cars passed over them they were flattened out so. He told us also that a man had been killed by the cars the day before—crushed out of life in a moment, his blood and brains were spattered all round. "The cars," he said, "were so swift and cruel. Every one was talking of the accident yesterday when we were in Belfast."

After they had got some refreshment, hastily got up by Jane, and were gone, a great fear fell on me lest it might be my father who was killed. I could not rest, but went out and in anxious and miserable, while my imagination ran wild over this new and terrible danger, and the possibility of my father never coming back to us any more. When he did return he found me watching for him at the gate, and I ran to meet him and kissed him again and again, with joy that all my fears were vain.

After tea that evening we sat with papa a long time. Walter had been quarrelling with Jane, and now he complained of her to papa, and said: "I want my own pretty mamma back again. When will she come?"

Then papa talked to us of mamma, how she was walking in Paradise, robed and crowned under the shade of the glorious trees with their leaves of healing, by the crystal river, seeing Him who sits on the throne with the rainbow steps, an exalted Prince and Saviour. Then my secret sorrow burst out, and I said: "Oh, papa! could my own mamma not get in there because she had O to her name?"

Papa looked at me as if I had struck him. I saw his face bleach almost as white as his hair. He had got

very gray since mamma died, though he was by no means old. At last he said: "Who has been talking before you, Elizabeth?"

"Aunt Henderson, when she was here last, was talking to mamma," I answered. So he made me tell him all I knew, his dark eyes looking through and through me all the time. Then he said, "Your mother, Elizabeth, was the noblest woman I ever knew. I have been better all my lifetime for having known and loved her. Your aunt did not understand what she was talking about; you must not think of or mind what she said. Your mother died young because the Lord loved her, and she left me with a recollection of her too tender and deep for words."

"I was afraid, papa, that the O was something wrong, when I never heard her spoken of but that one time," I said.

"God grant, my little daughter, that you may grow up worthy of such a mother," said papa, solemnly.

"But the grave is not in the churchyard, papa, where my brothers and sisters, and my other mamma, are buried," I persisted.

"No, my child, it is not, because your dear mamma died abroad."

"Abroad! Oh, papa! And did I not see her, as I think I did, before she died," I said eagerly.

"Yes, I expect you did," said papa, slowly, "though I have no distinct recollection of it. Your mother was long ill and weak, but she had one alarming attack, when we all thought she was about to leave us. It was at that time, I suppose, that she asked for you, and you were lifted up on the bed to see her, as you fancy you remember; but she rallied afterwards, and seemed better for a time."

"Why did she go abroad when she was so ill, papa?"

"In hopes that she might recover, dear. Her dearest friend, and a distant relative besides, Lady Fitzgerald, came to see her, and persuaded me to let her accompany her ladyship abroad to try a change of air and a warmer climate. I hoped a change of climate would benefit her, and consented, to my sorrow. She did improve wonderfully for a little while, and we thought she would be spared to us; but she had a relapse, and died quite suddenly. I got there too late to see her alive. She is buried in a little village in the south of France. Her grave is far away from us, Elizabeth. Her loss was a sore trial to me; it was a triumphant going home to her. It was not because I thought little of your mother that you never heard me speak of her, but because her loss shadowed my life, and I could not bear to open the old wound. If I had known what your aunt said before you I would have told you about your dear mother while she was here. She knows well that your mother was very precious to me, and her memory must be precious to you, my little daughter. I have more than one friend at the court of the Great King."

Papa said these last words in an absent manner, and relapsing into silence, sat musing. I became quiet also, because I was comforted. When we were going to bed under Jane's escort —very unwillingly—papa called us back and kissed us tenderly.

We said our prayers and went to bed quietly. Walter was too angry at Jane, and I was too happy, to chatter as we usually did. I fell asleep and dreamed happy dreams; no shadow of the coming morrow darkened them with its woe.

CHAPTER III.

Come, time, and teach me many years
I do not suffer in a dream;
For now so strange do these things seem
Mine eyes have leisure for their tears.
TENNYSON.

I remember that evening so distinctly, so sweetly, but the next day is all confusion in my mind. Jane said that

she was awakened by a heavy stroke on her bedroom door, that she felt awed and frightened, and then uncertain whether she had dreamed of the noise or actually heard it. Jane was a great believer in signs and wonders, and was often accused of being superstitious by my father, so, for fear of being laughed at, she remained listening and uncertain until she heard a strange voice in my father's room. She described it as a kind of gurgle or splash. Then she heard my father come out of his room and go downstairs. She exclaimed in her fright, "Lord have mercy on us! What is the matter, master?" She fancied she heard my father say, "Amen," but she was not sure. Getting up hastily, she wrapped herself in some clothing and ran downstairs. It was the grey dawning of an early autumn morning. My father had opened the hall-door and was sitting on a low hall table, in his old study gown, hastily thrown over his night-shirt, a hand on each knee, leaning forward a little. When she came near him she saw that the front of his gown and night-shirt were drenched with blood, and there was a pool on the floor at his feet, which were bare and splashed with red drops.

Jane screamed for Andrew Telfer, the man who farmed the Manse fields for father, who happened to be in the house that night, though he usually slept at home. Between them they laid him on the sofa in the parlor, and Andrew ran for Doctor Young, wakening Mr. Martin, the elder (who lived near), on his way. Father was not dead as Jane feared. After Andrew left he opened his eyes and tried to speak, but the effort brought a rush of blood to his lips, and before any one came he passed away with his head on Jane's arm.

And I, not knowing, slept on, and wandered in a happy dream with my two mammas through a summer land, bright with blossoms and fresh with verdure. When I awakened Walter and I were orphans indeed. The Manse was full of the people who lived near father's hearers they were mostly, and there was great lamentation over him. They would not let us into the room where father lay. The doctor came and went away again, and every one knew that all was over, that father was gone to his Master. We heard them speak to one another of his death, as having been caused by the rupture of a large blood vessel.

I cannot remember clearly the events of that dreadful time, they come back to my recollection in fragments.

Uncle Tom Henderson, whom I had never seen before, came to the Manse before the funeral and took the management of everything on himself. There were crowds of father's hearers and personal friends came to take a last look at him. They spoke of him as a faithful minister of the Word, as one who was a living example to his flock, and expressed their sympathy for the two childen left by this dispensation entirely alone. There was a very large funeral, and father was laid in the grave and covered up from our sight forever. Uncle Tom stayed on settling and arranging father's affairs. He was a tall, slim man, with a quick eye and very rapid in his movements. He was a great puzzle to me. I found myself watching him with the wondering thought, "What will he do or say next?" When he sat quiet, with a musing look on his face that became him well, I thought him a very handsome man, but in motion he was odd, very odd. He had a way of throwing up his head, and blowing out his nostrils with a kind of snort, that made him look like a startled horse. He walked at a great pace, waved his arms about in a wild manner, flung out his words with a jerk, as if he hated to waste time in speech, and breathed as heavily as if he were moved by machinery that worked at high pressure. This was Uncle Tom.

The elders of the church and he held a consultation in the parlor with the door

shut, which I felt had reference to us. Walter and I wandered about disconsolately, I wondering to myself what ailed me, that I did not feel sorrow for my father's death more keenly. I felt as if I were walking about in my sleep. Jane, obeying Uncle Tom's rapid orders, packed up trunks and boxes with certain things which he selected. There was a sale of the household furniture, and the proceeds were handed over to Uncle Tom.

We were aware by this time that we were to go with Uncle Tom to his home far down in County Antrim, and Jane Geddes was to go also. On the last night which we spent in the Manse we were sitting in the kitchen, amid corded up boxes and trunks, feeling, I think, a little like shipwrecked people, and truly we were sitting amid the wreck of our home, when Uncle came in to notify us of his final arrangements.

It never dawned upon Uncle Tom's mind that any one under his orders presumed to think differently from him. He announced to Jane that he wanted her to remain behind long enough to thoroughly clean up the Manse after the disorder consequent upon the sale. There were some other things to attend to which she could do as well as not, and he could stay away from his business no longer. Walter and I were to go with him in the morning, Mr. Martin lending his car and swift horse to take us into Belfast to the coach office. With great precision, Uncle counted into Jane's hand the exact amount for her travelling expenses, and with the air of having arranged matters, he left the kitchen.

Jane was cross with Uncle, so cross that she felt like throwing a creepie stool at him, in imitation of her great namesake, if she could have believed it would have been as effectual.

"He is such a driver," said she, "always, 'hurry up! hurry up, Jane!' and no amount of haste would squeeze one word of praise or thanks out of him. To see him snorting and steaming round, and looking as if he would blow up any minute, it is no wonder that his men call him the Steam Packet! He's miserly, too, and I believe it will be hard lines for us all, dears, to live in the same house with him. I would not go an inch if it were not for you two children that I have nursed since you were babies."

Next morning we were up before day. Jane had breakfast ready when we were roused by Uncle. She was sent up to help and hurry us in our dressing, which she did, abusing Uncle all the time.

It was very early in the morning, day was beginning to dawn, grey, cold and comfortless, when Walter and I, bundled up in our new pelisses, made out of dear mamma's blue cloth cloak, were placed on Mr. Martin's low backed car by Uncle Tom's hasty hands. There was not a streak of color in the east to speak of coming sunrise as we drove up the slope that led to the church. Passing Granny McLean's cottage, I remember thinking regretfully that if her ship did come in at last I would be far away and never get the bay pony—and in truth I never did.

I turned to look my last at the Manse. The morning star hung over it large and bright. Jane stood under the sycamore at the little front gate waving her apron to us. I knew she was crying, so was I, but the car rattled on, and the Manse of Grey Abbey, my childhood's home, the place of my father's sepulchre, lay behind me for ever—I never saw it afterwards. When the sun rose he had a veil of mist rapped round him, and looked, I thought, as if he were ready to break into tears like ourselves.

It was still quite early when we got into Belfast. The car drove into an innyard. Uncle was so busy flying around, unloading our trunks, and shouting rapid orders to Mr. Martin, that we stood unnoticed on the pavement. Presently a window opened near us, and a thin lady, with a good deal of

bright ribbon in her cap, looked out and called us.

"Are you going by the car, children?" said she.

"We are going by the coach, ma'am," I answered.

"By the coach, did you say?" asked the lady sharply.

"Yes, ma'am," said I.

"You are in the wrong place then," said the lady, tartly as possible.

"Are we, ma'am?" I asked, quite frightened.

"Of course you are," returned the lady.

We looked round at Uncle Tom, who was flying round, and had almost finished unloading the car. "Do you belong to him?" said she, following the direction of our eyes.

"Yes ma'am," I answered.

"She says we are in the wrong place," said Walter, running up to Uncle Tom.

"No, no," broke in Uncle Tom, "All right! Run in, children, out of the way. We go by the car, Miss Courtenay. Does it start soon?"

The lady looked mollified, and gave Uncle the desired information quite graciously. "The car," she said "will start almost immediately."

She came out and took us into a little waiting room. Mr. Martin, with whom she was acquainted, told her who we were, and she spoke very kindly to us, and brought us on a salver two glasses of raspberry wine and some seed cakes. We were glad to get this little treat, for, on account of being waked up so early, and the excitement of leaving home, we had scarcely tasted breakfast. Jane had, indeed, put up some cakes for us in a little basket, but Uncle had taken charge of it, and he was so busy we did not like to ask him about it.

By and by Uncle came in, and Walter asked him if this was the coach office.

"We are not going by the coach," he said, "but on Miss Courtenay's car. The coach is expensive, and might upset. The car is just the thing to see the country from—nice and low—no distance to fall. It is running opposition and is cheap; besides, we will be home earlier if we go by it."

After waiting what seemed to our impatience a weary time, Miss Courtenay's car was ready to start. It had its full complement of passengers without counting us. The lady with the bright ribbons said we could sit in the well of the car on the trunks. One of the passengers said he would make room for the little lady beside him, or keep her on his knee (alas, I stood on the foot-board most of the time). Uncle, who sat on the other side, took charge of Walter.

The car started with a flourish, and rattled and jingled through the streets out to the Antrim road. I remember passing many beautiful villas half hid in shrubbery. Uncle pointed out the Cave-Hill, which I could not see plainly through the mist, and was too much absorbed with fears of falling off to care about seeing. We were soon out in the open country. The car stopped frequently at wayside inns to water the horse. Sometimes he did not want to drink, and would not, but the driver and two of the passengers always did. The driver was a wiry, thin-faced man, with a long turned up chin and a short turned up nose. He had a hard, disreputable look, as if any amount of reckless mischief would be only fun to him. His recklessness seemed to increase so much after every call at the wayside inns that I was afraid of him. That was a dismal journey. The mist began to fall in fine rain, and we soon were uncomfortably damp.

The gentleman who took charge of me, meant, I am sure, to be kind, for he made room for me on the seat beside him, and put his umbrella over me; but when he and Uncle began to talk politics across the car he forgot me, I am afraid. I was so squeezed that I slipped down and stood on the foot board, holding by his coat. I was soon

tired standing. The gentleman's umbrella either dripped down my back or caught in my bonnet, while the political conversation went on for many a weary mile. It appeared that Sir Robert Peel had done something very wrong in Parliament, and had fallen in the gentleman's estimation very much on that account. I remember wondering if Sir Robert would be sorry. He talked about the rabble and the common people till I looked up at him to see if he was far above the common himself. I saw a man very straight and stiff, buttoned up to the chin, with a hard, red, clean-shaved face—indeed his face looked as raspy as if it had been scraped, and I concluded somehow that he had been in the army. I knew I was right when I heard him talk of the "Iron Duke" as one talks of a friend, referring often to the time "when we were on the Peninsula," or, when censuring Sir Robert Peel, "if the Duke had the management of affairs, sir, he would know how to keep the rabble down. A man like the Duke has resources within himself; he always rises equal to the occasion. Men like him, who know how to command, and, better still, how to compel obedience, should be at the head of affairs." Every little while he would shake his head over Sir Robert's political crimes and say, "Peel's a rat—Peel's a rat," and I longed to ask him how could that be and the gentleman a baronet and a member of Parliament. Wondering at this helped to divert my mind from my own weariness, till at last one of the passengers remained at an inn where we stopped, and I got his seat. We came to a place on our journey where the road ran through a peat moss. The peat had been cut away on each side till only the road remained, running like a broad wall through the moss.

"A dangerous piece of road this on a dark night," said Uncle Tom.

"The authorities should have a wall built on each side to prevent accident happening to His Majesty's subjects," said our military friend.

"We might as well be driving on the wall of Babylon," said Uncle Tom, laughing.

I looked down into the black depths, dotted with heaps of turf, piled up ready for drawing home, and thought, with terror, "What if the car should go too near the edge and fall over with us into the black depths below!"

"The mail coach is coming," said Uncle Tom.

Yes, there it was, sure enough, bowling along behind us at a great rate, drawn by four brown horses, that held up their heads and came spanking on as if drawing His Majesty's mail was fun and they liked it.

The coach was crowded with passengers, and looked top-heavy. The coachman, in his drab topcoat, with its large cape, flourished his whip; the guard blew loudly on his bugle a merry warning to clear the way. The road was wide enough to allow the coach to pass, but to my unaccustomed eyes it seemed too narrow, and there was no fence at either side.

Our driver had thrashed and shouted and sworn at his poor beast all morning, but he now stood up to put more vim into his performance, determined not to let the coach pass. It was right behind us now, the heads of the leaders—a terrible sight to me—almost touching us, champing their bits and sprinkling us with foam. On whichever side the coach tried to pass our driver kept before it, making his horse prance from side to side, leering round with his tongue out, enquiring of the coach driver if he wanted to pass, shouting back insult and defiance like one possessed. The two passengers who had been drinking with him cheered him on. The driver of the coach was pale with anger, but held in his temper as he did his horses, although I, in my terror, thought they would jump on us

every moment. The lady passengers screamed; the gentlemen—at least some of them—swore, I am afraid. The military gentleman, bidding me hold on for dear life, made a spring and caught the drunken driver, from behind, round the waist, pinning his arms to his side, and holding him with a grip worthy of his friend the Iron Duke, in spite of his oaths and struggles. At the same moment Uncle Tom sprang to the horse's head, turned him out of the way with a jerk, and held him till the coach tore past at full speed. It all happened in a few minutes, I daresay, but I will never forget the terror I endured.

The military gentleman told the driver, on releasing him, that if he gave any more trouble he would pitch him over into the bog. I daresay he thought he would be as good as his word, for he was quiet the rest of the way.

When we arrived at Antrim we had another instance of Uncle Tom's economy. He did not order dinner, but produced our lunch basket and called for three glasses of ginger tea. We did not like ginger tea, and we did want our dinner, but Uncle thought it was better than any dinner to take us out in the rain to show us Massareene Castle. As we only saw that part of it which towered above a high wall, we thought it small compensation for the loss of our dinner. He patiently showed us all the wonderful sights of Antrim, especially places made memorable during the rebellion of 1798. We were very inattentive listeners I am afraid, for Antrim remains to this day unknown ground to us. After we left Antrim it continued to rain steadily, and we were cold, miserable and silent till the car stopped at Miss Courtney's Inn in Ballymena. I hoped we would get supper here and get warmed, but again we were doomed to disappointment. Uncle took us away without allowing us to enter the inn at all. He gave orders that the trunks should be kept till called for, and then hurried us off, but not before the driver came and asked to be remembered. I do not think Uncle remembered him as he wished, by giving him money, for he said something sharp to him about Bridewell. We were then taken by Uncle through some streets and into a mean-looking house, in the kitchen of which was a long grate with a very little fire in it. A man who was sitting by the fire stirred it up into a blaze when he saw how I shivered.

"Is there anyone here yet?" asked Uncle Tom.

"Not yet," answered the man.

"If I were at home, I'd make it a warning to them," said Uncle.

"Oh, they'll be along soon," he answered. "And these are the children, eh?"

"Yes," said Uncle, "these are the children."

"And Walter Ray's gone, poor fellow. He was a good man, if ever there was one," said the man.

"No doubt about that," said Uncle, decidedly.

"Are you going to keep the youngsters?" asked he.

"It is likely," said Uncle Tom, "at least for a little while."

"Is your wife willing? She's a thrifty, managing woman, and that kind seldom like to be bothered," said the man.

"What is to be will be, whether we like it or not," said Uncle Tom.

"You're a great fellow for foreordination, Mr. Henderson. Now, I believe in the freedom of the will. You can keep these children or refuse to keep them, can't you now?"

"I believe you can believe according to your conscience, Mr. Hood. I never argue," said Uncle Tom.

We were just getting comfortably warm when a tall, awkward, broad-shouldered boy in fustian clothes came in quietly.

"Here is John Symmons at last," said the man of the house.

"Where's the car?" said Uncle, quickly.

"Something was wrong about getting the car," answered the boy, slowly, looking down and twitching at his red fingers nervously. "The mistress said I was to carry little master, and the little girl could walk."

Uncle flashed a quick glance at the boy, which was entirely lost on him, as he never looked up, but continued cracking the joints of his fingers one after another; then bidding a short good-bye to the man of the house, he took my hand and went out again into the wet night, followed by the boy with Walter hoisted on his back. We walked through the dismal streets for a little while, then, to my utter dismay, left them behind us and went out into the country. Uncle Tom was a very rapid walker, and I had almost to run to keep up with him. I felt envious of Walter, who was fast asleep with his head on John Symmons' fustian back. I was hungry; I was tired, but I struggled along bravely because I was ashamed to complain. At last I gave up entirely, feeling that I could not go another step. I think it was that night I first began to pity myself. I thought there was no one in the world to care how tired I was.

I said timidly to Uncle, that if he would let me sit down on the road-side to rest I would go on again after a little while. Uncle came to a dead stop immediately, gave an impatient snort, saying, "I thought you were a little woman instead of a baby," turned and pounced on me as if he were an eagle, clutched hold of me so tightly that he hurt me, and swung me up on his back without a word, only, "See that you hold on."

I was not big of my age; I was very tired; but I felt so insecure in my unaccustomed position, I held on so awkwardly—very inconveniently to Uncle, I think, for his breathing got apidly worse—that John Symmons, in his turn, came to a stop, and broke silence, saying:

"This will never do, master."

"I do not think it will, John," he replied.

"Suppose you stop to-night at Aunt Mattie's," said John.

"Aunt Mattie's! It is just the thing to do, John. It is not far now."

With these words he turned and shot up a lane at a fearful pace, John Symmons following with Walter. The lane seemed to be that long one that has no turning, and, I thought, no end. I would have fallen asleep with weariness, only I began to think that Uncle Tom was not able to carry me.

"Let me walk a little, Uncle," I said, feebly.

"Hoot! Be quiet! You'll soon be there," said Uncle, sharply.

"You'll better let the little girl walk a bit, master," said John Symmons.

"I suppose you're right, John," said Uncle, setting me down; "but we're almost there."

"Yes, master, there are the dogs," said John, "barking welcome."

CHAPTER IV.

There's nae place like my ain hame,
And I wish that I was there;
For there's nae hame like my ain hame
To be met with ony where.

GALT.

We found ourselves as John spoke skirting the edge of a small pond of nastiness called, as I afterwards learned, "The midden," on the far side of which was a long, low stone building. The door opening with a latch, admitted us into a large kitchen, where a bright peat fire, with a bit of bogwood blazing in it, seemed to give all the light necessary, for there was no other in the room. There was no ceiling overhead, nothing but bare rafters, black and polished with age and smoke. Flitches of bacon hung up near the fire-place, on the walls were many bunches of linen yarn,

nets filled with onions, dried herbs and other things. There was a large old-fashioned dresser, brown with age, at one end of the kitchen, its shelves filled with rows of pewter plates, wooden bowls and noggins, and some delf ware. At one side of the fire was a settle, on which sat a withered old man, blind of one eye, busily engaged making a basket, and a younger man, with only one arm, mending a flail very dexterously with the help of an iron hook which was fastened to the stump of the missing arm. At the other side of the fire an old woman and a young one were spinning flax. The young man stopped his whistling as we entered, and the old woman rose from her wheel and came forward saying!

"Hoo are ye, Tammas? Ye hae gotten back wi' the bairns.'

I noticed that she had a very sallow face and a long chin, that her eyes were pale blue, that she had a queer expression in one of them, as if she squinted, but she did not. She set two little stools for us near the fire, lifted Walter off John's back, and said, kindly:

"An' this is the wee bonnie laddie, Walter's boy?"

Walter, nearly wakened, began to cry, and she soothed and petted him, taking him up on her lap for the purpose.

"Warm yer hands, my bonnie lamb, ye're tired my sweet wee laddie. Set ye doon here, lassie," she said to me. The one-eyed old man laid down his basket and took my hands in his and chafed them, asking me if I was tired.

"Are ye no tired trit' trottin out here like a wee powney? Are ye no hungry like a corbie?" he said, blinking at me with his one bright eye. I did not answer him,—I was far too tired. When he came in first Uncle said something to John Symmons, who opened the door again and disappeared in the darkness.

"Auntie," said my Uncle Tom, "get us something to eat in a hurry, for we are all hungry."

"Hurry up, guid wife," said the old man. "Get something nice for the lammies noo. As for you, Tammas, onything's guid eneuch for you, I ken. Ye hae the stamach o' an ostrich, my man, and the old man laughed heartily at his own wit.

The old woman hung the kettle on the crook over the fire, and set out a little table, on which she spread a clean white cloth. She then brought some cups and saucers, some oat cake, and a very little pat of butter. Then, after some deliberation, she added a little new cheese and some potato cake. She then opened the lower part of the big dresser, showing an immense wooden bowl heaped with eggs. She stood looking at the eggs, evidently halting between two opinions, then slowly lifted two, which she boiled in a little saucepan, made tea in a little brown teapot and our supper was ready.

Uncle Tom, with a deep flush on his face that reddened his brow (how well in after years I learned to interpret that flush), set me up to the table. The old woman was devoting herself to supplying Walter's wants, and Uncle began to wait on me.

"The wee lass is no that young, Tammas, that you need be at the flash o' waitin on her," said the old woman. "Tak' yer ain supper, my man. This egg's is for you; ye'll need something to hearten you after the long journey."

"Here's an egg for you, my bonnie man," she said, preparing the other precious egg for Walter.

"Where's 'Lisbeth's egg?" asked Walter.

"Dinna ask questions, but eat your supper the noo, lammie."

"Where's 'Lisbeth's egg? insisted Walter.

"Hoot, toot! Eat your supper, my lamb. We gie' the lads a lump an' the lasses a thump here."

"If you thump 'Lisbeth I'll kill you," roared Walter.

"Weel done, laddie! Od, yer a spunkie!" laughed the little old man.

"Eat your supper instantly and hold your tongue," said Uncle Tom, sternly.

Walter, frightened, began to eat his supper, whimpering as he did so.

Uncle now gave me the other egg. I did not like to take it after what the old woman had said, and I was ashamed to refuse it, for fear of displeasing Uncle Tom. The old woman noticed what he had done, and said slowly, with an emphasis on every word: "I tellt ye Tammas, that I boilt that egg for you, tae hearten ye after yer warsle wi' thae bairns. Gie'n it tae her is doon-richt waistrie. Onything ava's guid eneuch for a lassie." After this bit of philosophy she went sulkily back to her spinning-wheel.

We had finished supper, and the old woman had put away every thing, when she noticed that Walter was asleep. She took him up kindly, undressed him, and carried him away into the next room, which she called "ben-the-hoose," and put him to bed.

As she came back the door opened softly, and a little wizened-up silly old man stepped in and stood near the door. He was dressed in the tatters of what had once been a uniform, was very old and wretched-looking, as he stood there asking in broken English for charity and shelter for the love of God.

"Come in, comein, Bonnyup," said Uncle Tom in his quick way. "Uncle Jack, Aunt Mattie, this is a great friend of mine. Bonnyup is a Dane, and has been a brave sailor in the service of his king—fought off Elsinore against Nelson, and would have beaten him only he didn't. Give him some supper, aunt Mattie. His ancestors once ruled Ireland, he says, and they may own it again, so let us be kind to him as a matter of prudence; besides he's my friend."

The poor old bundle of rags smiled at Uncle's praise. He was quite crazy, and, dear me, how unwelcome he was. Aunt Mattie got up grumbling. I do not think she was much given to hospitality, and going to the dresser took from a dish of cold potatoes a very few, which she brought on a wooden trencher, also a small wooden *caup* of buttermilk, and set them before the stranger.

He took off his fragment of a hat, folded his hands together, mumbled some words of prayer in his own language, and then commencing eating as if he were wolfishly hungry. Meantime Uncle Jack talked to Uncle Tom about his farm, and of his thrifty management. According to his account, no fields in the whole country side produced as his did, none were such good land, or had the same skill lavished on them. Aunt Mattie joined in to speak of her economy and her Cows. No cows yielded such milk, as to quantity or richness, as hers. "Oor Brindle now yields thirty quarts o' milk a day, an' ten pun o' butter a week the hale simmer raun," said she. "The auld man's gaun' to the market the mornin' wi' a firkin o' butter an' a wheen eggs. Ye may as weel bring it in, guid man, an' let Tammas see't, an' it'll be here handy to lift in the morn."

The old man brought it in, and set it up on a low bench, and took off the loose lid and the fair white cloth that covered it, while Aunt Mattie actually lighted a candle to throw its glimmer on the subject. Uncle Tom looked at the butter, and praised it highly, as he was expected to do.

"We aye get the best price gaun' on the market for oor butter. A' the best people in Bellamenach aye strive for't, an' we sell mair than ony ither folk in the hale toonland can dae off the same number o' kye—we dae that," said the old woman, self-complacently.

The butter being praised, she got a large, white willow basket, and, bringing out the same dish of eggs, from which

the two devoted to our supper had been taken, she transferred them to it. Eggs are eggs, and require careful handling, but Aunt Mattie lifted them as tenderly as if, in addition to their brittleness, they were as precious as pearls of the same size. She counted them carefully, and great was her distress to find that the last dozen lacked one. I am sure it added to the regret she felt already at the "waistry of gie'in an egg tae a lass bairn." When the eggs were all safely in the basket ready to go to market the guidman brought down the large Bible, and read a chapter in a droning voice, very unlike his brisk butter and farming talk; then we all knelt down, and he prayed. I remember hearing: "O Lord, we thank and praise Thy never-enough exalted name," and I fell off my knees into the land of dreams.

I was awakened by the girl-spinner, who was the servant lass. The settle on which Uncle Jack had sat making his basket was opened out into a bed, and she undressed me and laid me into it. I saw, sleepy as I was, that Aunt Mattie was carefully covering up the fire, and that the crazy old man was dozing and grumbling in a chair in the chimney corner. As Aunt Mattie disappeared with the only light, she warned the girl to be up betimes in the morning to have breakfast ready before the old man went to market. The girl, without a word, undressed in the dark, and crept into bed beside me.

I do not know how long I slept, but I suddenly knew that I was awake, and looking over the side of the settle bed I saw the old beggar man raking out the fire. He added some peat to it; he lit a piece of bog fir and stuck it in the crook to give him light. Then he went to the dresser and brought the dish of cold potatoes, from which Aunt Mattie had taken his frugal allowance of supper, and put them all to warm in the hot ashes. While he waited for them to warm, he spread his hands to the heat, and chuckled and mumbled to himself. When the potatoes were well toasted, he raked them out of the ashes with his fingers and lifted them into the dish, and, going over to where the firkin of butter stood, he removed the loose wooden cover and the white cloth, and emptied his hot potatoes on the top of the butter, and commenced to eat.

I watched him, uncertain whether I was dreaming or not, while he eat with ferocious haste, like a starved animal.

The potatoes were as hot as red hot ashes could make them: they sank into the butter, so that by and by he had to grope for them. He searched and ate with an appetite as good as new until he could find no more. He could not, even then, believe that he had eaten them all, so he clawed through the melted butter with his horrid fingers, stopping occasionally to consider where they had gone to, scratching his head in his perplexity, which got well oiled in the meantime.

He brought over from the fireplace the blazing splinter of fir to throw light on his search. Not succeeding in finding any more potatoes, he began to whine and lament over his supposed loss like a little child. Then a bright thought seemed to strike him and he went into the room, with the lighted splinter in his hand, and hunted round until he found the bed where the old people slept, and wakened them up in a hurry, crying:

"Get up, get up, good man of the house! I have lost my potatoes in the butter."

"Eh! What! What!" broke from both the old people with the force of an explosion.

In a moment every one in the house was awake, and there was a fearful uproar.

Aunt Mattie, with her nightcap, awry, and her grey hair on end with fright and vexation, wrung her hands and lamented over her loss.

The servant lass pretended to comfort her, and it was only pretence.

Uncle Jack had the gun, and was struggling violently with the one-armed man, who held him, and was threatening in language that sounded very like swearing to blow Bonnyup off the face of the earth.

"Run, you old rascal! Run for your life!" said the one-armed man, panting, for Uncle Jack was giving him enough to do to hold him.

Uncle Tom unlocked the door, and Bonnyup no sooner saw it open than he fled out into the darkness like a "whip of the whirlwind." It was a long time before the house was stilled into quietness again.

How the old people did lament over their loss, and the great waste of good, marketable butter! How they blamed Uncle Tom for his softness in asking shelter for a "daft gangrel bodie" that was sure to work harm to the house!

Uncle Tom offered to pay for the spoiled butter, which the old man feebly protested against, while the old woman clutched greedily at the offer.

Uncle's generosity astonished me, when I remembered his economy on the road.

The one-armed man and the servant lass, who were very loud in their expressions of sympathy, were secretly glad, as I saw by the glances which they telegraphed to one another when the old people were not looking.

All got quieted down at last, however, and I fell asleep again, and slept on until I was wakened by Aunt Mattie, who told me that, "wee lasses should na be lazy, but jump up in the mornin' early."

Breakfast was ready before I was ready for it. The old woman kept on wailing over her ruined butter, and the old man fiercely threatening vengeance on Bonnyup, if ever he put himself within reach.

Aunt Mattie noticed that I did not eat my porridge with relish, and she broke off the thread of her lamentations to ask me if I "didna think it was a sin for a wee lass to turn up her nose at guid halesome parritch an' sappy soor milk."

After breakfast Walter, who was of an exploring turn of mind, took me into the room called "ben-the-hoose." There were in it two queer bedsteads, boarded up like closets, with doors on the front. In one of these arks Walter had slept with Uncle; in the other the two old folks were sleeping when Bonnyup raised the midnight cry over his vanished potatoes. In this room, which, unlike the kitchen, was ceiled, Aunt Mattie kept her treasures: a clock in a tall mahogany case; a cupboard with a glass front, showing her cherished china, far too precious to be used; some heavy old-fashioned chairs, all of the same expensive wood. There was a little book case, with a few old books, seldom disturbed, to judge by the dust which had gathered on them. I was looking at one, which I thought was nice reading, when we were called by Uncle Tom and hurried into our pelisses to start for our new home. When we got outside I noticed that the house and the barn where they kept the grain, and the byre where the cows stayed, were all under one roof, which made the house so long. In the barn the one-armed man was threshing oats and whistling the "Protestant Boys." Uncle Tom had stopped a moment for some last words with Uncle Jack, and we waited for him opposite the open barn door, pleased to watch the man threshing.

"I say, little girl," he called to me, stopping his work to turn over the sheaves with his foot and the end of his flail, "I say, little girl, do you feel brisk this morning after your egg? A whole egg is too much at once for a frisky little girl like you."

"Come away, Walter," I whispered, "he is mocking us."

I heard his loud laugh as we turned

away. He called after us, "Stay two or three days and help us to eat the butter. We don't always get butter, you know." We did not look round, but we heard the stroke of the flail and the whistling of the "Protestant Boys" recommence.

Aunt Mattie and the servant lass were milking in the byre, and we stopped to look at her. I thought her very clever to direct the stream of milk into the can, when she kept so far from the cow. I was so much exercised on this subject that I could not help asking her how she managed to do it, for which I was sorry when she told me that "wee lasses should learn to be modest an' haud their tongues, an' no talk havers."

Uncle came up just then along with Uncle Jack. At parting he put some money into Uncle Jack's hand, who said: "Yer ower lavish wi' yer money, Tammas. Ye'll sen' the bairns ower to stap twa or three days whenever ye like. We'll aye mak them welcome, ye'll remember. Od, I like the lassie, she's no that ill faured ava."

We had to shake hands with the old people, and even to kiss them, then we bade a joyful adieu to Aunt Mattie's place, and started to finish our journey.

CHAPTER V.

I've none to smile when I am free,
Or when I sigh to sigh with me.
H. K. WHITE.

The day was beautiful after the rain, fresh and fair in the rosy light of morning as a lovely child just come out of its bath. We walked along silently, God's beauty and stillness all around us. The world seemed full of loving whispers; sweet thoughts clustered round my heart, and I felt "as one whom his mother comforteth," and lost the feeling of orphaned desolation that had set me apart and alone last night. After a walk of some miles we reached the village of Endbridge, where Uncle Tom lived.

The house was not quite in the village, but a little outside of it, being the first house we came to. It was a plain two-story stone house, rough-cast and whitewashed. On the gable end was a sign-board: "Thomas Henderson, Clothier." Uncle kept quite a number of tailors working for him, and the sign might have been tailor as well as clothier.

There was a garden at one end of the house, and another and larger one at the back. Three fields, which also belonged to Uncle, lay behind the garden. The hall door stood open, as also did the shop door, which opened out of the hall. The shop was large, and well filled with goods. There was a cutting table behind the counter, and an elderly grey haired-man was standing at it cutting out cloth. We went into the shop while Uncle talked a little while to the man about how the business had gone on during his absence. I noticed that the shop had been made out of what had once been a handsome parlor. There was a fire-place in it, with a beautiful carved mantelpiece representing autumn fruits and foliage. When we left the shop I noticed a closed door on the other side of the hall. Uncle took us along the hall to a small back room, where we found Aunt Henderson sitting in a low nursing chair, with a baby on her knee. Besides Aunt and the baby there was a younger woman, who was lean and ill-favored, like the kine in Pharaoh's dream.

"It is about time you would come back," was Aunt's greeting.

"Yes, it is; but I have come as soon as possible," he replied.

"How did you settle the affairs?" she enquired.

"The affairs are settled—the children are here. That is enough for you to know at present," said Uncle shortly, and turning on his heel he left the room.

"That is like him!" exclaimed Aunt.

"That is Tom Henderson all over! Of all the men that ever were born into the world he is the most unsatisfactory."

"I am sure you have my sympathy, though he is my own relation," said her companion, soothingly.

"Well, I am sure I need sympathy," said Aunt, sharply. "There is no need, however, to leave the children standing on the floor all day."

She then called Walter to her knee and kissed him, and smoothed his hair, saying to her companion that he was very like his mother. "Take off your bonnet and pelisse, Elizabeth," she said to me. "Will you, Jane, show her the brown chest in the kitchen. You will fold up your pelisse carefully, Elizabeth, and lay it, with your bonnet and gloves, carefully into that chest. Walter, come with me, and I will show you where to put your things."

Aunt took up baby in her arms and went upstairs with Walter, and showed him the little room which he was to share with Uncle's boys, and the special drawer in the bureau where he was to keep his things.

I followed the lean young woman into a very large kitchen, in an arched recess of which was an old tent bedstead, with check blue and white curtains. At the foot of the bedstead was a steep stair leading up to a room above the kitchen where the apprentices slept. Under this stair was the brown chest, into which I laid my bonnet and pelisse.

A young girl, with a good-natured face and a very frowsy head, was busy peeling potatoes for dinner. My guide spoke sharply to her, as if to show her authority. She never answered, but when we turned to leave the kitchen, happening to look round, I caught her making a face and shaking a not very clean fist at the thin young lady's back. We returned to the little room, and found Aunt and Walter there. Aunt's baby was a little puny, sharp-eyed creature, and seemed to be very cross and peevish. I asked her to let me nurse him, because she looked tired and fretted.

"There's too much of the serpent in him to go to any one," said Aunt, for she was a little cross just then. I went over and held out my arms to him. He looked at me with his sharp eyes, and then stretched out his arms to me at once.

"Did I ever see the beat of that!" exclaimed Aunt. "I never saw him go to a stranger before."

I may as well mention that from that day forward he clung to me as the old man of the sea did to Sinbad.

By-and-by the girl I had seen in the kitchen came to ask Aunt about the dinner, and she went to the kitchen with her. The thin young woman, whose name was Jane Drennan, set a table for four in the little sitting-room. The clock had struck twelve, and I, for one, was very hungry, seeing I had eaten but sparingly of Aunt Mattie's "halesome parritch an' sappy soor milk," when we heard the hall door slam violently open, and two boys came in with a rush, calling if dinner was ready. They were followed more quietly by a little girl. Their bags of books showed that they had come from school. They were all pretty children, though the boys were not so pretty as Walter. The little girl was very pretty; she had lovely brown eyes—eyes with a pleading, beseeching look in them—a pale, clear complexion, and abundance of dark-brown hair.

"Here are your cousins," said Aunt to them. "This is Walter, and this is Elizabeth."

The children looked at us, but made no move to speak to us. I rose from my seat with the baby in my arms, and stretched out my hand to the little girl, but she held back. At this moment Uncle came into the room. He took his little daughter's hand with the sudden jerk that I knew so well by this time, and said, "Anna, this is your cousin Elizabeth. I hope you girls

will love one another. Walter, these are my two boys, Nat and Tom. I hope you will quarrel as little as possible. Now, Elizabeth, you will be a good, patient li le girl, such as your father would like you to be. Remember that. Now, children, go to the kitchen."

And Uncle seated himself with the air of one who had done his duty, and, figuratively speaking, washed his hands of all responsibility concerning us.

Uncle's children and Walter obeyed at once, but I waited until some one would take the baby.

The elderly, grey-haired man whom we saw in the shop was passing the door of the room, when Aunt called to him: "Mr. Logue dinner's ready; would you be kind enough to call the men?"

In a moment I heard a soft, sweet voice say, at the foot of the stairs, "Gentlemen, come to dinner, if you please," and also immediately the sound of many feet hurrying down stairs.

Uncle and Aunt, Jane Drennan and the grey-haired, soft-voiced man sat down to dinner in the little sitting room. Aunt put a bowl of panada into my hand before sitting down to dinner, and told me to feed baby. It was a hungry baby, and watched every movement of the spoon with its keen eyes as if it was afraid of being defrauded of its rights. Whenever the panada was done it began to cry. Uncle turned round with a jerk, and demanded in an angry voice why I was not at dinner. I left Aunt to answer why. "I suppose," she said, "you grudge that I should have one meal without him on my lap. Come, Jamie," she said to the child, but he tightened his arms around my neck and turned away his head.

"What do you mean, sir?" said Uncle, sharply. At the sound of his voice baby Jamie let go his hold and went quickly to his mother.

"Go to the kitchen to your dinner Elizabeth," said Aunt.

In the kitchen was a long table across the room, surrounded with men in their shirt sleeves, who all stopped eating to look at me as I came in. There was another table lengthways of the kitchen, at which the children, apprentices, and the servant sat. An elderly man, with his coat on, sat at the head of this table. This was John Ferris, who managed the fields. I recognized John Symmons, the boy who carried Walter from Ballymena to Aunt Mattie's on his back, as I went round to the place reserved for me. There was a younger boy opposite to me at the table, who stared at me all the time of dinner, to my great annoyance. He was a boy about fifteen years of age, tall and slim, and had a bold, proud look. He had dark bright eyes—eyes that you would not forget in a hurry—and close-curled black hair.

I got better acquainted with this boy than I had any desire to be before many days.

Uncle's household was very large. There were Uncle and Aunt and four children, six workmen, besides Mr. Logue, who was foreman, two apprentices, the man John Ferris, who took care of the fields, Jane Drennan, who was Uncle's cousin, and had no place else to stay, the girl, Bella Wiley, and we two little Rays. The men all boarded in the house, but did not all sleep in it.

The village, at the entrance of which Uncle lived, was not very large, but a busy, thriving place, all alive with the linen trade. There were two bleaching establishments near, which employed many men. Uncle did a large business as tailor and clothier, but Aunt, as I afterwards learned, had used all her influence to prevent the word "tailor" from appearing on the sign-board. She had such an utter dislike to the name, because it was so often used as a term of reproach, that I often wondered how she brought herself to marry one to whom it could by any stretch of language be applied.

Uncle was making money fast, and

Aunt looked forward to the time as not far distant when every vestige of the hateful trade would be swept away, the house purified of shop and workshop, and restored to its original state as a private dwelling. I must say that when I became an inmate of Uncle's house the trade monopolized the best part of it. What had been the best parlor was taken for the shop; on the opposite side of the hall, what had been the sitting-room was given up to aunt for a parlor. It was handsomely furnished, but seldom used or entered. The little sitting-room, mentioned already, had been the kitchen once, but Uncle, after his marriage, had built the large kitchen, out of which opened the buttery. Up-stairs what had once been a handsome drawing-room was used for a workshop; the rest of the floor was taken up in bedrooms. Over the hall was a small room which the children had for a playroom, and where they went to learn their lessons. The girl, Bella Wiley, slept in the kitchen in the bed with check curtains, and with her I slept. I used to have a room of my own in the dear old manse days, that were beginning to look far away already, and this arrangement of Aunt's did not please me, though I made no audible objection; and, indeed, it would have been of no use, for Aunt had no room to spare.

Aunt's household was a very busy one, as well it might be, with such a large family. I was not long in the house before I discovered that Uncle and Aunt loved one another much, and esteemed one another highly; but they never were heard to speak a tender word to one another. Sometimes they spoke quite unkindly to each other. They seemed in public more like the managers of rival business concerns than people who had one interest and one aim.

Uncle Tom attended strictly to his own business, and never interfered with anything outside of it. If Aunt asked his advice about anything, which was seldom enough, his answer invariably was, "Do as you please," which Aunt thought very provoking. Aunt was a great manager; she managed the hired man, the fields, the cows, the crops, the children, the servant girl. She was just like Joseph in Egypt, whatever was done there she was the doer of it. As for the workmen, Uncle Tom would brook no interference on his own domain, but the men knew that in the victualling department she was absolute, and it was their wisdom to keep on "misses's side of the fence."

There was a standing matter of dispute between Uncle and Aunt, whether his trade, or the fields under her management, combined with her economy in household matters, were the more profitable. This question was never settled in my time.

In her own home Aunt seemed a very different person from what I thought her when she visited us in Grey Abbey. I thought of her then as not so much a woman or a relation as a Presbyterian, armed at all points to do battle for her Church, and to defend every jot and tittle of that Church's belief or practice; proud of her Scottish ancestry, and despising all others who were less privileged. Even yet I think this was true of Aunt when she was most herself, on the rare occasions when she had left family care behind her—when her mind was out for a holiday.

Aunt was not, I think, wilfully unkind, but she undertook too much to leave herself any time for tenderness or any nonsense of that kind. There was one exception to her managing: she did not manage Jane Drennan. Jane managed her, partly through flattery, partly through being the spy of the household and bringing to Aunt "their evil report."

I fell into my place in the household as universal messenger ("Run, Elizabeth," seeming to come easily to many lips), and nurse to baby Jamie, by his choice as much as my own.

Baby Jamie was a queer child. He was old enough to walk, but had never attempted to put his feet under him. He had never tried to speak, but when older people were talking he watched their faces with his shrewd grey eyes as if he were weighing every word they said. At times he would break into a loud short laugh that was perfectly eldrich. He had a dreadful temper if crossed, and a reserve power of kicking and screaming that every one feared to provoke. He ruled me without mercy, but he was fond of me, and I felt so bereaved and desolate that that itself was a comfort. Dear little Jamie! he was amusing, too; I was always wondering what he would do next.

Except Jamie's exacting love there seemed no love for me in Uncle's household. I was apart from all the rest, a speckled bird among the birds of the forest. It was different with Walter. Aunt, to all appearance, was fond of him, and proud to reckon him with her own. He never was in Uncle's way; he never quarrelled, but was good-natured and pleasant, so that he was a universal favorite.

He was a very pretty boy, very like our dear lost mamma. He had her curling light brown hair, and kind blue eyes and regular features. His complexion was beautifully fair, with a delicate bloom on his cheeks; so that the people among whom our lot was cast, who had the merit of speaking their mind freely, often said to Aunt: "What a pity he is not the girl."

It was very different with me—partly, I suppose, because I was so much with Aunt, and, as it were, in the way. I never succeeded in pleasing her, though I tried hard to do so. She said I was too awkward to live. Such remarks hurt me—made me feel a new sort of pain—as if I had no right to be at all. Some way, people did not take to me very much; I was not at all pretty, and I heard that fact remarked upon so often that I supposed it was a great misfortune. Neither had I Walter's winning way. Walter was not only beautiful, but he had the natural gift of pleasing others, of winning for himself loving care. He was bright in his little speeches, also, and raised expectations of one day becoming a great man.

My mind only cared if what I said was true, if what I did was right from my own standpoint, and I was always surprised when my words displeased, or my actions brought me blame, which was rather often the case.

How my heart mourned after the pleasant Manse home, and grave, kindly father; my sweet, fair-faced mother, the dearer because so kind and not my very own; my little room in the ivied gable end, where the twitter of birds woke me in the early summer mornings; the sunny Manse garden; Granny McLean, with her richly laden ship in the offing just ready to come in, and red-checked Jane Geddes, always taking care of us, telling us what to do, warning us off forbidden ground, but loving us all the time! If Jane would only come I thought the utter loneliness would be more bearable, but day after day passed and still she did not come.

I was only a few days at Uncle Tom's when one evening baby Jamie took it into his little head that he would not go to sleep, and I was walking up and down the long hall singing to him.

He was very willing for me to walk up and down singing, with his little face nestled up against my neck. While I sang he crowed an accompaniment, but if I stopped walk or song, he began to yell immediately. I say yell, for it was too short and sharp to be described by any other word. As long, however, as I walked and sang there was peace between us.

Uncle and Aunt were alone in the sitting-room. Aunt was preparing mulled ale and toasting bread. She always made some little treat for Uncle's supper when he came in from the shop.

Every day I was more confirmed in my opinion that Aunt and Uncle were very fond of one another. I do not know how or why I was so sure of this, for Aunt never spoke kindly to Uncle, or he to her, nor did she speak kindly about him, while he never mentioned her at all if he could possibly help it. Yet it was only in business they were opposed. She liked the man and the money which he made, but hated the business by which he made it. He liked Aunt so well that he was impatient with the good management that left so little time for companionship after his day's care was over. This, at all events, was the conclusion my childish observation led me to arrive at.

While Aunt was busy with her preparations she tried to ascertain from Uncle what provision there was for our maintenance and education. He parried her enquires with texts from Scripture about fatherless children, and words of belief in the willingness of Aunt's better self to take up the duty which God, by calling away her only brother, had laid at her door. I thought Uncle was partly right, but I knew that Aunt considered him very provoking, because he told her nothing of what she desired so much to know.

When Aunt had given up asking questions as hopeless, Uncle said carelessly: "I did not mention to you that Jane Geddes is coming here to stay with us. She will be along some of these days."

"Why in the world did you consent to have her come, and such a houseful as we have already?" said Aunt, sharply.

"I wanted her to come, and proposed to her to come. I want some one in the house that will be a help to you instead of a hindrance. You're working entirely too hard."

"Much you care about how I work!" snapped Aunt. "I declare, I often think you feel like collecting burdens from the ends of the earth to lay on my shoulders."

"I have been collecting help this time," replied Uncle, drily.

"What will I do with your cousin Jane?" said Aunt. "I thought it was a settled thing that she should make her home with us."

"I thought so too, until, I became convinced that she does nothing but make mischief, and that continually. Her work, if you separate it from the dissension she sows in the house, would not pay for her salt."

"You are always so unjust to Jane, making mountains out of molehills, and she is very desolate. If she is a little particular she is the more to be pitied. Besides, she likes me, and that is something to me," said Aunt, in the tone of one who needed some one to like her very much.

"Jane never liked any one but herself," said Uncle, decidedly. "She ought to be independent, earning for herself, instead of fastening on you like a limpet to a rock."

"But she is a help to me," said Aunt. "What do you know about the housekeeping—you that never notices how things are going on out of your own business from one year's end to another?"

"Come now, Mary Ann, come down to particulars, What does she do?" said Uncle, with a laugh in his voice.

"It is not so easy to tell, all in a minute, when there is so much to do," said Aunt, smiling in spite of herself.

"I have got a good situation for Jane as nursery governess at the Grange. She will have fair wages and an easy enough time. When she is gone, and Jane Geddes here for a few weeks, you will find out whether your cares are lightened or not."

Aunt considered a little, and then said: "Did you consider how Jane's coming will affect the children? Will it not make them harder to manage? I am sure Elizabeth needs to be kept down instead of being encouraged."

"Jane Geddes will take all the trou-

ble of the children off your hands, and if their presence annoys you send them to school out of your way."

"Walter went to school with the boys to-day. He is not so much trouble."

"Well, send Elizabeth to-morrow."

"I do not think Elizabeth needs much more schooling than she has already. She'll never be a scholar; it is not in her. She is not at all bright like Walter. It would be a waste of time and means. She is a very stupid child, just fit to tend baby, and Jamie is quieter with her than with any one else."

"Send her to school to-morrow," said Uncle sternly. "Jamie has been nursed too much since she came."

Aunt knew that I was walking up and down the hall, that I could not help hearing every word she said, but she talked of me as if I had neither ears nor feelings. I was tired; though Jamie was light of his age, he was heavy for me. I was lonesome and homesick. I always thought Aunt hated me, and since the conversation between her and dear good mamma at our own home I knew it was for my dead mother's sake.

Now she pronounced me stupid and unmanageable, though papa or mamma never thought so. I could not help tears dropping down my cheeks, or the sob in my throat choking my song.

Baby Jamie felt the tears, and patted my cheek with his thin hand as if he was comforting me.

Aunt never disobeyed Uncle when he spoke decidedly, so I went to school on the morrow as he had said.

Mr. Caldwell, the teacher, was very severe, and whipped on the slightest provocation. He was quite impartial, and rained blows on all alike. For all that, I liked going to school. It was a rest to me between the morning and evening spells of nursing baby Jamie. Besides, I had the comfort of going and returning hand in hand with Walter, for Aunt had kept us apart as much as she could ever since our arrival. It was, therefore, delightful to feel his warm little hand in mine and to hear him tell me over and over again how he loved me, and what he would buy for me when he was a man. How my heart did cling to my beautiful, bright-faced little brother, all I had left to me of our dear home!

I began to build castles in the air of a happy future, when something would turn up that he and I would be always together, away from Aunt and all the rest, who did not like me and thought me a burden. I longed to grow up, to know some one thing thoroughly, that I might be able to support myself and my darling brother independently. I knew of no one to whom I could confide my purpose, no one who would care enough to advise me how to set about learning to support myself, except Jane Geddes, and day after day was slipping drearily past and still she did not come. I believe she had written to Uncle Tom telling him she must go to see her mother in Glasgow before coming down to Endbridge, but I knew nothing of this until afterwards. While Jane waited on her sick mother in Glasgow, I watched for her with a longing that might have drawn her to me from the ends of the earth.

CHAPTER VI.

I am with life at feud.
Jean Ingelow.

Jane Drennan left for her new place. Aunt, who was loth to part with her, hired a carriage and went with her to the Grange, to see her placed. Jane Geddes had not yet come, although I looked for her anxiously.

I had only been a few days at school when Mr. Caldwell, the teacher, took ill, and consequently there was no school. Aunt declared she was driven distracted with the noise and confusion. To get rid of the boys, she allowed them, with Walter and Anna, to go

over to Aunt Mattie's to spend the day. I was kept at home to nurse baby Jamie.

After dinner, Jamie was asleep for a wonder, and I had found a book, and crept into the recess at the foot of the bed in the kitchen to rest and read a little while out of Aunt's sight. Uncle came into the kitchen, an unusual thing at that hour, and said to Aunt that he must buy potatoes, if there were none on the place better than those we had for dinner, for the men were complaining of them.

"They are wet in the garden this year," said Aunt, "whatever is the reason. If you could spare Arthur to go to the far field for some Cork-reds, they are always dry; we will try if they are any better."

"I will send him," said Uncle; "but do not keep him long."

"Bless the man, how he does talk!" said Aunt impatiently. "We are not so fond of that distinguished young gentleman of yours; we prefer his absence to his company any day."

In a few minutes the dark-eyed boy whom I have mentioned before came into the kitchen.

"Who is to pick up those potatoes, Mrs. Henderson?" he asked.

"Can you not pick them up yourself?" said Aunt impatiently.

"I can do so, of course," said Arthur, calmly. "I can dig the potatoes first, and pick them up afterwards, but you are aware it will take double the time. It is all one to me, but I'm wanted back again almost immediately to go to the Castle, and I cannot possibly be in two places at once."

"Well," said Aunt, "I suppose Elizabeth can go. See that you don't fool away your time, sir."

"Where are you, Elizabeth?" she said, looking round for me.

"Here, Aunt," I answered, coming out from my hiding-place.

"You will go with Arthur and pick up the potatoes for him. See that neither of you waste any time."

Arthur went to the barn and got a basket and spade, which he put into the wheelbarrow, and we set off up the lane towards the far field, Arthur wheeling the barrow.

"What is your name, your whole name?" he asked, as soon as we were clear of the gate.

"Elizabeth Loftus Ray," I answered.

"That's not much of a name. The Rays are nobodies and the Loftuses are not much," he said, contemptuously. "My name is Arthur Augustus Egerton De Vere," and he threw up his head with pride after making this lofty announcement, at the same time watching how I felt about it; but I said nothing. It was not pleasant to me to hear the Rays rated so low. About the Loftuses I knew nothing, and therefore did not care so much.

"Do you feel the honor done to you when you are allowed to pick up potatoes to save me from dirtying my fingers?" He spoke quite gravely as if he meant every word he said.

"No, I do not," I said indignantly.

"Do you know who I am?" he asked.

"Yes, I do," I answered promptly. "You are Uncle's boy."

"That is my vile fate at present, but I will have you understand that I am the son of an officer and a gentleman, that in all the British empire there is no name more noble than mine. Do you now feel the honor of walking beside me and picking up potatoes for me?" He stopped the wheel-barrow and stood looking at me.

"No, I do not."

"Why, pray?"

"A name is not much. You cannot help your name. It is noble to *do* nobly."

"You need not lean so heavy on that *do*. *You* will never do much or be much."

I was getting angry, and I said hastily, "I am as good as you are."

"No, you are not, I tell you. You

need not put yourself in a passion. Keep cool as I do. Nothing will alter the fact that you are only a tailor's clipping."

"A what?"

"Did you not hear? What an ignoramus you are! I mean that you are the insignificant daughter of a tailor, who is the ninth part of a man, and of no account in the universe."

"I am not the daughter of a tailor," I said, almost crying. "My father was a minister, and he was good; but he is dead now." I forced back the tears; I could not bear to cry before this cruel boy.

"It is no matter what you were once; it's what you are now is the question," he said, watching my face keenly as he spoke. "You are a daughter of this house now, and therefore a tailor's daughter."

"Uncle is not a tailor," I objected; "he is a clothier."

"Uncle is so a tailor," he answered. "All the water in the sea would not wash the name off him.

"Well, it's no harm."

"It is harm to be anything so odious."

"You will be one yourself."

"No, I will not, so there now. The shears are not made that will cut me out for a tailor, nor the goose hatched that will press me into one."

I thought I would talk to him no more, and I walked along silently.

"Why don't you speak?" he demanded at length.

"I have nothing to say," I answered.

"Find something to say then, when I bid you," he said, as if he were getting angry very fast.

"Is it far to the field?" I asked. I was getting afraid of this boy, and he knew it.

"Whose field?" he enquired

"Uncle's field," I said.

"Oh, you simpleton! It is your Aunt's field. All the fields are hers and every thing else."

"Everything Aunt's?"

"Of course. Don't you know this is the old Ray homestead? There were only two children of the Rays, your father and your precious aunt. He went off to be a preacher, and she kept by the property. She was an heiress on a small scale, and your uncle married her for her inheritance. I wonder how many times a day he repents!"

I did not think it right to listen to this dreadful boy, but how could I help it? "You should not speak that way of Aunt," I said, in feeble remonstrance. "She is your mistress."

"She is not my mistress; there now do you hear that? There is not a woman born, or ever will be born, to be my mistress, much less your aunt, who is a cross old she-cat. Do you know what is your uncle's nickname?"

I was so cowardly I never thought of refusing to answer what he asked when he turned his bright, black eyes on me, so I told him that Jane said his men called him the Steam Packet.

"Is it Jane Drennan who said that?" he asked.

"No, Jane Geddes."

"Who is she?"

"Our girl. She is nice. She is coming here soon."

"Is she? Well, your Uncle has a better name than that."

"What is it?"

"Danger! When we're larking, whoever sees him first cries, Danger.'"

"It is not right to call names."

"Don't you begin to preach, mind, like that poor-spirited muff, John Symmons. He loves old Danger, and feels it his duty to be faithful to him, the owl that he is!"

"Do you not like Uncle?"

"Like him? Well, that is a joke! No, I don't; I hate him. He is the keeper of the Bastile, and I am a State prisoner; but he'll soon die, however, and I'll make my escape."

"You are not telling the truth now,"

I said. "You cannot tell when any one will die."

"I know when he'll die, for all that. It will be soon, too. He has a beast or a worm or something growing inside of his head. John Symmons says so, and he always tells the truth. That's what makes old Danger snort and puff the way he does. The beast is always trying to choke him, or pull out his eyes. And John Symmons is pitiful of heart, and this alarming fact makes him mosey after him like a tame jackdaw to show how sorry he is."

Arthur spoke gravely, as if what he said admitted of no doubt in the world. I felt the tears come into my eyes with pity, though I was inclined to think that this terrible boy told these stories to frighten me.

"Did you notice old Barney?" said he, getting away from the pitiful subject of Uncle's probable death.

"Who is he?" I asked.

"That old duffer with the grey head," he answered.

"Oh, the old gentleman who speaks so softly?"

"Yes, that's old Barney. He once had a big trade of his own—was rich—kept a shop full of men working for him. He was good to his men, too, so Scrieven Doyle says. When Scrieven came here to work first (he was taken on in a throng time) and saw old Barney here, he was a little sprung—drunk, you know—and he began to cry this way." Arthur dropped the wheelbarrow that he had only just taken up, and began to mimic this Doyle, in his drunken grief and astonishment, staggering, propping himself against an imaginary wall, with his cap over one eye, in the most approved drunken fashion. "'Gentlemen, journeymen tailors, here is a come down. Boo-hoo! Oh, what a fall is here, my countrymen! Boo-hoo! Him that lived in style! Him that had three steps up to his hall door—a green door with a brass knocker! Boo-hoo-oo! This was the man that fed his men with the beef with a white selvage! Boo-hoo-oo-oo!'"

Arthur suddenly stopped his howl, and took hold of the wheelbarrow, saying to me, "Come on—don't keep me here all day."

"How did Mr. Logue get poor?" I asked, as we went along.

"He drank like a fish; so did his wife. They had two daughters—pretty girls, they say. One died, the other did worse—ran away and married a Protestant," said Arthur, with a grin. "They had to drink to comfort themselves, and they drank till they were as poor as a pair of Job's turkeys. At last they had but one sixpence in the world, which Barney had fished out of his old vest pocket, and they held a council whether to buy drink or get some breakfast with it. Mrs. Logue was pious, and she said, 'Barney, dear, get half a pint, and the Lord will send us our breakfast.'"

"And did He? Did they get any breakfast?"

"What do I know? Do you think the Lord has nothing to do but send breakfasts to the like of them? As if they deserved any breakfast!"

"Oh, but they were hungry, if they were wrong, and He makes His sun to shine on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust."

"Oh, you needn't pelt me with Scripture texts that you don't understand a bit, though you are a Manse chicken. He has plenty of sunshine and rain to spare, if He does sow them broadcast. It would be different to go and work a miracle specially to give a breakfast to Barney and his wife because they were hungry. Serve them right to be hungry—drunken beasts."

"Where is Mrs. Logue now?" I asked.

"Dead, and in her grave, and all her bones are rotten."

"Please, don't talk that way," I said.

"Please, I will, for it is true. After she died your uncle got him to be fore-

man. He keeps pretty straight, but breaks out now and then and is lost. Danger hunts him up and brings him back; and, my eye, doesn't he catch it from his sweet-tempered Missus every time he goes off on his labor of love! And old Barney is so penitent, so humble, so useful and polite,—it is quite refreshing till he tumbles into temptation again, and has to be fished out and brought back."

"Poor man! And does Aunt not like him?"

"'She feels for him,' to use Miss Jane Drennan's elegant and forcible language, 'only intense and unmitigated disgust.' As I would say, 'She hates him as Beelzebub hates holy water.' She likes old Riley Carrol, though, and he's the greatest rascal unhung, but, like the elegant and much-regretted Miss Drennan, he has the measure of her right foot."

"Which is Riley Carrol?"

"That fat old fellow in fustian who sings."

"Yes, I know. I hear him singing psalms. I like to hear him."

"Oh, yes, you like the psalms; you can join him in singing, 'I die with hunger here, he cries, I starve in a foreign land,' because you are a black-mouthed Presbyterian yourself, as well as he is."

"Is he a Presbyterian?" said I, feeling a sudden interest in him.

"He is, the old sinner, in spite of his Papist name a Carrickfergus Presbyterian. I am English Church, the only church fit for an officer and a gentleman," said Arthur, drawing himself up proudly.

"No one will think you a Presbyterian," I said, "when you don't know the difference between a psalm and a paraphrase."

"I don't want to know either. But about old Riley—he was a gentleman once—not a tradesman like Barney, but a real gentleman. He had, and has still, property about Carrickfergus, but it does him no good—fellows he owes manage to get his rents, and here he is stitching to keep body and soul together."

"How could he become a tailor when he did not learn when he was young?"

"He had a talent that way. My, that's nothing! There was a king once that stitched for fun—embroidered petticoats for the Virgin. Why shouldn't he stitch? It is all he can do, and he must do something. He is not much good at it either."

"How did he lose his property?"

"Drink, of course, and gambling, and horse-racing and such like innocent amusements. But here's the potato field, and there's John Ferris, who was not made of the dust of the earth but cut out of a dry stick, stooking up the oats over there."

He began to dig the potatoes in a leisurely way, giving orders in plenty to me about picking them up, continuing his wonderful revelations all the time.

"Pick fast now. These are earth apples—*pommes de terre*. Pick them up quickly.

'The beautiful fruit that grows at the root
Is the real gold of Ireland.'

"Would you like me to tell you of the solitary comfort that gilds the existence of old Riley?"

"What is it?"

"Dancing with the Marchioness."

"What Marchioness?"

"The Marchioness of Donegal."

"He never does! You should not tell me stories—it is not right."

"Do you think I would tell stories? I never do anything unbecoming to an officer and a gentleman, so I never tell stories. The dancing is a solemn fact. Old Riley is a Roman citizen—that is, he is a freeholder. His property is entailed, that is, he has only a life interest in it, therefore he has a vote that he cannot trade off for grog. Whenever election time comes round, if it is to be sharply contested, Lord Riley notifies the Marchioness of his whereabouts.

She sends a decent shop suit of black, and a covered car to bring him along. Old Riley sheds the fustian, gets into the black clothes, and is a gentleman again. He votes for member, sits at the head of one of the tables at the election dinner, and does the honors. He opens the election ball, with the Marchioness as his partner. Next day he goes on the spree, pawns his clothes, and comes back to his stitching in rags.

The last time he came home from high life he wasn't quite sobered off, and he mistook your aunt for his old housekeeper, and ordered her to bring his boat cloak, and wanted to put Nat at the back of the fire for laughing at him. It was a lark !—and to see your aunt's indignation was jolly. When he came to himself he was as penitent as Barney himself, the old prodigal ! "

" It is a great pity of him."

" It is no pity at all of him, you goose. Why does he do such things, and what is it to you ?"

I was silent, and picked up the potatoes as fast as I could—as fast as Arthur shoveled them out.

After a little while he said, " If you pity old Barney and Riley so much, how much do you pity Doyle ? "

" Which is Doyle ? "

" The big black man that looks like Cain after he got the mark,—that is Scrieven Doyle."

" Scrieven is an odd name."

" It isn't a name, its a nickname."

" What does it mean ? "

" It means that he's the wickedest man in the world,"

" Why, what has he done ? "

" What has he not done ? "

" Has he killed anybody ? "

" He may have and eaten them too, for aught I know or care. It is not unlikely he would do anything. I'll tell you one little performance of his. When he was paid off once he had a new suit of clothes and some money. He went on the spree. When he had drank all his money, he went on the market house steps in Ballymena and auctioned off all his clothes to get the money to drink."

" All his clothes ? "

" Yes, all his clothes, and then walked home naked to his lodging-house. The police would have taken him up, only they thought he was the ourang-outang escaped from the menagerie, or the king of the Cannibal Islands."

"I do not believe you are telling the truth. Uncle Tom would not keep such a bad man in the house."

" As if your Uncle knew !" said he, scornfully. " What a softy you are ! They are sober when they're here. It is when they are paid, and go off to Ballymena, that they cut up shines."

I was silent again, and picked up the potatoes, hoping we would soon be done and go home again.

" How do you like to carry Jamie, and sing the hundredth psalm ?" he said, after a little while.

" I don't sing the hundredth psalm," I replied.

" Yes you do—the tune, I mean. You sing it to all sorts of words as you go trotting up and down that dark hall with the ' wee corbie,' as old Jack calls him, in your arms. Do you like to nurse ?"

" I like Jamie," I said, evading the question.

" I don't. He's too like old Mattie ; he's no cannie. I know what I would do with him if I had my will."

" What would you do with him ?"

" I would rake out the fire, and take him on a shovel and put him behind it. If he is a fairy changeling—and I'm sure he is—he would fly up the chimney,—of course he would, for he's no earthly child."

" But if he's not a fairy changeling what would happen ?"

" Oh, then he would get singed, I suppose."

" I don't think you mean all you say. I hope you do not."

" You need not hope any such thing.

My difficulty is to be able to say all I do mean. I generally mean more than I say."

We had now all the potatoes we wanted. Arthur put the basket into the wheel-barrow, turned down on the top of the potatoes, and the spade beside it, and we started for home. When we got into the lane Arthur stopped to rest, and sat down on one of the handles of the wheel-barrow, and looked at me steadfastly.

"I am sorry you are not handsome," he said, at length.

"Am I not handsome?" I asked.

"Oh, dear, no. You are ugly."

"Why do you wish me to be handsome? Maybe I will grow handsome yet," I said, hopefully.

"No, no, you never will in the world," said Arthur decidedly. "If you had been handsome you would have been my sweetheart. And when I get away from here, and am a soldier and an officer, as my father was, and go to the wars, you could stay at home and pray for me."

"I might surely pray for you, although you do not think me handsome. If you went to the wars I would pray for you if you wished. I would like to—it would not be much trouble."

In imagination I saw him starting away for the wars, and I did think he needed to be prayed for.

"Yes, you might,—that's true. I never thought of that. You might love me in vain, think of me and pray for me, and die of a broken heart; that would be nice."

"I don't think that would be nice at all," I said, not relishing this melancholy prospect, not having as high an opinion of Arthur as he had of himself either. "I think," I went on, "it would be very foolish to die that way. I don't think I would love you—not much anyway—because you frighten me."

"Oh, that's nothing—you would get over that; but you cannot get over being ugly."

"Papa did not think me ugly," I said, "and papa knew."

"Pooh! What of that? That's a way fathers have. They always think their children ever so nice. My father thought me nice; nobody else does."

"Is your father dead?"

"Yes, and everybody that cared for me is dead,—every one that should have stayed alive to take care of me, or I wouldn't be here. I don't care, I'll take care of myself."

"Have you nobody—no friend, I mean?"

"Oh, yes, I'm the son of my aunt—my precious, dearly beloved and longed-for aunt."

"Do you like her?"

"Do you like your aunt? Don't trouble yourself to answer. I can read your expressive face. I wish my aunt and yours were harnessed together, and driven by Giant Despair to the end of the world, and made to jump off into space, among the horns of old moons and the tails of worn-out comets—and never turn up again."

I did not answer him, although I was sorry for him. Happening to look down the lane, we both saw my aunt standing at the gate looking up, shading her eyes with her hand. Arthur jumped up, and seized the handles of the wheel-barrow, saying, "Talk of the—of his sooty majesty, or any of his female relatives, and they will be altogether likely to file their appearance. Now there will be a shindy! You will have to dance the reel of Bogie to your aunt's music, Miss Elizabeth."

I did not know what he meant, but I supposed Aunt would be angry with us for staying so long.

"Well," said Arthur, after reflecting a little while, "will you be my humble friend?"

"I will, if you will only hurry," I said, trembling. "I am afraid Aunt will be angry."

"You need not be afraid; you may be sure she will, and I don't feel inclined to hurry myself to avoid what is sure to come anyway. Say you will be my friend."

"I do not think there can be any harm in that. Yes, I will."

"Well, touch thumbs on it?"

"Why?"

"If we touch thumbs we will have made a bargain to be friends for ever and ever."

"I don't want to touch your thumb. Maybe I would not like to be friends with you for ever and ever."

"You had better, for if you do not I'll suppose that you intend tattling to your aunt about me. If you did do such a thing I would be sure to find you out, and I would get up in the night and murder you."

"Will you be sure that I will tell nothing if I touch your thumb?"

"Yes, of course. If you told anything after doing that your thumb would rot off."

"Well, I would not tell anyway. I will touch your thumb if you like. It can do no harm."

I touched Arthur's brown thumb with an inward resolve that I would keep as far as possible from my new friend in the future.

When we arrived at home, Arthur wheeled the barrow into the yard with a business air, and walked into the kitchen to report himself.

"Here are the potatoes, Mrs. Henderson," he said, gravely.

"Where have you been all this time?" said Aunt, sharply. "I understood you were in a hurry."

"I was up at the field for potatoes, and I have brought them. I also thought I hurried as much as was possible under the circumstances."

Aunt turned from him with a hopeless expression, and he walked out of the kitchen.

Aunt turned to me. "Come here, Elizabeth."

I went over and stood before her like a culprit, struggling hard to keep hold of the assurance that I had done nothing wrong.

"What were you about all this time?" she asked of me, with a very angry face.

"We were getting the potatoes, Aunt," I answered.

"Nonsense! You might have dug half the potatoes in the field since you went. Were you as busy as you could be? Did you hurry as much as possible?"

"No, Aunt," I said, timidly.

"What were you about all the rest of the time?"

"We were not doing anything else."

"What were you doing when I looked up the lane?"

"Arthur was resting."

"Why did you not leave him then, and come home yourself?"

I might have done so, I acknowledged mentally, but I had never thought of it. I answered in a whisper, "I don't know; I didn't think."

"You don't know! What were you talking about all the time?"

Here was just the question I dare not answer. It was not the danger to my thumb or the midnight vengeance which Arthur threatened that frightened me, but his astonishing revelations were so dreadful, if no honour bound me, I dare not repeat them to my angry aunt, so I stood before her silent, with a very red face.

"Do you hear me?" said aunt, sharply.

"Yes, ma'am?" I whispered.

"Do you intend to answer me?"

I was still silent.

"I will take the stubbornness out of you," said aunt, rising. She went out and returned with a stout rod in her hand. I knew what it meant, and I had never been beaten before in my life. My turn for being whipped in school had not come yet.

"I ask you for the last time, Elizabeth, what were you talking about?" She

was angry, very angry. Her determination to subdue it made her speak low, but every word vibrated through me. I thought in desperation of saying, "It is none of your busines;" then I thought, what would mamma think of such a rude speech? I knew an answer of that kind would not mend matters much, even if I had courage to utter it. It flashed through my mind how Aunt would feel if I were to repeat to her Arthur's not very flattering description of the household at large; then I wondered how I could think of anything but Aunt's anger.

"You intend to defy me," said Aunt, in a low tone of concentrated anger, "but I will subdue you if you were as firm as Morne Mountains."

I knew well enough that my silence was exasperating my aunt, but what could I do? I saw no way of escape. I could do nothing but stand there and be beaten like a dog, and Aunt did beat me as if she intended to break me to pieces. She seemed to get more angry as she whipped, as if she were paying off the old grudge she held against both my mother and myself. When the rod was all broken to pieces, neither her strength nor her anger were exhausted. She seemed determined to whip me into submission, for she looked round for something to replace the broken rod, and caught up a hearth-brush handle. Instinctively I put up my hand to ward off the blow I saw coming, and caught a sharp stroke across the back of it, and with a loud scream, I dropped on the floor. I saw Uncle Tom wrench the brush-handle out of Aunt's hand, asking, "Do you want a strait jacket?" while Aunt turned on him furiously, asking how he dared to interfere. She then caught me up by the arm, threw me into the bed, drew the check curtains, and left me to darkness and repentance.

I was tingling all over with pain and anger, and cried such tears as I had never shed before, not even when my father died. I remembered bitterly what my aunt had said in the Manse at Grey Abbey. I knew then that she disliked me for my mother's sake, and I felt her dislike in every fibre of my body—and returned it—and then I was in her power for ever.

I wondered if my father, in happiness, knew how I had been treated—if he would think I had not deserved to be beaten. He would understand that I could not avoid hearing what the boy said, and that it would not have been honorable for me to tell. My hand was swollen much and pained dreadfully. I thought it must be broken. When I had cried myself into quietness, and lay bemoaning my sorrows silently for I do not know how long, the curtains parted, and old Uncle Jack's one bright eye peered in at me.

"Wae's me lassie! Have ye been dour an' gotten yer paiks for't? But ye'll be a guid wee lass the noo an' stap greetin'. Here's an unco nice buik till ye I brocht it in ma pouch. Wattie said ye were clean daft ower buiks. Noo be a wise-like bairn, and dinna greet any mair, an dinna be dour, like a guid bairn, tae vex yer aunt."

"Thank you, sir." I said in a shamed whisper, wondering much that old Uncle Jack would be so kind to me.

The curtains were closed again, and shut out the funny thin face with its one bright eye. After a while Walter came to me, and pitied and kissed me, and I was comforted. As long as my bright little brother was left to me I could not feel entirely alone. He brought out of his pocket a piece of soft potato cake, with sliced apples baked in it. It was all crushed up, and not very attractive looking after being so long in his pocket along with slate pencils, strings and marbles, but I thought only of the love that brought it.

"It is apple fadge," said Walter; "Aunt Mattie gave it to me. It is nice; there is sugar in it. She told me to eat

it all myself but I did not; I kept this piece for you."

Aunt called Walter away, telling him I must be left to darkness and penitence. I had no supper, and after a while I forgot my sorrow in sleep. I was awakened by some one kissing me softly, and opened my eyes on the rosy face of Jane Geddes. She had arrived while I was asleep It was now late, and the rest of the family were gone to bed. I did not realize how lonely and sorrowful I had been until I saw her face, and then wept out all my sorrows in her arms.

When she was helping me to undress, because I was so sleepy and tired, and sore as well, she discovered my bruised hand. She was indignant at Aunt before, but now she was so angry that I had a great deal to do to pacify her and get her to promise to say nothing about it. She got a piece of old linen from Bella and bound up my hand, putting vinegar from the cruet on it. Jane slept with Bella and me in the kitchen bed. I had never felt so happy behind its check curtains as when I crept into Jane's arms and knew I had one now who loved me, who would take my part, who was herself a part of my own home. Jane had heard from Aunt why I was beaten. "Why did you not answer your aunt?" she asked.

"I could not, Jane. The boy made fun of Aunt and every one in the house. I could not tell that. He's not a nice boy, and he made me promise not to tell. Besides papa said it was not honorable to repeat what we heard."

"Poor abused lamb!" said Jane, "you will miss your papa, and your own quiet home. For peace sake, you must ask your aunt's pardon for vexing her. Your papa would wish you to do so if he were here."

In the morning I went to do so, but Aunt was busy, and would not listen to me, told me to run away with myself out of her way. She never asked why my hand was bound up. I thought she was sorry she had beaten me down in her heart, because for a while she was as kind to me as to Walter, but she never said anything more about the matter.

CHAPTER VII.

For my heart was hot and restless,
And my life was full of care,
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear.
LONGFELLOW.

I found life at Enbridge more endurable after Jane Geddes came. She smoothed many a rough place for me, engineered me round many a difficulty, kept me out of the way of many a scrape into which I would have run with heedless steps. She kept me from being troubled by my new friend, Arthur, of the high-sounding name.

He sometimes, at dinner or passing through the kitchen, held up his brown thumb with a solemn glance, to remind me of the covenant between us and the penalty of breaking it; but Jane took care that I was not sent with him to pick potatoes again, or to do anything else, so by degrees my terror of him wore off.

Household matters also went on more smoothly after Jane came. Aunt was not so much worried and therefore was not so often impatient and angry.

I still nursed baby Jamie evenings and mornings, but I went to school pretty regularly, always going and returning hand in hand with Walter. After school I saw little of him, for he was off playing with Nat and Tom, while baby Jamie claimed my attention as soon as I entered the house, so that I seldom knew what play meant. I comforted myself with reading whenever he consented to go asleep.

When I got time to examine the book old Uncle Jack gave me, I found it was the "Life of Lorenzo Dow," written by his wife, Peggy Dow. I do

not know how I would like this book now—I found it delightful then.

It told of a man acquainted with God and working for Him, and God was on his side so that everything worked for good to him. He had no money and no settled home, but his Lord was rich and supplied his need. Nothing could hurt him; he did not feel unkindness or insult, because he cared for nothing that man could do unto him, cared only for his work, and that God prospered in his hands. And he loved the poor people and wanted them to be saved and made good.

I wondered that I had never heard of him before among the other good men.

I thought he was a little like Jane Geddes in his belief in his dreams, and dependence on signs and wonders. I knew my father would have said to him—as he often did to Jane, "I perceive you are too superstitious." Still I thought I would like to be like him patient under wrong, and forgiving towards those who were unjust to me. I particularly longed to get into more loving relations with Aunt Henderson. As far back as I could remember, before ever I heard her conversation with dear good mamma, the thought was in my heart that Aunt disliked me. I knew that she was the only person I both disliked and feared. I began to think more kindly of her, and to believe that perhaps I might overcome her dislike to me by being loving and tender with her. I thought of this a good deal, and longed to try, but there seemed always a difficulty in bringing down my theory to the level of practice. The first time I tried was when Annie was ill of inflammation of the lungs.

She was very ill indeed, and Aunt was beside herself with grief and apprehension. For once the housekeeping and the fields were neglected, as far as Aunt was concerned; John Harris was left to the freedom of his own will, to his great delight, for, "nae guid comes o' women's guiding," was his opinion. Jane Geddes looked after everything that was inside of the house, out of John's department, and did it quietly and well.

It touched my heart to see Aunt's grief, for it was very great. One night, when Annie was at the worst, I was sent to the doctor's for some medicine, because I happened to be in the way. Coming back in the dark, I found Aunt in the hall, weeping and wringing her hands and utterly beside herself with grief. Aunt was not much of a nurse, and she could not bear to look at her child's suffering when she could not relieve it.

"Oh, my little child, my little child!" she moaned. "Never to see your dear face, never to hear your voice, or the sound of your feet coming in to me after school!"

I should have respected Aunt's grief and passed her in silence, but I was sorry for her, and blundered into a trial of my new theory of sympathy, so I went close to her, touched her timidly and said, "Don't cry, Aunt,—Annie may get well."

Poor Aunt! she was always cross with me, and now only saw in me a spy on her abandonment of grief. She gave me a smart slap, and told me to go into the house, and not come prying and spying after her. "There's no fear of your dying in a hurry; no such good news as that," she said.

Annie got better, however, and Aunt indulged her very much, she was so thankful to receive her back from the gates of death. I made no further trial of offering my sympathy to purchase Aunt's friendship.

I do not know how long it was by weeks and months that Jane Drennan remained at the Grange, but one day she arrived suddenly, bag and baggage. According to her story she was a most injured piece of innocence. Mr. and Mrs. Beverly (especially Mrs. Beverly) were the most unreasonable tyrants ever

known out of history. The children were perfect imps of wickedness. The servants unprincipled and lying, and wickedly leagued against poor Jane. The thought of Aunt's goodness had been always present to her mind, and the hypocrisy and deceit in the Rev. Beverly's family were too much for her conscience to endure, not to speak of the effect their unkindness had on her tender heart. So Jane returned to Aunt Henderson's, like the dove to the ark, because she found no rest for the sole of her foot anywhere else.

Arthur saluted her with the old saying, "You're back again, like a bad penny."

The great Napoleon is reported to have said, "The earth will not bear two suns, nor Europe two kings." If he had been at Uncle Henderson's he would have said that the kitchen could not bear two Janes.

Jane Geddes was so nice, and such a good manager at Grey Abbey, and she was so fond of us and so good to us that we naturally were sure she could do no wrong. I was surprised and sorry to find that she seemed always in the wrong now. She was a little hot-tempered, and, as she said, "would not submit to be put upon," as if the creepie stool of her great namesake ran in her blood. Jane Drennan was not high tempered, but always sweet, always nice, always in a perfect frame of mind. She held her head to one side, smiled and spoke softly, as one afraid to offend, and was abjectly soft and conciliatory with Jane Geddes, who called her a snake and a serpent, and declared that she hated cat-footed women purring round her. She said she loved Jane Geddes from the first moment she saw her, and only differed with her through kindness and for her own good. "Indeed I don't differ with her at all," she said to Aunt mildly; "she differs with me." According to Jane Drennan, she was stretching out loving hands to her namesake all the time in vain. In every dispute in the kitchen, Jane Drennan was sweet and loving, gentle and kind, and Jane Geddes was boiling over in spirits of irrepressible wrath.

These passages of arms became so frequent and so violent that it was apparent one or other must leave for peace sake, and the question was which one. If the matter had been decided by universal suffrage, Jane Drennan would have been voted out by an overwhelming majority, but she knew how to manage Aunt, and Aunt managed the household; so Jane Geddes, honest faithful, passionate Jane was defeated, and I lost my protector.

One day in school Mr. Caldwell was very cross with all the scholars generally, and with me more than any one, because I had objected to learn the Church Catechism. I had been well drilled in the Shorter Catechism by my mamma, and I did not think it was right to make me learn any other. I think Mr. Caldwell could not help it,—I think teaching the Church Catechism was one of the duties of his situation, as all the scholars learned it; but he was fond of authority and very irritable, and could not bear one of his scholars to hesitate a moment in obeying his orders; so when I said to him, "Mr. Caldwell, I would rather not learn the Church Catechism," he could hardly believe his ears.

"What is that you say?" he roared, and I, shaking in every limb, repeated what I had said before. He reached down his rattan, and asked me quietly what objection I had to learning it.

I stole a look at him, frightened by the change in his voice, and saw that he was white with anger. I was terribly frightened and blundered out, "Because I do not believe it is true." I know he thought me bold and defiant, but the words, truly what I thought, were forced from me by fear.

"Pray, Miss Ray," he said, with fearful politeness, "point out what you consider untrue."

I was dreadfully perplexed and terri-

fied, but I never thought of evading the question. "It is not true that baptism makes us members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," I said in a low voice.

"Indeed! You are quite a theologian. Pray what is your version of the matter?"

I was at home in answering this question; I said, "The Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling."

I stood trembling in the silence that followed the sound of my own voice, but just then deliverance came, for a knock came to the door, and Mr. Caldwell laying down the rattan stopped my examination to go to the door. He was anticipated by a boy near the door who opened it and turned to say, "Person to see the little Rays, if you please, sir."

"Walter and Elizabeth, go to the door," said the master, seating himself at his desk again.

We walked down the school to the door, followed by envious glances from all the rest of the scholars. At the door we found Jane Geddes.

"Oh Jane," I said, "you came just in time to save me from a whipping; I think the Lord sent you."

"I will never save you again," said Jane, beginning to cry, "for I am going away. I came to bid you good-bye."

I could only say, "Oh Jane, must you go? must you go? Has Aunt sent you away?"

"I am sending myself away, dear," said Jane, her pride shining through her tears. "I cannot stay in the same house with that—that cobra, that's what she is, if ever there was one." Jane paused with a kind of satisfaction in the new title she had found for her enemy; she thought it fitting and expressive.

I stood silent,—I had no words to express my dismay. Walter broke in; "I say, Jane, I wouldn't go to please her, stay with 'Lizbeth and me.

"One of us must go, darling," she said, hugging him close and kissing him fondly. "I used to be able to keep my temper, but she has such an art of provoking, that I get angry before I know what I'm doing, and while I am in a tearing passion she is as calm as a dove on her nest joying it. Oh, the alligator!"—Jane stopped and shook her fist at her absent enemy.

"Why do you heed the old thing?" asked Walter.

"She got at me to-day," Jane went on, not heeding Walter, "hinting and insinuating, as if she knew something very bad about me, if she chose to tell it. I do believe she could make your Aunt think I had murdered someone, or done worse, the base liar that she is. I told her before your Aunt if she had anything to say to speak out. I said, 'For my part I hope I will never be so far left to myself as to scheme and plan to do mischief continually as you do.'

"'Don't compare yourself with me, if you please,' she said in her nasty white-livered way. 'I have spared you ever since you came here, but if you provoke me, I won't spare you much longer.'

"'Why won't I compare myself with you? I don't do it. I would rather die than be like you; for you are a wicked hypocrite?'

"'I'll have to bear what you say, if there's no one to take my part,' says she, her thin face all on edge with venom. 'But mind, I'll not let you compare yourself to me, and stand it quietly. Though I'm reduced now and dependent on my good cousin's kindness, I'm as far above you as Heaven is above—above the other place,'" said Jane, with a sob—even in her grief and rage she did not wish to mention

that awful word before the minister's children.

"Don't fret, Jane," I said, with a poor attempt at consolation; "I wouldn't mind Jane Drennan the least bit. Let her say what she likes. I think she is real bad; but don't leave us,—what would we do without you?"

"I must leave you, dears. Your Aunt,—the Lord forgive her,—said to me, 'I do think you had better go, Jane; I cannot have such language in the kitchen,'—as if I had said one ill word—'we never had such scenes before you came.'

"I was hot enough, but I cooled down whenever she said that, and the only answer I made was, 'Very well, Mrs. Henderson, and the sooner the better!' So I'm on my way to Ballymena to take the coach in the morning. The carter will bring my box. But, oh, my lamb! my lamb! I'm leaving you among wolves. Walter is, in a sense, among his own people, but they have a strange spirit to you. Dear child, remember the God of your father, and ask Him to take your part. I'm not what I should be, I know, but I will ask God to look after you for your father's sake. He was, I believe, a man after God's own heart, as much as ever David was."

So with many kisses and caresses, Jane left us. Her dear, kind, ruddy face was the last vestige of my old happy home. I fretted after Jane as much as after leaving Grey Abbey, but Walter did not feel it as I did; he was more at home.

I do not like to look back upon the time that passed immediately after Jane Geddes left. I never had been able to please Aunt by any means; it was worse now, for Jane Drennan seemed to take a cruel pleasure in stirring her up against me. I was blamed for everything done amiss, because they said it was so like me; blamed and punished, blamed and punished, as regularly as the days went on. Uncle Tom was not unkind to me, but he never interfered to protect me. He seemed to have dismissed us both from his mind altogether. This was the time when I began to call upon the name of the Lord. I had prayed before as a duty, said my prayers,—I liked to pray, to think myself one of Christ's lambs. I thought I loved God, because of papa's and mamma's teaching. I had heard of Him with the hearing of the ear and took it for granted that I was a good girl, that I loved Him as He loved me, but this experience fitted the calm, secure shelter of my father's house. My religion failed me now, I was not very sure about my loving God, or being a good girl; indeed I felt very bad sometimes. I felt a need of Him in my helplessness that I never felt before.

A strong sense of injustice swelled in my heart. I wanted God to judge between Jane Drennan, Aunt and myself. I wanted Him to pity me and take my part, but I felt so bad that I know I did not deserve that He should do so. I thought if I could get very near to God I had a pretty long complaint to make, and I thought that He would help me, perhaps, for my father's sake.

In that large household I was alone and apart, a solitary child, that never got a word of approval or tenderness but what came from my bright little brother,—and how I did idolize him!

It did very much increase my dislike to Jane Drennan when Walter said to me one day, "Are you my half sister, 'Lisbeth? Jane Drennan says you are."

"I am all the sister you have, Walter dear," I answered. "You will not call me a half-sister, will you?"

"But are you my half-sister?" persisted Walter, who always wanted to get to the bottom of things.

"Indeed I am not," said I, indignantly; "that's more of Jane Drennan's lies."

"That's bad talk you are using, Elizabeth," said my cousin Annie, who

was in the kitchen with us at the time; "I'll tell mamma on you, and you'll catch it, my lady."

"I don't care," I said angrily. "I don't care one bit; I said nothing but the truth."

"Well, you did not," said Annie, "for you are nothing but a half-sister; and mamma says your mother was a strange woman, a Moabitish woman, like the bad people in the Bible. She had an O to her name too, like Dan O'Connell. Pah!" and Annie turned up her nose with the greatest disgust.

I had been thinking of God, and praying to Him for help and pity a few minutes before this, but I forgot God under the provocation of my mother's insulted memory, and flew at Annie and slapped her face with all my puny might, and my rage increasing as I gave it vent, I caught a handful of her long brown hair, and gave it a savage pull.

Annie's screams brought Aunt to the rescue from one direction, and Jane Drennan from another. Aunt's first care was to take my fingers out of Annie's curls, and she then gave me such a push as sent me staggering against the opposite wall. She had a rod and was standing over me before I recovered myself. The anger in my heart cast out fear, and I said, "You're a wicked woman, and I hope my father sees you." The rod fell out of Aunt's hand, and she walked out of the kitchen without a word, leading Annie with her, and calling Walter after her. He kissed me first, and whispered, "Don't be angry, 'Lisbeth; you are my sister, and I love you; I hate Aunt." And he followed Aunt out of the kitchen, and I was left alone to pray if I could.

How wicked I felt after they left the kitchen, how far away from God! It seemed to me that I need not stretch out my hands to Him any more, for I had slipped down far below the place where He hears prayer to answer it. Bella Wiley tried to stop my tears with comforting words, not knowing the reason why I cried so bitterly. I had to stay in the kitchen all the rest of the day and bear my disgrace. The disgrace was not much to me,—I was in disgrace so often that I did not mind it; but I had a deeper sorrow, remorse for my own wickedness. I always had a feeling that my father watched over me, and the thought of my misconduct distressing him in the happiness of heaven was too dreadful. I was sent to bed early, and lay awake behind the check curtains, for the first time in my life thinking more of my sins than my sorrows. I could not go to sleep, but lay staring into the bit of darkness that was fenced in by the check curtains. When the house got quieted down in the still night till I could hear the clock ticking on the lobby, I felt God's eyes piercing the darkness to me and looking through me. Everything of my quarrel with Annie came before me. Annie's words, that had provoked me so at the time, faded into insignificance compared with my fury. I remembered that she was weak and peevish after her illness, and I felt mean, oh, so pitifully mean! I thought of myself standing before the great white throne, and the pure angels, and the good people finding out how mean I was. I tossed and turned till I could endure my thoughts no longer. I must pray; God knew all about it and if He forgave, He blotted out sin, He would never cast it up again. I slid out of bed. Bella was sleeping with a great noise. I was alone with the quiet night, and I prayed out loud in my earnestness, confessed my sin, and asked God to forgive and forget, and help me to do better, for my father's sake. I tried to move His pity by reminding Him that He knew I was an orphan, and very desolate and had no one but Himself to take my part.

My prayer brought comfort to me, and I slipped back into bed. Next morning after breakfast Uncle called me

into the parlor; he had a large quantity of black silk in his hand.

"Now, Elizabeth," he said, after he shut the door, "you will wind all this silk before you leave off. Some of the skeins are entangled, and you will have better employment for your wicked fingers in unravelling them, than in tearing the hair of your feeble little cousin."

I looked up quickly, determined to justify myself, but uncle prevented me. "You need not say a word, nothing you can say will make any excuse for what you have done, flying at poor weak Annie like a tiger-cat."

"She might leave my mother alone," I muttered sullenly, my good frame of mind going away like the early dew.

"Don't mutter," said Uncle, who did not catch what I said, "but think while you are winding the silk of what your father would feel if he saw his little daughter act so wickedly."

And Uncle left me to my meditations.

The silk was hard to disentangle, and my mind was as perplexed with thoughts as my fingers were with my work.

I was sorry. I wanted to do better. I was wronged, I wanted to be treated ustly, but how could anything be altered? As I twitched and picked at the ravelled silk, my thoughts were in a greater tangle.

After a long time the door opened and let in a whiff of dinner along with Arthur's head, his large black eyes dancing with mischief. He began singing:

"Miss Elizabeth Ray, come along to your dinner,
You're a poor little orphan and a very great sinner,
You'll catch it, my lady, if longer you linger,
And no one will care, not the snap of my finger."

Here was a new horror,—that dreadful Arthur had heard my foolish prayers, and was making fun of them.

What I would have given for the privilege of going dinnerless, so as to avoid my terrible friend! But there was no way of escape, so I came with a burning face, and got a pitying glance from John Symmons as I took my place at the table. Arthur had a great many wants during dinner. He was not quiet for a moment.

"Please, John Ferris, can a poor sinner have a little more meat? I die with hunger here, he cries, I starve in a foreign land."

"Hold your tongue, if you can," growled John Ferris.

"Bella Wiley," he resumed, "how can you have the conscience to deprive a desolate orphan of all the big potatoes?"

"This milk is not the milk of human kindness. It is sour; Jane Drennan has been looking at it. Is it right, John Symmons, to skim the cream of comfort from the poor sinful orphan's allowance?"

"You might have sense enough to hold your tongue, if you have no kindness, Arthur Weir," said John Symmons. "It would be well for others if they had as little feeling as you have."

"My name is De Vere, if you please, whatever my feelings are," said Arthur.

"Well I don't please; it's just Weir and nothing else," retorted John. "Is your father's name not good enough for you? Weir has been the name of better men then you'll ever be, unless you mend your manners."

I had finished my dinner and was glad to slip away back to my silk winding and leave them to finish their quarrel by themselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

O Thou that dwellest in the heavens so high,
Beyond the stars, within the sky,
Where the dazzling fields need no other light,
Nor the sun by day, nor the moon by night;
Though shining millions around Thee stand,
For the sake of Him at thy right hand,
Oh think of the souls He has died for here,
Thus wandering in darkness and doubt and fear!
—HOGG.

Aunt Mattie came to see us some

time after this, and stayed for a good while. She had not yet recovered from the shock of the butter disaster. She often referred to it as a date, and counted from it backwards and forwards. I am sure that as long as Aunt Mattie lived that event was a Hegira in her calculations.

When Jane Geddes was at Uncle Henderson's she instructed me to keep out of Aunt's sight as much as possible. For this purpose she encouraged my love of reading. "It amused me," she said, "and kept me out of the way." I used to sit in the recess at the foot of the bed in the kitchen, sheltered from observation by its check curtains. I discovered for myself, after Jane left, a better hiding-place, even the best parlor. It was never entered by the children, and only when it required arranging, or on the rare occasions when company came, did Aunt set her busy foot in it, so the best parlor became my place of refuge. In this room was a book-case with glass doors, never locked, that fitted on the top of Uncle's escritoire. I often spent hours of Sunday evenings among the books. Solid works they were, and not very attractive to a child, but some of them were full of pictures, among which I revelled.

I have an affectionate remembrance of Doddridge's Family Expositor, a Dictionary of the Bible, and a Goldsmith's Animated Nature, all illustrated profusely, and the pictures were specimens of high art to me. One day I made a discovery. Beside the chimney was a cupboard in the wall, never used because it was infested with crickets. In the bottom was a heap of fragments of books. Out of this I fished bits of plays, old magazines, scraps of the church historian, Fuller, quaint and sweet, parts of stories and histories; not enough of any one thing to satisfy me, but enough to set me longing for more. I read these stray leaves over and over, until I almost had them by heart. I honestly think they were my greatest comfort during that dreary time at Enbridge. They helped me to have a world of my own to retire into from neglect and taunts and punishment.

One day during Aunt Mattie's visit, when I had got Jamie asleep, the others being out playing, and Aunt being occupied in chatting with Aunt Mattie, I slipped into the parlor, opened the closet, and sat down on the carpet to sort among the tattered remains of the dead books. Jamie had been very fretful and unwilling to go to sleep, and I had been tired and impatient, and though I said nothing I was sure Aunt, who always had her eye on me, noticed my impatience. All was forgotten now but the books, out of which I succeeded in fishing up something new to me, "A Vision of the Angelic World," by Defoe. I was lost in another world, when I was recalled by Aunt Henderson's voice talking to old Aunt Mattie, both, by the sound, coming along the hall.

Anything was better than being found taking my ease in the best parlor. I crept into the closet, crouched among the crickets on the heap of tattered leaves, drew the door to after me, and sat as still as a mouse. I was afraid they would hear my heart beating. I hoped they were going into the shop, but no, they came straight into the parlor.

Aunt was showing the ancient Mattie some heirloom or other out of Uncle's escritoire. I knew by their talk that it was some memento of my dead father. Aunt praised him as one who was worthy, and praised mamma, and old Aunt Mattie assented.

"Noo, Mary Ann, that we're be oorsels," said old Aunt Mattie, "just tell me hoo it's wi' ye aboot thae bairns. The laddie's no' that bad, but a lass is just a fearfu' responsibility. Is there plenty o' provision left for them noo? I'm thinkin' no, for puir Wattie was na the ane to be forehanded."

"I don't think there is anything,

Tom's so contra[illegible]ie wouldn't tell me how the affairs were settled, but I have neither seen nor heard of any provision made for them. It's just as I expected it would be, another ready-made burden laid on me," said Aunt dolorously.

"I wadna' thole't gin I were you," said Aunt Mattie, with vehemence.

"The little boy is not so much trouble,—he is good-natured, and his board isn't a great deal in such a family as ours. His father's clothes will cut down for him for a good while to come. It's Elizabeth that's the trial. She's sulky and sour-tempered, as awkward as she can live, and useless to boot. She is a burden and a heavy one. I never saw a child in my life with such ungainly ways."

"Toon lasses are aye hard to guide," said Aunt Mattie. "The wee lad's weel eneuch, but I was misdoubting that the lassie was ower auld farrant. Wow! but she turned up her dainty neb at the guid parritch yon nicht at oor place! I said tae mysel', 'My leddy, ye'll claut the luggie clean yet.' I wonner noo, that Tammas doesna satisfee ye aboot them. He oucht to consider the provokshun it is to you."

"It is provoking, Aunt, but it's Thomas's way,—he always did like to keep things to himself. He gave me no satisfaction as to how my poor brother left things. I don't think there's a penny. He was not the man to gather, except books, and there's plenty of them."

"There's little feedin' or cleedin' in a wheen o' buiks. I'd hae't oot wi' Tammas an' see what ye'll hae for a' yer fash. I wadna rab and ruin my ain weans at ony rate. Tak ye my advice noo."

"I cannot do anything past his pleasure, Aunt. As I said, the boy is but little trouble, but I'd part with the girl without many tears. I wish you saw how she flew at poor weakly Annie the other day. She shows neither gratitude nor common feeling to us, after all we've done for her."

"I wadna thole't gin it was me. Ye should consider yer ain. Is there na some society or schule whaur ministers' orphan weans are cared for when they're left destitute, an' get better care an' guidin' than ye hae ony way tae gie them?"

"I daresay there is, but Thomas would never consent."

"Consent to what?" said Uncle Tom's voice, and I heard his brisk step coming in. "What are you two plotting here?"

"I was just sayin', Tammas, wi' a' your care, ye had sma' need tae add twa grown weans to the femily, forbye ye hae somethin' tae mak amens for the out puttin'."

"You must think me a poor provider, Aunt Mattie, and Mary Anne a poor manager if we could not spare a crumb for these two sparrows," said Uncle, laughing.

"I tell ye what, my man," said Aunt Mattie, "it's my opunion that ye pick up ither bairns a thocht too readily. Ye hae a gran' way o' makin' licht o' things. My certie! ye micht be content wi' yer ain hoosefu,' an' mair comin' it's mair than likely. Gin there's ony way o' schulin' them in a free way as a minister's orphan weans, I think it's yer duty as a father o' a femily tae tak it. Ye'll hae nae slack in yer expenses. Ye'll be for givin' the lads a cast at the college, an' sendin' Annie, the wee bonnie weakly one, tae get mair buik lear than she'll get wi' Caldwell. Ye shuld consider yer ain risin' femily."

"Well, Thomas," said Aunt, deliberately, "I think you should consider what Aunt Mattie says. I know that there are schools, at least I have heard so, where children are as well taught and as kindly treated as at schools to which people send their children and pay dearly for the privilege. Why should we burden ourselves when there is no

earthly reason? I must say there's a good deal of sound sense in Aunt's opinion."

I heard Uncle Tom's short laugh. "A pretty sample of your Christianity you're showing!" said he. "Do you know that it is your only brother's orphan children you are talking of sending to a charity school, if one can be found to take them? I should think you would be willing to deny yourself a little to shelter them for his sake if you have no higher motive."

"If they were your brother's children," said Aunt, "I would not mind the burden half so much, but the expense comes from my side of the house. Aunt Mattie is right,—our expenses will be no less year by year. I do not see why we should bear the burden if it is not absolutely necessary."

"Ither folks' bairns are aye a burden an' a care," put in Aunt Mattie. "The wee lad's a fine lad an' a bonnie, but I canna bide the lass, glowerin' at me wi' her big een as solemn as a hoolet."

"Aunt Mattie, you have no skill of bairns, when you have none of your own," said Uncle in a joking voice. "Mind your cows and hens; no one can beat you there."

"Listen to me, Mary Anne, once for all. This is a matter that Aunt Mattie cannot meddle with."

"My certie!" began Aunt Mattie.

He went on without noticing Aunt Mattie's indignant interruption. "Your brother, a man called and chosen of God, who consecrated himself to His service, has been taken away, and left his children fatherless. Now it is our duty and privilege to bring them up for God as well as we can. We are their nearest of kin. When Walter Ray's children go to a charity school of any kind my own will go. While I can earn a shilling they will share and share alike with my own family. Don't get close-hearted, Mary Anne; the God of the fatherless is good pay." I heard Uncle go out of the room and shut the door after him.

"Waes me, but Tammas's wilfu an' misguided!" said Aunt Mattie.

"He's very obstinate when he sets down his foot, but he's mostly in the right," said Aunt Henderson.

"Weel, weel," retorted Aunt Mattie, "mak the wee lassie as usefu as ye can; she'll aye be guid for somethin' if ye gar her dae ye biddin."

This conversation sank deep into my heart. I did not need to hear it to know I was not a favorite with either Aunt Henderson or old Aunt Mattie. but I was surprised to hear Uncle Tom speak so nobly. I had thought him stingy and mean, but this declaration was laid up in my heart to his credit forever. I never felt angry afterwards when Uncle called me a queer shaver, or pulled my ears, and told me I was not worth my salt.

It was a good while before I got leaving my hiding-place. I was not capable of thinking of anything clearly: I was filled with a tempest of contending thought. Aunt's house, that had never had much of a home feeling for me, could be a home for me never more.

I resolved to be as useful as possible, to keep from being a burden, and to learn all I could, that when I grew up I might be independent.

I tried to interest Walter in my thoughts for the future, when we went together one evening to drive home the cows from the fields, but Walter wanted to look for beechnuts among the withered leaves in the lane where the beeches grew. I did not want to say much against Aunt to Walter,—I thought it would be mean, so I said hesitatingly, "Walter, I don't think Aunt is glad to have us here."

"Who cares?" said Walter. "I don't. Look, 'Lisabeth, here's lots of these funny three-cornered beechnuts."

"Yes, yes, Walter," I said, rather impatiently, "but what will we do?"

"Wait till I grow up and you'll see what I'll do. You will ride in a coach and have everything you want."

"But, Walter," I said, some of the sentiments running in my head that I had picked out of the fragments in the parlor closet, "we must grow up and carve out our own living."

"We can't grow up to-night, like Jack's bean-stalk,—I would like to. See, there's a bird; I bet I'll hit it."

It was no use. Walter's mind would not take hold of my ideas, and I, forced to think out the matter by myself, fell to building airy plans that reached into coming years. We were late that evening,—had delayed, Aunt thought; so Walter, as being younger, was forgiven, while I was sent to bed without supper. I lay awake rebelling against Aunt's rule with all my feeble might. I began to think of God's great power, so often exercised in infinite pity towards creature helplessness. I wondered if He would not pity me as well as Hagar's child when he was perishing with thirst. I determined I would seek Him. I slipped out of bed and poured out my thoughts to the God of my father, taking care not to speak loud enough for Arthur to hear. I reminded Him of my trouble, my helplessness and Aunt's injustice. I made no mention of my sins this time,—it seems I had forgotten that I had any sins to be forgiven; and it was not for Christ's sake, but for my father's, that I sought help and redress.

I wonder what I expected, for I had no hope of seeing Aunt transformed. I began to think if God spoke to me and asked me what I wanted what would I say. I would tell Him that father, mother and home were gone; that the distance between God and me was getting wider every day. I wanted to have Him on my side. I fancied I was struggling to get nearer to Him, and slipping with every effort to a greater distance. I knew I was not such a good girl as when I lived at home, and I was not getting any better. I was angry at Aunt and hated her, and old Aunt Mattie too. I did not want to get the hatred out of my heart; I wanted God to take my part against these my enemies. I do not think I wanted Him to hurt them, but I did want Him to like me better than He did them, to be with me as He was with Joseph, and make my plans for carving out a future for myself to prosper, and to hasten the time for my escape out of Aunt's family. I was a little frightened at the vehemence of my dislike. None of the good people of whom I read ever felt as I did. I might go on hating Aunt and get worse and farther away from God and never get the way back. I tried to look at my case from Aunt's point of view, but I did not succeed; my mind always slipped back to my own trouble. She did not want me, but I did not want to come. I had lost a pleasant home, but I did not fret over that alone; I would try to bear it if I was only welcome here. It was tiresome carrying Jamie about, but I liked to do it, till I got very tired; I liked to feel his thin arms round my neck,—I knew that he loved me. I liked to help Aunt, was glad when she asked me to do anything for her, only longing to hear her say once, "Well done, Elizabeth," but this word never came. Annie was not so willing or patient as I was, but Aunt seemed to think that she could do no wrong, and that I could not do right.

It was so that my prayers and my meditations always left me thinking I had done no wrong, and a sense of Aunt's injustice kept my heart on fire with anger and I could not be happy. I would have liked to die at this time. I read of happy little children that died, and I would have gladly died if I could have been sure of the hereafter. But the more I thought I had done no wrong, the more I felt and resented Aunt's injustice; the more unwilling I felt to stand at the judgment seat, or meet my father's grave, tender eyes. I set myself afresh to seek God, and read

the Bible at every opportunity as a help; but the distance between God and my soul seemed to be greater every day.

I never turned to the New Testament. I never desired to make Jesus my friend. I was afraid of Christ. He was far too holy to feel for or sympathize with such little troubles as mine. He was not earthly, and had no feeling for temporal things. He snubbed the man who wanted His influence with his brother, that had seized all the inheritance. He favored Mary when she sat with the company and left Martha to serve alone, as Annie did me so often. I would have liked if the Lord had said, "Go and help Mary, and you will soon be done, and both can sit at my feet." The education I had received, strict and loving as it was, had not enabled me to understand the Lord's answer.

Teaching is good, training is better, but He who carries the Keys of David, our dear Lord Himself, alone can open the heart to know the things of Christ.

I turned therefore as eagerly as a Jew to the great events of the Old Testament. I sympathized with a fellow-feeling in the danger of the crowding multitude of fugitive slaves, the sea before, the Egyptians behind, no apparent way of escape. What relief thrilled from rank to rank as the word was passed, "Stand still and see the salvation of God!" What an answer to Moses's agonized silent cry up to Him, was the order, "Go forward!"—the triumphal march dryshod through the midst of the sea; the song of triumph on the shore of safety!

The God of signs and wonders was the God I sought for, the Jehovah of Help; that God who came down on the whirlwind to speak to Job when he had reached the extreme limit of human endurance. And if He did reprove him for his impatience, He knew it was but natural with three such friends teasing him with their piously spiteful speeches, and a wife that was like Aunt Henderson. He took his part magnificently at last, restored to him double what he had lost, and made his friends acknowledge that he was more righteous than they.

There was a little difficulty in entering into these stories for myself by myself, because of the hard names that were scattered about them. Pihahiroth, Migdol and Baal-zephon were places with a strange, unreal look; so it was hard to realize living men called Bildad, Zophar and Eliphaz. They could not be nice men with such names, that black Bildad especially. It was a great drawback that these names were so strange. I could not attempt to pronounce them, but passed them with a flying jump and tried to forget them.

I had the one wish and prayer that the mighty God of Jacob would deliver me, and make Aunt Henderson acknowledge that she wronged me. I thought Hezekiah's plan of spreading out his case before the Lord in the temple a very good one, and one that brought quick results.

There was a difficulty in the way of my taking Hezekiah's plan. God had promised to be always near to answer in his Holy Temple, but the Temple was in dust, and no one place that I knew of was holier than another now. I sought God, but there was no answer, and I was afraid that no one regarded. My thoughts were so much taken up with these matters that I was more than usually absent-minded, awkward and blundering. One day Aunt had got home a set of china dishes for the best bedroom. They were on the kitchen table to get the dust of traffic washed off them. I thought they were very pretty. They had birds of Paradise in purple and gold flying over them among strange foliage.

I was looking at the pitcher which had some peculiarity about the handle, when Aunt, noticing me, called quickly to me to set it down. In doing so I

let it fall in my nervous haste and broke it. Aunt gave me a severe beating, —not for breaking the pitcher, but for meddling with it. Jane Drennan wondered Aunt was so patient with such a perfect idiot. Aunt Mattie declared I should be sent "oot tae beg frae door tae door wi' a meal-poke on my back."

After my whipping I wandered away into the fruit garden at the back of the barn and knelt under a cherry tree that stood in a corner with my complaint.

I never thought of the back door of the barn, or of the possibility of any one being there; but Arthur was inside helping John Ferris to pick over potatoes. This was the second time he had heard what was meant for God alone. The first notice I had of his nearness was his voice singing derisively:

"Poor Elizabeth!
Who always saith,
She is very sure
That she's a sinne. poor,
And a little orphan with hardships to endure."

I saw John Ferris pull back the curly head and box his ears. I fled into the house as much ashamed of and angry at myself as Aunt could be—ashamed that I should be found out in my clumsy attempts to seek after God.

While Aunt Mattie stayed, Aunt Henderson was invisible for a while, and a dear little baby, Nellie, was added to the household.

The house-keeping was left to Jane Drennan by and with the advice of Aunt Mattie. It seemed as if we had passed from the stern rule of Solomon to the wanton tyranny of Rehoboam. Bitter old Aunt Mattie emphasized her orders to me with stinging nips and pinches. Before Aunt recovered I had an assortment of these love-tokens on my arms in black and blue. However, Aunt Mattie's pinches were loving-kindnesses compared with the torture of Jane Drennan's tongue.

She knew she could hurt me through my mother's memory, and she used her power without mercy. The wild Irish, the O's and Mac's, Connaught coat of arms, the Kerry brogue, the Wicklow mountains were thrown up to me like personal sins. When Jane boasted that she had not one drop of Irish or Papist blood in her, I was glad, and respected Irish and Papist blood because of their absence from her. She kept Aunt in a ferment with her lying tattle.

It was a great relief when Aunt again took up the reins of government, and Aunt Mattie went home.

Another blessing was that Jane Drennan found a sweetheart among the workmen, and was so occupied in engineering him into a proposal, that we had comparative peace. Indeed, having a beau mollified her exceedingly.

And I had never yet found God, though I sought Him constantly with my complaint. I began to think, like the Syrians when they said God was a God of the hills, that there were places where He more surely heard prayer and answered it more readily than He did in others.

Jesus oftenest went up into a mountain apart to pray; but there were not many mountains in our part of the country. I knew none but the distant *Slieve mis*, and, of course, I never could go there. But many, like Peter, went up to the house-top. I determined to go up there and try once more if He would hear and answer.

One night when the candles were lighted, and Jamie put to sleep to his favorite tune, I slipped out of the house, solemnly determined to try if God favored one place more than another.

Aunt's house, as I said before, was a two-story house with a large kitchen at the back. In the angle between the kitchen and the house there was an old apple tree that threw its branches over the kitchen roof. I climbed up the apple tree, and got from it to the kitchen roof. But the kitchen roof was not the house-top, so I climbed on the roof of the house. I need not say I was but a child,—this exploit proves it.

I found the roof steep and the slates so smooth that it was difficult to keep from rolling off. I crept on cautiously till I reached the ridge, and held on while I prayed my prayer. The sense of insecurity marred it somewhat. I could not order my cause before Him as I might have done on the level, but I said what I could remember, and turned to make my descent, which was more difficult than going up.

The moon was at the full, careering among downy balls of cloud, which were lightened up and glorified with her mild white light. Now Jane Drennan and her lover were in the shade of the apple tree, whispering their own secrets, when they were startled by the rustling overhead. Jane thought immediately that some one was spying on her, and slipped into the house by the front way, while her sweetheart, after pausing to find out who it was, rushed into the house and alarmed Aunt with the news that Elizabeth was on the top of the house. Aunt armed with a rod soon appeared at the foot of the tree, followed by Annie, Walter and the boys. I had not sense enough to stay up and make terms, but came down abjectly and was marched into the house a prisoner. Uncle came in just then and helped Aunt to catechize me, but I stood obstinately silent. I could not tell any living soul what I went up on the house-top for. In vain Uncle questioned, in vain Aunt catechized; my face was as white as it could bleach with terror, but I could not answer. Aunt felt defied and determined to whip me, but Uncle interfered and told me to go to bed and say my prayers. After I got to bed I heard Uncle telling Aunt it was no use to whip me, as I was not right in the head.

"Oh!" groaned Aunt, "that some one else had to manage her; I would willingly give up *my* responsibility."

I think Aunt never gave me more than a slap on the face, or a box on the ear after that night. It was settled among them that I was a little crazy.

But God had not answered my prayers; He did not interfere in my behalf. He has forgotten me, I said; if ever He loved me, He loves me now no more, and I left off seeking Him in despair.

CHAPTER IX.

A child-heart sickened with deferred hope,
Feeling the impatient anguish of suspense,
And tasting of the bitter, bitter cup
That Disappointment's withered hands dispense;
Knowing the poison that o'erflows from thence
Over lone, tedious, miserable hours.

—ANON.

After this I looked for no change as day after day drifted hopelessly by. I did not go to school; there was the new baby to nurse, and Jamie had not yet begun to walk or speak. I felt that I was sinking down into confirmed neglect. When I came first to Enbridge, Aunt Mattie used to call me "the wee toon leddy," the scholars at Caldwell's school did the same, because my clothes, thanks to my dear mamma's care, were very neat and becoming. As my clothes wore out I lost this distinction, and Arthur, noting everything with his sharp eye and sharp tongue, nicknamed me Cinderella. Walter sometimes tried to cheer me up by confiding to me his plans for the future. He was to become a great man and to make of me a grand lady. I was to have a silk dress, blue as the sky, with flowers on it as white as the clouds, and a watch of the red, red gold.

Walter was a bright little fellow, eager and quick to learn; he took some little prizes at the examination, and was spoken of as a boy of great promise. My dear little brother, with his clear blue eyes, his pretty face, delicate as a girl's, the rings of golden-brown hair clustering round his broad, white brow, with his winning smile, his pleasant manner, no wonder he was a general favorite. In my eyes he was a peerless

boy, and with all his heart he loved his poor, plain little sister. Was not that a comfort to me?

O, Walter, darling, what a pleasant little brother you were to me in those lonely days!

It was a great sorrow to be kept from school, to feel that I was learning nothing. I read when I could, and often picked up something when the boys were learning their lessons out loud. They always did this when Aunt was not about, for the noise they made was too much for her patience or her head. I had left off praying entirely, at this time, and was living without God in the world. I was very unhappy, but, strange as it may seem, I laughed more, and appeared more gay and thoughtless than I had ever done in my life before. Aunt said I had no feeling, and I began to believe her; yet I was sad enough when I was alone.

When spring came round, Jane Drennan brought her courtship to a close by marrying her sweetheart, John McLaverty, out of hand, and emigrated with him to Philadelphia, loaded with presents from both Uncle and Aunt. She is there yet, well and doing well, as her letters to Aunt testify; sowing dissension and stirring up strife I am very sure, or her nature has much changed. I never have had the least desire to visit the Quaker city for Jane's sake.

John Symmons left us a little afterwards. His apprenticeship was over, and he was going to travel about as a journeyman, to see strange places, and perfect himself in his trade. I was alone in the barn, where Aunt had sent me to rub the buds off the potatoes stored there, when John came to bid me good-bye.

"I'm going away, Miss Elizabeth," he said, in his slow, awkward way.

"Well, John, I hope you'll do well and be happy, I am sure," I said.

"I will be happy whatever happens, Miss Elizabeth." He paused and shifted from one foot to the other, his colorless face reddening all over in his effort to speak.

"Miss Elizabeth," he said at length. "I have thought of you, and—and prayed for you too, ever since the night I carried your little brother from Ballymena to Aunt Mattie's on my back."

"I wish I had never come here," I said. "I have wished it ever since."

"But you are here, and I'm afraid—I'm afraid that you are beginning to forget your inheritance."

"What do you mean?" I asked, looking full in his face.

"I had no one to teach me Bible learning as you had, but I do know a little, and I'm afraid, Miss Elizabeth, that you are marring your inheritance," he said.

"How?" I asked, still looking at him.

"I heard about your father, that wicked people nicknamed him the Apostle Paul, because of his earnestness and devotedness. Mr. Henderson says he walked in an atmosphere of consecration. The seed of the righteous inherit many great and precious promises. You can say the second paraphrase better than many—

> God of our fathers, be the God
> Of their succeeding race.

Don't you think you have an inherited obligation on you to be the Lord's?"

"I want to be the Lord's," I said, "but He treats me like Saul,—He will not answer me."

"O, Miss Elizabeth, doubt anything else, but be sure of God's loving care. You are of more value than many sparrows. He has the hairs of your head numbered. Do not fear, He will bring you out of all your distresses. Be afraid of yourself, be afraid of sin, but never be afraid that God has forgotten you or forsaken you. Look to Him, and wait patiently. He never forgets. Do not let Arthur or any one else laugh you out of your prayers."

"I would not mind the laughing, though it is hard to bear, if there was any answer,—if I thought there was any one that regarded," I said. "I have a complaint to make, I have lost every one that cared for me but Walter; this is not home,—it never can be home; Aunt would not care if I died, and God does not care how lonely I am."

"Call upon God, Miss Elizabeth. He says, 'I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee.' If you wait patiently on Him you will find that He remembers your case."

"He has forgotten me," I said sadly.

"Don't now, don't now, Miss Elizabeth," said John earnestly; "don't be bearing false witness against the God of your father. Look to Him, wait on Him, trust Him, and He will bring to pass all He has promised concerning you."

"What has He promised concerning me?"

"Search the Book, Miss Elizabeth. It is all there. Good-bye; do not fear but He will bring you out safe at last." John shook hands with me and went away, and I never saw him any more.

I did not read the Bible to find out what the fatherless children of godly parents were entitled to under the hand and seal of the Almighty. I slipped further away from God day by day, and more apart from every one around me.

I thought of Aunt with wonder; I wonder at her yet. She was considered a good Christian woman; she was, as she boasted, a rigid Presbyterian; there was not a better neighbor in Enbridge; she was a loving mother to her own, tender and good; she was not unkind to Walter; I was a very little girl, only eleven when my father died, and in all these dreary months she had not one word of kindness or commendation to spare for me.

My dear mamma used to say so often, "You can lead Elizabeth anywhere by her heart." I thought then that I had a kind heart; I doubted it now,—I doubted everything. I thought so much about myself and my troubles that I was getting selfish, I knew. I watched my cousins and saw them, and my brother also in a lesser degree, moving in an atmosphere of warmth and light from which I was shut out. As I looked and longed to share alike with the rest, I was filled with envy, malice and all uncharitableness, and all my thoughts judged and condemned Aunt. I was mercifully delivered from a serious trouble about this time.

A conviction had been growing on Aunt that Jamie would never either walk or talk; this fear made her more tender and indulgent to him. I may say I was the proxy that carried out her feelings towards him. I carried him about in the house, in the garden, abroad in the fields in the warm spring weather, till my arms seemed ready to drop from my shoulders. I never complained, for who was there to heed my complaint?

One day I had got him to sleep with much difficulty, brought him home and carried him upstairs to his cot, and tucked him in with a sigh of relief that the long march and the weary singing were over. When I came down stairs Aunt said to me, "Elizabeth, take Nellie and carry her out into the air a little while."

It was with an unwilling heart that I took her that day.

She was a nice little baby, not a bit cross, fat and sweet and white, soft to feel, like a little white rabbit or a kitten. Aunt tied on her wee white bonnet and cloak of white dimity and I carried her up the lane into the long meadow and sat down to rest on the grass with her on my lap.

It was a bright day—everything was just as beautiful as it could be. The sky was brightly blue; big, downy clouds, all their whiteness filled with glory, floated tranquilly along. The grass was starred with daisies and golden with

buttercups. The birds were doing their best to express their gladness. One thrush of my acquaintance that had a nest in the big elm tree that grew in the hedge, sat on a branch where I could see him plainly—oh dear he did not mind me in the least!—held up his head and sung such a jubilant psalm as if he must sing the glory of his joyfulness or die. A distant cuckoo went over his two notes as though he wanted all the world to hear. The gladness of the spring comforted and rested me. I looked at the little round-eyed daisies holding up their faces to the sky, every white leaflet blushing crimson at the edge for gladness. I longed to gather the beautiful things and make a daisy chain for the white throat of little Nellie. If I had only a needle and thread. I looked in my pocket-cushion, where it ought to be—the needle I mean— and in the breast of my pinafore, where it was, to Aunt's dismay, sometimes found, but there was no needle, so the daisy chain must remain unstrung. Well, it was one comfort they looked better on their own stems among the grass.

As I sat there spying out the beauties of the spring-time, watching the shadows sweeping over the grass, hearing the little stream that ran down the side of the meadow, telling its own story in its own way, to the pebbles and the rushes, I noticed something blue swaying and swinging on the ditch face beyond the stream. I went near to the edge of the little stream, and behold they were flowers! Never before had I seen any like them. They were blue, pure like the sky above me, little bells with delicate mitred edges, two and three clustered on one stem, and it as slender as a hair ; and they trembled and swung in the soft spring wind till I could fancy they were ringing chimes for the fairies. How glad I was to find these beauties, aristocrats of flowers! How common daisies and buttercups in their silver and gold looked beside them! I must get them; they were only across the little brook, on the bank beyond. I could cross it with a running jump, and get them and be back in a moment. I sat looking at them as they swayed in the soft spring breeze, dipping and nodding at me as though they would say "Come over and gather us." I would never have thought of it if I had had Jamie, for he would have lifted his voice in a screeching protest that would have alarmed the country if I had attempted to lay him down ; but Nellie was so sweet and quiet, I might lay her on the warmed grass for a minute, only for a minute, and I would have the flowers that were like bits of the heaven that bent above me.

I laid the dear baby on the grass. There was an almost imperceptible slope from where I laid her to the edge of the little stream, that was pretty deep though narrow. I ran down and sprang across quite easily. I gathered the flowers ; they were as beautiful in my grasp as when I looked at them from a distance, which cannot be said of everything we grasp at. But there were more a little up stream on the other side of the bank. I must have them too. I ran up a few steps and gathered them. Turning my head up and down stream to see if there were any more, I saw that the baby had kicked and squirmed until she was rolling down the slope, and had got quite near the edge of the stream. I dropped the precious flowers and made a great jump across. As I lifted my eyes from the part they took in my jump, I saw the little white bundle roll over the brink and flash into the water. I saw her float down on the little rapid stream. I tore along the grass like the wind, jumped into the water and caught up the darling. She was nothing the worse, only the plunge and the fright. I stripped her entirely and laid her things smoothly on the grass to dry, and rolled up the dear white naked

pet in my pinafore, and held her close to my heart, and sung to her, walking up and down in my wet skirts till she quit sobbing and fell asleep. It was a long time before her clothes were dry. I put her little chemise in my bosom to warm before I put it on her. I was dreadfully afraid of her taking cold from her plunge and being sick, and I was afraid also of Aunt's finding out and having good cause to be angry. Her clothing seemed as if it would never dry, but at last it was dry and I dressed her with care and set out home without the bluebells,—indeed I never thought of them.

Annie was coming up the lane in search of me as I went down. Aunt asked how I managed to tumble baby's clothes so, but a neighbor was in and she let the matter slip by, and no harm happened to the baby either, and I was so thankful.

The days went slowly past, bringing no change for the better to me. I fretted impatiently that I was learning nothing. All prospect of learning to support myself seemed at an end. Bella Wiley suggested to me once that I might learn to flower on muslin for the factory; but when there were two babies to be nursed, where was there any time to learn anything? I could seldom snatch a minute to read now, either by sitting up late or rising early, and reading was a must-have of my nature.

This summer there was a great depression of trade felt all over. Times were slack at Enbridge, Uncle said, and he paid off some of his men. Those whom he did not wish to part with took a week's holiday and went off to enjoy themselves. Uncle proposed to Aunt to take advantage of a standing invitation and make a little trip to Killead to see Arthur's aunt,—she who had apprenticed him to Uncle so much against his will.

Uncle hired a jaunting-car for the day, intending to take Aunt and the children, including Walter. Arthur was to drive, while I was to stay at home to take care of Jamie, whose temper could not be relied on so far as to make it safe or pleasant to take him visiting.

Arthur's aunt, Mrs. Malvern, lived at a fine old place with orchards, gardens, and finely laid out grounds, worth going some distance to see; so great pleasure was anticipated from this visit. But Aunt laid so many injunctions as to behavior on Nat and Tom, so many directions about saying ma'am and sir, commands about handkerchiefs that never would stay in their pockets, so many "Thou shalt's" and "Thou shalt nots," that they got discouraged and rebelled entirely against going, declaring sturdily that they would rather go to Aunt Mattie's. To this Aunt at last consented.

Early on the eventful morning, Nat and Tom in high glee set off together to Aunt Mattie's, glorying in the liberty from forms and ceremonies which they were to enjoy, forgetting altogether that the prospective good times depended entirely on Aunt Mattie's humor, which was at best a doubtful thing to count on. They had full permission to stay with Aunt Mattie all day. Bella Wiley had asked for a day out, to go over to West's, beyond the gazeebo, where she used to live, to see Miss Janetta Nicholson, Mr. West's niece, before she returned to Scotland; so I, with only Jamie to mind, was to be "monarch of all I surveyed." I determined beforehand to have a good time reading whenever I got Jamie to sleep.

Aunt was about ready, Annie and Walter waiting with great impatience; Annie was holding the baby in her full dress of pale blue merino, cloak trimmed with a border of quilted blue silk, and a little white silk bonnet covered with rosettes of white ribbon; Arthur, walking about dressed in his best, looking very grand and important, when the car came to the door. The driver, a lanky boy, a decided enemy of

Arthur's, said to Uncle, with a side glance at where Arthur stood, "Master's compliments, and I must go along to drive. He wouldn't trust any horse he owns to Arthur Weir's driving."

"I'll answer for the horse to your master," said Uncle, impatiently. "Tell him so."

"Master's compliments," persisted the boy, "and if the horse goes, I must go too to take care of him."

It was too late in the day for any other alternative than to come in to the boy's terms, or not to go at all. Arthur took offence and would not go, because he was not to drive, though Uncle almost coaxed him.

"Don't let him stay," said Aunt fretfully; "there's no knowing what mischief Elizabeth and he will manage to do before we return."

"They will be at mischief, it is altogether likely, wherever they are," said Uncle, with provoking coolness. "Mischief-makers are always best at home. You will do as little, however, as you can conscientiously," said Uncle to us, with a glance that comprehended us both.

Arthur turned on his heel and went into the house, missing the triumphant leer which the boy cast at him as the car drove off. There was a nice day of torment before me, I thought. I had not been alone with this boy since the time of the potato-digging. Jamie was fretful because he was left behind, and I carried him up and down the kitchen, soothing him by singing his favorite tune.

"You had better give him to me," said Arthur. "Come along, little Corbie; see what Arthur has got in his pocket!"

He produced three or four particolored glass marbles, a little whistle, on which he blew a shrill alarm, and a shining medal of Father Matthew's which he had picked up somewhere. Jamie lifted his head from my shoulder, looked at the gay marbles, hesitated—another blast from the whistle decided him, and he went to Arthur quite willingly. He established himself in Aunt's chair, set Jamie on the little table beside him with the glass marbles and some common ones in a little wooden dish to play with, blowing the whistle for him at intervals when he seemed likely to tire of the marbles. Thus arranged, he turned to me.

"What prog have they left you?"

"Bread and butter and milk; everything else is locked up," I answered.

"That old aunt of yours should be hung. No jam left out, eh?"

"Not a bit."

"She's careful, she is, to go away for all day and leave you like that, and the Corbie to take care of besides. She might have comforted your heart with a little pot of jam, or some of that golden honey sent to her by my venerable aunt. Well, we must get up a feast. Have you any money?"

"No," I said; "I never have any."

Arthur turned out his pockets, and noticed with disgust that he had only eight pence. "I had two shillings last week, but I spent the rest," he said ruefully. "What will we do with it? We must have a pie."

"Eight pence would buy a little pie, I think," I suggested.

"That would not do," said Arthur, briskly. "Too extravagant. You must make the pie."

"But I can't; I don't know how," I objected.

"You don't know whether you can or not, if you never tried. Making pies may be the business of your life. You have got to make your first pie to-day," very decidedly said.

"What will it be made of?" I asked.

Arthur thought for a while. "There are gooseberries and cherries in the garden. What more do you want?"

"O, Arthur! the gooseberries are done, and these cherries take so much sugar and are not sweet after all."

"Well, well, take apples from the corner tree. They're green, but I guess

they'll be good enough in a pie. What more do you want? Flour? Did your Aunt lock it up?"

"No, she did not. There's flour and butter for the paste, and nutmeg in the grater, but there's no sugar."

"Well," said Arthur reflectively, spreading his eight pennies on the table before him, "fair sugar, eight pence a pound—half a pound, sufficient to sweeten a pie, four pence; four pence remaining will buy four tarts at the baker's, or four sweet buns. You must go and do the marketing."

"I cannot leave Jamie," I said, unwilling to go, and glad to make excuse.

"I'll keep Jamie. We're going out to bring in the apples; I'll pare them too,—I have a sharp knife, sharp enough to cut off chickens' heads, Jamie my boy," with a glance at baby Jamie, who was singularly well behaved.

My excuse was taken from me, and I had no fresh one to offer. Arthur gave me the eightpence and I set off to do my marketing. Mr. Smith, the baker, was in the shop with his paper cap on. To make sure of pleasing Arthur, I bought two tarts and two sweet buns, and Mr. Smith, who knew I was left to keep house, gave me a large square of gingerbread.

Before I returned Arthur had brought in the apples, and some cherries also.

He surveyed my purchases with approval, and sat down to peel the apples. Jamie, wonderfully on his good behavior, sat on the floor amusing himself. I began to make the pie crust from recollections of watching Jane Geddes making pastry long ago.

"How are we to bake this pie, Arthur?" I asked; "Aunt sends her's to the baker's at the corner. We cannot do that."

"Never you mind, make the pie and we will bake it some way."

In the middle of our preparations for the feast, Nat and Tom came running in, banging the door after them with a great noise. They were very cross, for they had promised to themselves a good day at Aunt Mattie's, that Uncle Jack would plan amusements for them, as he often did, and make Aunt Mattie be more liberal of her good things than she was inclined to be of her own accord; but Uncle Jack happened to be away at the fair, and some domestic mischance had made Aunt Mattie bristle up like a hedgehog, so they had come home in a huff. They took great interest in what was going on, stood beside the bake-board watching with eager eyes every movement of my hands, as I fitted the paste to the pie dish, cut off the residue and heaped in the pared and cored pieces of apple which Arthur had made ready. I felt inclined to put in all the sugar, but Arthur prevented me. He decided the amount, recommended bits of butter scattered among the apples to increase the flavor, told me how much nutmeg to put in, and was very learned about ornamenting the upper crust.

When it was ready he swept clean a hot place on the hearth, set the pie on it, turned down a pot over it, and heaped up coals and ashes all around it. Then he got another pie dish, into which he laid the cherries, after stoning them, with my help sprinkled the rest of the sugar over them, and set them away to be ready for the feast.

While the pie was getting baked Arthur got the last paper and read a story for us, to keep the boys' attention from the pie, because they were sure it was burning every minute, and wanted the coals raked away and the pot lifted off to be sure that all was right, and to see if it was near done.

The story was about an old bachelor who hated children, and was punished for it by goblins, who caught him in a churchyard on a Christmas-eve.

We got so deeply interested in the story, and were so glad that the wicked, child-hating bachelor got punished, that every time a vengeful goblin jumped on his back we laughed with glee

and joined in the shout "Ho, ho, ho, Gabriel Grub!"

"Look at little dummy," said Arthur, pointing to baby Jamie, who was listening intently, watching Arthur with his shrewd little eyes, and laughing shrilly when we laughed. "I do believe the little Corbie understands. He is a fairy changeling, there is no doubt about it. I have a great mind to put him behind the fire and see."

"You had better look at the pie, Arthur," I said, glad to change the subject, terrified lest some dreadful mischief should come into his head, and no one at home to prevent him from carrying out any purpose he might form.

He looked at the pie and pronounced it done. It was beautifully browned. A strip of candied edge suggested where the rich juice had boiled up. The feast was ready. I set the table, laying on bread and butter, the buns and tarts cut into four shares, the cherries swimming in their own juice, the gingerbread divided like the rest in four pieces, and the crowning glory of all, the pie.

I brought milk to serve for tea, obeying Arthur when he told me not to take the top off. What a feast we had, and how the boys enjoyed it! Every one divided with Jamie and petted him, Arthur not having again hinted at testing by fire if he was a fairy.

After we had feasted abundantly, we played blind man's buff, hunt the slipper, and puss in the corner, and enjoyed ourselves immensely. When we were tired playing, and had taken our supper of bread and milk, sitting round the fire we all agreed that we had spent a pleasant day.

"'Lizabeth's not stupid," said Nat, in a burst of confidence; "she maked the goodest pie that ever was."

"You'll be a good wife," chorused Tom, "and make good things for your husband."

Arthur burst laughing at this speech, and we all joined in, and baby Jamie pounding the floor with a stick as he sat by my side sang out "Ho, ho, ho, Gabely Gub."

When Uncle and Aunt returned the boys met them at the door shouting, "Jamie has talked! Jamie has talked!"

There was great rejoicing. Arthur only remarking that the little Corbie could have talked long ago if he had liked.

Jamie though always a weird child with something not cannie about him, after that day learned to talk and walk rapidly, to my great relief.

But this day of pleasure that showed the good side of Arthur's nature made us too familiar with him, and led before long to trouble.

CHAPTER X.

'Tis good to speak in kindly guise,
And soothe where'er we can,
Fair speech should bind the human mind
And Love link man to man.

ELIZA COOK.

Arthur was, I regret to say, lazy and trifling, and Uncle was very strict. When he did not get through his task, Uncle compelled him to stay after hours to finish it. I, and Annie afterwards, got into the habit of stealing into the workroom, when we knew he was alone there, to keep him company. We both knew that Aunt would not have permitted this had she known of it.

One night Arthur was in disgrace as usual, and Annie and I stole up to see what he was doing. We were very welcome and Arthur quit his work to show us a puzzle.

The three boys, who were learning their lessons, in the little room over the hall, came into the workroom when they heard our voices.

"What are you doing?" said Walter.

"Arthur is showing us a puzzle," said Annie, shaking back her long curls.

"Arthur won't show you how to make the puzzle, Miss Long-tongue," said Arthur.

"Will you show it to me, Arthur?" said Walter, eagerly.

"Yes, I will. Come round here away from the rest, quite away from the girls. Girls should not be shown anything, they are always blabbing," said Arthur, in his teazing way.

Annie and I were both angry at him because he spoke that way about girls.

He was sitting on the board, the candlestick, a wooden one with branches—only one branch had a candle in it—stood before him, between him and us. Walter went behind him to see the puzzle, and he turned away from the light to show it to him, so that we might not see it. Annie slyly turned the branch with the candle in it round till the blaze touched his hair and it took fire and blazed up over his head. Now Arthur was very proud of his curls, and the flames of the candle burnt his temple as well as his hair. Annie did not mean to do so much harm. She was quite frightened, as well she might, for Arthur pounced upon her and gave her a good many smart slaps before he remembered what he was about. As soon as he let her go, she ran down in an agony of crying and sobbing. The boys scurried back to their lessons, shutting the door softly behind them.

Annie had a plan of crying that alarmed her mother, and made her crying a terrible event in the household. She held her breath till the veins in her neck swelled as if they would burst. She turned black, gasped, choked, then settled down into sobs that threatened to break her to pieces. Her mother soothed her, petted her, called her endearing names, declared to the bystanders that she was too sensitive and delicate to endure much. After a time Annie would lie quiet in her mother's arms, with only a great gulping sob at intervals, to tell of the storm that had passed. I used to look on wondering if I could do it if I tried, and musing on what would be my probable fate if I attempted it. This time the attack was more than usually severe, because Annie had been ill, and Arthur had no business to strike her, and she felt that an excess of emotion was due under the circumstances and so she went through the whole performance with variations.

It was a long time before she had breath enough to answer her mother's tender enquiries. She seemed likely to faint, shut her eyes and grew rigid.

"My smelling salts, quick!" said Aunt in desperation.

"Burn feathers under her nose," suggested Bella Wiley.

"Fetch some cold water," gasped Aunt.

"Slap her hands hard," advised Bella.

Bella went for water. I ran for the salts. Bella then pulled some feathers from an old goose wing, preparatory to trying that remedy I took one hand to chafe it, while Aunt loosed her dress. Then Annie came to with a convulsive sob, and her mother asked "What is it dear? What is the matter?"

Annie turned her face to her mother's and gasped out "Elizabeth took me up stairs."

"Of course Elizabeth! always Elizabeth! Why do you ever go near her!" said Aunt indignantly. "Is that all ails you, darling? Look up! I'm not angry at you."

"Arthur slapped me," said Annie, relapsing into sobs.

Now it happened that Arthur hearing the commotion and wondering what was going on, came down stairs to see, making as if he wanted an iron. It was Arthur's audacious theory that it was always better to face the music. He came close to the group at the fireside just as Annie sobbed out her charge against him on her mother's bosom.

Arthur had not come out of the fray scathless; his crop of short curls were singed off at one side, and his temple was slightly scorched. His

face was pale yet with the temper he had shown upstairs.

Aunt turned to him and indignantly demanded how he dared to touch a child of hers!

Arthur smiled—his smile was so calm and supercilious that it was a great weapon of provocation. "You had better teach your daughter how to behave herself Madam," he said.

Aunt was so fiery—so fond of her darling, he had dared to strike her, and now blamed her to her mother's face, she forgot herself entirely, and, as if he had been one of us, boxed his ears.

He turned on her like a wild cat and gave her a well aimed blow that knocked off the little lace arrangement which she wore on her head, broke the tortoise-shell comb that held up her back hair and let it tumble down in a golden brown stream. Aunt's hair was her solitary beauty. Both looked at each other—both recollected themselves. Arthur pale and erect walked out of the kitchen holding his head higher than usual. Aunt bundled up her back hair and never seemed to notice that Annie was frightened into quietness.

We all knew that Aunt felt bad because she had forgotten her dignity so far as to strike Arthur—and get the worst of it,—and a great silence fell upon us.

When Uncle came home Aunt preferred her complaint with only as much exaggeration as was natural to her when Annie was in the case.

Arthur was called down to defend himself and came into the little sitting-room as haughty and determined as ever. Uncle repeated Aunt's complaint and asked Arthur what he had to say.

"The young ones have no business on the board if they cannot behave themselves. If they will come round bothering let them take what they get. As for Mrs. Henderson I'm sorry I struck her but she had no business striking me." said Arthur stiffly.

He did not say any more—he did not even mention Annie's setting fire to his hair. But his curls were all frizzled up at one side and the scorch on his temple showed quite plain.

"How did you singe your head that way?" asked Uncle.

"That was the beginning," said Arthur, "Annie did that—turned the candlestick round while I was showing Walter the puzzle and scorched my face, and I was angry, and so I slapped her."

"Annie!" said Uncle with a whole volume of reproach in the word.

She immediately recommenced crying, but softly, for she never carried on her worst before her father.

"He would not show me the puzzle and I did not mean to hurt him," she said.

"That will do," said Uncle, shortly. Leave the room, I'll see what's to be done with you. You go too Elizabeth. Take them away, mamma.

Uncle gave Arthur, when alone, a severe reprimand, though he acknowledged that he had got provocation. That he was much to blame in Uncle's eyes was proved by him going to the escritoire, bringing out his indentures and reading them over to him, especially a clause that empowered the master to punish a refractory apprentice. Arthur made fun of the whole affair afterwards, called it, "Reading the Riot Act."

When he had gone back to his work, not in the least penitent, Uncle called me and talked to me seriously, for though Annie was blamed a little, the weight of the blame rested on me. What he said to me was both good and kind, only he assumed that I deliberately did wrong on purpose to provoke my aunt, and I knew that I was trying earnestly most of the time to please her, and could not succeed, and he would not allow me to say a word in my own defence. I was wrong, I knew, to go up to the board when Arthur was alone,

but the day of the feast had made us friends, and I did not mean any harm.

Arthur in his defence had inadvertently called me Cinderella, the nickname had made Uncle Tom think of my neglected education, and soon after, I was told that Annie and I were to be sent away to school.

Aunt opposed my going to school at all, on the ground of expense, and Uncle told her that there was enough of my father's money to defray the expense. When Aunt asked why he had not told this before, Uncle said it was not needed before. Aunt opposed the sending of Annie and me to the same school on every account. Uncle was determined on having his own will in the matter, not only to send us to the same school, but he insisted that our dresses should be made exactly alike. The only difference Aunt ventured to make was to tell the dressmaker who made up our best dresses, wine-colored merinos, to trim Annie's with silk velvet and mine with cotton velvet.

We were sent to school to the Moravian village because the schools there had a great name, both for the education imparted, and the tender care lavished by the gentle Moravians on the pupils entrusted to their charge. I found myself in a new atmosphere in the Moravian school I was free entirely from the injustice which I had felt so keenly. I felt that I now stood on a level with the other pupils. If I did well I should be accepted, and if ill, blame would lie at my door. The lessons were long and strictly exacted, the rules like the laws of the Medes and Persians, inflexible, but there was also a law of kindness that reached all alike, so different from the hard rule of Mr. Caldwell, so entirely different from the partiality of Aunt Henderson that for the first time since I left Grey Abbey I nestled down with a feeling of being at home. In truth Himmel-en-erde was to me as Elim must have been to the Israelites, beautiful of itself but still more lovely and delightful as a haven of rest after the danger and the trials encountered on the way to it. The shelter of Elim's palms, the sparkle of its fountains must often have been seen through grateful tears and surely when on the long march through the waste, howling wilderness, when the drought consumed them by day and the frost by night, they must have remembered regretfully the green oasis watered by the twelve wells, shaded by the threescore and ten palm trees and thought of the rest they enjoyed while they encamped beside its waters.

I know that years have passed away since I was a childish sojourner in Himmel-en-erde, but still it is seen through the rosy tints of a grateful memory. I loved my teachers, though they in no wise distinguished me from among the rest, with a romantic love that would have surprised them if they had known it. I admired one of them very much, a very tall and graceful woman with a regal carriage, who was always dressed in soft and flowing material.

A firm decided woman she was, always inflexibly just in her decisions, as far as she knew. I was no favorite of hers, I never thought such a thing possible, I had lived too long in an atmosphere of disapproval to expect a miracle like that, I admired her for the pleasure her every movement gave me, and for the trust in her even handed justice with which she inspired me. Neither Annie nor I was looked upon with much favor by the teachers. Annie was, they said too pettish and too liable to take offence. I was awkward, dreamy and old fashioned, and neglected other studies for the sake of reading. The accusation in my case was but too true. There was a library connected with the school and I set myself deliberately to read my way through it, I had never yet satisfied myself with reading, so I took all the time I could possibly steal from play or from

my other studies and revelled in Tales, Histories, Travels and Biographies.

The minister, whose name was Malilieu came to the school every Monday to hear us repeat our lessons out of the Summary of Christian Doctrine. He was an old greyheaded man with a double portion of the calmness and peace which was characteristic of the Moravians.

When I first read Tennyson's May Queen, and came to the lines

"O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair,
And blessings on his whole life long until he meet me there!"

they immediately called up the recollection of Mr Malilieu and of his fatherly kindness towards us all. There was a lecture for us in the church once a week to which the pupils of all the schools marched two and two. And there was also another Catechism. It was not difficult to learn or remember, and I never got into any difficulty with my teachers by rebelling against it as not true. The answer given to the question "What is God?" made a deep impression on my mind.

"God is a spirit.
Eternal—without beginning or end.
Omnipotent—able to do all things.
Omnipresent—present everywhere.
Omniscent—seeing all things.
Holy—loving that which is good and hating evil.
Just and righteous—rewarding the good and punishing the evil.
True and faithful—keeping his word.
Good and merciful—for God is love."

This definition of God set me longing again to have Him on my side, to have Him as my friend. The only hindrance I saw was expressed in the words "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," and I deliberately set myself to become holy in His sight. I need not say that I failed. Still my failure in this had no effect on the gladness I felt in my newly found liberty and equality and sense of companionship, and the school-days sped merrily by. I was thankful for an opportunity for study, but I was not by any means noted for studious habits. In a reaction from a life of repression at Aunt Henderson's I became more noted for fun and folly than for anything else.

Annie and I were seldom together; she liked and was liked by one class of girls, while I was drawn to another. My time was the time of love and I made idols of those whom my heart selected, wrapped them in the royal purple of my own imaginings and fell down and worshipped them. If I walked in dreams I am glad I have never entirely awakened. Every recollection of the Moravian settlement is a golden memory. It is ground made holy by remembrance of tender care, gentle leadings, kindly sympathy. All my day dreams took a rosy tinge amid the beauty, the safety, the kindliness of that home of learning. If Providence would grant me my heart's wish, for

"As Moses longed for Lebanon I long that once again
My feet might press the shamrocks in the meadows by the Main."

I might go first to the garden of sleepers, God's acre, for there lie the most of those whom I loved, who loved me in blessed Himmel-en-erde.

I suppose there were childish sorrows, and the childish relief of tears, but these recollections have faded away leaving only the memories of sunny times. So I studied and read, played and loved and grew childish and happy in the warmth and light.

Christmas holidays came all too quickly. Then I knew what punishment was decreed for my former delinquencies. Annie was sent for home, and I was left behind to spend my vacation in the settlement. It was a great relief to me, this arrangement. I did not want to go, there was no home at Enbridge for me. True I would have liked to see Jamie and the

baby, and I had got over my dread of Arthur, and I pined for Walter, but on the whole staying was much better.

Christmas in the Moravian settlement was "the height of a grand good time," as Mary Darling a little Kerry girl expressed it in her warm southern way. The church—there is no church in all the world quite so nice as that church—was all decked with holly and ivy, laurel and box, the work of the fair hands of the minister's daughters, assisted by the gentlemen of the academy. The high one-legged pulpit was festooned and garlanded till it did not know itself. The banisters of the stairs leading up to it were changed into a leafy screen, the pillars were wreathed with ropes of foliage, the chandeliers were lost behind a green covering, out of which the many wax lights gleamed like stars, the organ loft was transformed into a bower where the singers like nymphs and dryads warbled their anthems under a canopy of laurel. It was beautiful to get into the church just to see it, but to be one of the children that sat in rows before the pulpit, the boys in blue jackets and falling collars, the girls in white, with little lace arrangements on their curls, and sashes and bows of bright pink ribbons all dressed alike, a very republic of little children, this was enjoyment. Such a crowd of merry faced little ones, full of happy glee, although grim Miss McClosky who watched over their behavior, sat before them with admonitory nods and frowns, they were all too happy to think of her."

Soft-footed women glided about with wicker-baskets lined with snowy napkins and filled with Christmas cakes. Surely there were never such cakes as we got at the Christmas eve festival at Himmel-en-erde! And the tea fragrant and sweet, was served to us without even the rattle of a teaspoon to disturb the good minister who spoke to us of the Saviour born to us, who was Christ the Lord.

Some of the little people had to say hymns and portions of Scripture about the babe of Bethlehem. To my great joy I was one of these. At a given time I was to stand up and repeat a Christmas Hymn. I had prepared it with great care, but my heart beat lest I might forget any of it, or not speak loud enough for all the people to hear. In my innocence I thonght this absolutely necessary. At the appointed time I rose and repeated Montgomery's Hymn

Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang Creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship—
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

Shepherds in the field abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing;
Yonder shines the infant light:
Come and worship—
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

Sages leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great desire of Nations,
Ye have seen His natal star
Come and worship:
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

Saints before the altar bending,
Waiting long with hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord descending,
In His temple shall appear;
Come and worship—
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

Sinners stung with true repentance,
Doomed for guilt to endless pains,
Justice now revokes the sentence;
Mercy calls you break your chains.
Come and worship—
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

I will not tell how I murdered these beautiful verses. I would like to forget it as I hope every one else has done long, long ago.

The festival was nearly over when the door opened and a man came in and with shuffling uncertain step came forward into the light. A shabby man in clothes that had been those of a dandy once, but now were so stained with the mud of travel, torn and tattered with accidents and

fights by the way, that he was little more than a shabby genteel bundle of rags. A hall servant brought him to a seat, where I could see him without looking round very much, which I did not like to do, from a sense of my recent failure as well as from the wholesome dread I felt for Miss McClosky. I looked across and forgot everything in amazement and horror when I recognized Scrieven Doyle. He must have been on a long tramp and a great spree before he came to be such a figure, He could not I thought, be anything like sober or he never would have ventured in among people in such a plight. His crop of spiky black hair was standing up in all directions, like the feathers of an enraged hen, as feathery looking as Nebuchadnezzar's must have been after he quit taking care of it. I knew the Adelaide brown coat with its tattered velvet collar that used to be so smart, but now was ragged and torn, and buttoned up to the throat to conceal the greater rags, or the want of them beneath. His shoes, light pumps, were laced with black thread. There he was in all his misery sitting in the glare of the light in a most conspicuous place where all his full-lengthed wretchedness could be seen. He was set in the uppermost room at the feast, which was too much for his comfort, and he rolled his blood-shot eyes about in search of a corner to escape into out of sight. Seeing none he tried to smooth his face into becoming gravity and only succeeded in looking more drunkenly hideous. I felt a dreadful terror lest he should notice me and claim me as an old acquaintance. I could not keep my eyes off him, as he sat there, holding his hat, as if he could not find a place to lay it down. Oh, such a hat! all battered and bruised, and torn and crushed out of all shape and resemblance to anything. One of the hall servants brought him the basket of Christmas cakes. He stared at him with surprise but the man stood gravely immovable, till he dropped the dreadful hat close by his feet and helped himself. Then came the tea—one cup after another, hot, strong and sweet. He eat and drank with visible enjoyment. He must have been perishing with cold and hunger. I am sure he enjoyed the light and warmth and beauty after the keen cold that was outside. The food must have seemed to his need almost miraculous. The festival was nearly over when he came in, and he had done eating only a little while, when the hall servant began to go round with the collection box. As soon as he saw it coming a sense of his moneyless condition came over him for he rose and made for the door, and escaped into the darkness. He remembered the tea and cake after he got sober, and boasted of having been at the Moravian Christmas Festival. He used to say if ever he left the ancient Faith—as if he had a Faith of any kind poor fellow—that he would certainly join the Moravians.

Many a one wondered as they dispersed from the festival, who the wretched looking creature was. I was the only one in the congregation that knew, I suppose, but I was not very proud of the knowledge and did not share it with any one. I was glad, however, and so were they all, that he had got a share of the feast.

CHAPTER XI.

"An end comes to the darkest day,
And the bright sunshine comes back after rain."

It was during this Christmas vacation that I was first taken notice of by the dearest of all the friends of my school days, Sister Keren Borg, the Labouress among the single sisters. A lady whose memory lingers like a blessing in the minds of all who came under her influence.

Well I remember the day on which I was first invited to go to see her, my anxiety to appear well, the flutter I was in about my dress, how I tried first one

then another, and finally settled on my brown merino because it was my best, adding a little lace collar and neck-ribbon which had been my dear mamma's. With what nervousness I rung the bell at the great door, and followed the porteress, Sister McClosky, with timid steps, through the spacious hall, up the wide staircase till she knocked for me at Miss Borg's door. I learned to know by heart that pleasant home-like room. Even now as I write I can recal it most distinctly. I remember the paper on the walls, the pattern of the carpet, the motherly sofa in its cover of green and white striped chintz, the pictures of Herrenhut and Count Zinzendorf above the mantlepiece, with quaint card racks on each side, the ornamental curiosities on the mantel-shelf, Miss Borg's chair and table at the window and the footstool on which I loved to sit, I see them all, they are parts of a picture indelibly printed on my memory. Above all I remember the fair kind motherly face, softly tinged with pink like an autumn apple, the clear eyes with a wealth of love and pity in their stedfast look, eyes that beamed as if they had never looked fierce with anger or hopeless with sorrow, eyes that could not look sly or sarcastic; the whole face in its repose, in its strength of goodness and patience spoke of faith in God, of a trust that had tried and proved him and through conflict, had reached the eventide of peace. This was Miss Borg, and when I add that she was always dressed in soft material of drab or brown, her cap and kerchief-net of the finest, the simple border of quilling drawn close round her face and tied with a bow of white ribbon, that her voice and hands had the tremble of age in them; I have described her as truly as I can. I cannot tell how or why this old lady drew me towards her. I was a lonely little thing at my first entrance into the settlement, I had some quaint thoughts of my own and perhaps I amused her and perhaps it was merely the outflow of her motherly heart in sympathy. These grand glorious single women who have never been bound down to one hearthstone or absorbed in its cares and blessings, they are free to pity the solitary and have a large share of Our Father's mercifulness for the fatherless. She soon found the key to my heart and soon knew all my sorrows and struggles. It was a blessing to me to find one who understood and sympathised with me, wise to counsel and tender to blame. Her advice and instruction ran like golden threads through the warp and woof of my school life, among its faults and follies, high aspirations, endeavors and failures.

Other friendships came to me, young and fresh with the romance which God puts into the hearts of children, but none so powerful for my good as hers. I wish that my gratitude might reach her where she reigns with her Lord that she might know her loving kindness was not altogether wasted.

I was acquainted with my venerable friend for some time before I found courage to tell her of my search after God.

"You have been indeed wandering upon the dark mountains my poor lamb," she said, "the trials of life have come to thee in God's providence very early. After all it is not, my little one, what trials we meet by the way, but where the path leads, that is of most importance. The way has been rough to thy feet, and, stumbling about, I am afraid thou hast lost sight of His banner over thee which is love."

"I thought God might care if I was alone among so many, and always blamed whatever I did, but He did not," I said.

"He does care, my Elizabeth; He does feel for thee; He is touched with our sorrows, knows their heaviness, for He carried them when he bore our sins. He knows how much bitterness to mix with every cup—with yours—with

mine, for truly I too have tasted bitterness. He cares for thy suffering but he cares more for what thou wilt become. When the Lord Christ came to seek for thee and me and other silly sheep who were running each in his own way His path lay not among roses but it led to the lost. He trod the sorrowful way, drank the bitterest cup, all because our souls were precious in his sight."

"If He loved me," I persisted, "when He is Almighty He might have taken my part against the rest, He might have interfered to save me from injustice,"

"Hast thou been seeking a strong champion to redress thy wrongs? Didst thou consider God as a free lance or a knight errant whom thou mightest hire by thy prayers or influence by thy tears to undertake thy cause. The God whom you thus seek you will not find, my child. God is our Father —Father to us and to those with whom we are angry. Truly He is the Judge of all the earth and He will do right. He is the Great Redresser of wrong; but he knows when, and where, and how to interfere, and how long it is best we should endure, and whether it is discipline or punishment that has been our help."

"He knows right from wrong; that must always be the same. 'Rewarding the good and punishing the evil,' is what the catechism says."

"Are you good, my Elizabeth?"

"No," I said, hanging down my head, "not in his sight, but I was trying to be good to Aunt and my cousins, and she was unjust to me."

"My dear child, if God through electing love, has chosen you to bear the yoke in your youth, to stand in a difficult place, you stand for Him, as one whom He honors with a trust, a charge to keep,—you occupy till He comes. Let your *I serve* be rendered lovingly and cheerfully as to Him and wait patiently, till the end of this discipline being answered, He bid you come up higher to serve Him in another position. Ask God to fix the yoke to your neck, to pour in the oil of consolation where it galls. Always remember the dignity of service, the honor of being chosen to a place; and you are chosen not doomed; chosen to be where you are, and what you are, child, you are beloved for the father's sake. Think of this, it is He who loves you, who has appointed the bounds of your habitation, and after all it is with Him you have to do. Looking at things in the light of God you may discover *mein Kind* that your service even towards your Aunt has not been entirely perfect."

"I know that already, but I do try, I do want to do right," I said.

"Well, little one, bearing wrong is not so dreadful as doing wrong. Wrong doing leaves evil marks on the human soul, but angry resentment leaves marks too. Remember that."

"But I want to be a little happy like the rest," I said.

"We all want to be happy, my Elizabeth; we all search for happiness, but we do not find it unless we are brought where it is; 'At His right hand are pleasures for ever more.' You have wandered away from Him into the wilderness where anger and resentment parch up the soul. Come back to Him who is as the dew to Israel and you will revive as the corn and grow as the vine. When he has forgiven you, and comforted you, enlarged your heart and filled it with His presence, you will know happiness because you will have entered into blessedness."

Conversations like these were like beautiful music to me. I did not understand them but I enjoyed them. The calm of my childhood at the Manse came back to me with an added beauty and sweetness because of the dark days at Enbridge that preceded them. Nevertheless I did not set myself to return to the God of my father, the better

times that had come to me instead of stirring me up to seek God soothed me into self-complacency, as if I was receiving at the Lord's hand double for my sorrow, and deserved it. Whenever past vows of serving God, made under the pressure of my childish trials, came crowding up into my mind demanding fulfilment, there came also visions of innocent pleasures, of things of beauty that served to glorify the hard life of duty and reality, saying, "Can you give up all these before you have tasted of them, turn your back on all that is light and gay and enjoyable, flowers and song, poetry and romance, for a hard, stern path of duty leading to an early grave?"

Of course I did not know that the Great Schemer was showing me visions of a kingdom of this world and the glory of it to win my heart's worship. Of course I did not know that he always promised roses and paid thorns. As I had turned from God in my babyish sorrows so I turned from him in the happiness of childish enjoyments. I formed close school-girl friendships, and "proved myself with mirth." It would have surprised any of the girls to have known of my serious conversation with Miss Borg for I was counted a merry girl, when I could be lured away from my book. I could not get rid of earnest thought, but I kept it down, did not let it rise to my face for common occasions. I preferred to seem thoughtless and gay to my companions, covering from sight a constant want, a constant yearning, but

> "Keeping my faith and prayers
> Among the privatest of my affairs."

When I was alone I was compelled to an uneasy examination of myself, to see if I was getting any nearer to God, any surer of his favor, any more certain that I was a Christian, or even that I was gradually changing into one.

When the girls discovered me in a corner, and coaxed me into their pastimes I was the gayest of them all. Even this made me unhappy, fearing I was a hypocrite, because I seemed so much more thoughtless and merry than I really was. I got a new idea, new to me I mean, from Mary Darling, the little Kerry girl. She had lost a little sister whom she loved dearly and for whom she sorrowed deeply. One day forgetting her grief for a while she was playing merrily with the rest when Sophia Ross, a girl who liked to say disagreeable things, remarked to her:

"I wonder Mary Darling, you can be so light-hearted, and your mourning so new!"

"I am not light-hearted," said Mary, stopping suddenly in her play, "I am light-headed, and I am very sorry for it," and she left her game and went away by herself and cried bitterly.

We were all angry at Sophia Ross, and I think she was angry at herself for making such a bitter remark. Her words set me wondering if it was light-headedness ailed me, when I felt more than I dare show to any one but the one aged friend, and God who knew whether I willed it or not.

The days floated on to the midsummer vacation, and again Annie went home and I was left behind. Every one was very kind to me because I did not go home. The loveliest girl in the school and the best anywhere—beautiful Lily Adair, tried by every kindly means to make me forget that I was not desired at Aunt's. I was invited to her home during the vacation: She lived with her aunts, the Miss Crawfords. I had always worshipped Lily from afar, being with her increased my love for her. To me she was an embodied poem, her name hardly expressed all her loveliness of mind and person.

My vacation was no punishment to me, on the contrary, Lily and I had a splendid time. Together we wandered by the Maine water, to the grove, and the far Trilinn, and over the grassy ruin

called Rory Og; from her lips I learned the sad legends connected with this ruined castle of the McQuillans. She knew all the haunts where wild flowers grew; the birds seemed to tell her the secret of where their nests were hid for she knew all about them, and well she knew how to pass the time with song, romance and lay: That vacation was the brief bright time of close companionship with Lily the beautiful and lofty hearted. She was older than I was and left school shortly afterwards. She slipped away from us entirely before long and lies asleep with the green mantle of Erin spread over her in the graveyard of Himmel-en-erde.

I had another school friend, a bright auburn haired girl, Marion Lindsay, who was as fond of books as I was, and had a wonderful facility for getting herself and everybody else into scapes. She had a great love for poetry, of which I knew nothing, except the Scottish version of the Psalms and the Moravian Hymns or stray pieces found in the corner of the "Ulster Times." She smuggled Burns' Poems into school and lent them to me, and I neglecting everything else got mentally drunk over them. The "Address to the Deil" fascinated me and I spent some time in framing a reply in doggerel imitation, but was found out and complained of to Miss Borg, to whom was given a copy of my attempt at imitating the inimitable, to show her the depravity of her favorite. It was Greek to Miss Borg, whose English did not extend into broad Scotch. She submitted it to a sister who had no partiality for me, but was an enthusiastic admirer of Burns. She pronounced it harmless and rather clever for me.

Marion and I escaped, as far as Miss Borg was concerned, with a gentle request that we would write a composition on the text 'Cease to do evil, learn to do well.' Which Marion did in school girl prose and I in doggerel rhyme. We had escaped so easily that there was no improvement in our studies. Marion was averse to arithmetic, did not see the use of girls bothering about it. I thinking differently was classed with her because we were so much together. We gave ourselves up to reading until we had the reputation of being the idlest girls in school. Book after book was borrowed, secreted and read, and we lived "in fantasy." One evening, because of idleness, we had to remain in the school-room after school hours. Our teacher gave us the Rule for Simple Proportion to study so as to be able to solve a problem by the Rule without any assistance or explanation. It was not difficult to learn the rule, and I mastered it in a short time, and by rule worked out the first example, a very simple one.

"Have you done, Marion?" I asked, looking up. No answer from Marion, who sat with her head bowed down over her desk.

"She is reading," I said to myself and jumped up and ran over to her. She was reading in Walter Scott's "Marmion," the trial of Constance. I read a line over her shoulder, became interested, sat down beside her, Marion kindly sharing the book, and was soon utterly lost to the outer world. It was not our usual teacher who had charge of us that day but one of the single sisters who had taken our teacher's place for the time being. She had a rooted belief in the original sin of schoolgirls, therefore she would have been disappointed if she had found us studying. Being assured we were doing something unlawful she came in, shod in velvet, and stood behind us before we were aware of her presence.

"Miss Lindsay, have you accomplished your task?" she asked, addressing Marion.

Marion confessed she had not, and Miss Langley turned away and left us for another hour without waiting to see whether I had done anything or not. Birds of a feather we were in her eyes.

Of course we were both punished and disgraced. Only a few days afterwards Marion induced me to slip out and go across the bridge to the next village to get a book for her, the loan of which she had been promised. My reward was to be permission to read the book before it was returned. I consented, slipped out an hour before school time, and went swiftly on my errand. I received the book and returning could not resist the temptation of dipping into it a little. It was Walter Scott's "Rob Roy." I walked along reading, and got so absorbed that I jostled against some ladies who were walking in an opposite direction. I looked up quickly to apologize, when one of the ladies said:

"Did you ever see such a resemblance?"

"Resemblance to whom?" said her companion.

"Look and see," exclaimed the first speaker, then turning to me, she said: "What is your name, my dear?"

"Elizabeth Loftus Ray," I answered.

"I thought so," she said. "Now Evaleen, look, do not you recognize those eyes?"

The lady called Evaleen looked at me carelessly as I stood blushing under her scrutiny, and said, "Yes, her eyes are very like Nora O'Neil's."

"They are the very same. This must be Nora's child. What was your father's name, my dear?"

"Walter Ray," I answered. "He was a minister and he's dead."

"It is certainly the child," said the lady. "Norah named her baby Elizabeth Loftus after Lady Fitzgerald."

"And your father is dead also?" said the lady, turning to me. "How do you come to be here, my dear?"

"I am going to school at Himmel-en-erde," I said. "I came over here to borrow a book."

"Quite like Norah in her love for books," said the lady to her companion, "she is very much like her mother. We must see more of you. We must positively. Where shall we see you?"

"At the school," I answered. "It is against the rules that I am here now."

"Breaking the rules? Ah, that is not so well! We will not detain you now; we will see you again."

I hastened back with the book and got in unperceived. There was a tumult of feeling in my mind. These ladies—real ladies, knew my mother, and her name was Nora O'Neil. So strange to think that I had never heard it before. I never got through my studies so badly. I was reproved several times, I was told I would require a shaking to wake me up. I was in a tumultous dream and did not wish to be wakened. I started at every sound, hoping some one would come to enquire for me. Marion who was next me in class whispered "What have you done that you start so?"

I turned to her with a smile, but did not answer. I could not say, I have heard my mother's name for the first time, heard her spoken of as one who was worthy, as my father said she was, though at Enbridge they called her a Moabitish woman. Nora O'Neil, the words repeated themselves in my mind like the refrain of a song set to sweet music.

Next day, when I had begun to fear that the ladies had forgotten me, I heard myself asked for at the door. I got a half-holiday, and permission to spend the afternoon with the lady who had sent for me. I was to go to the Brethren's house and ask for Mrs. Villiers. I knew that the Brethren's house, emptied by emigration, had been vacant for a long time, except two solitary specimens of the brethren who remained like two last roses of summer, left blooming alone. Some of the unused rooms were occupied temporarily by an English lady, this Mrs. Villiers.

When I rang the bell, an elderly maid-servant showed me into the par-

lor where I found the two ladies whom I had met on the bridge and another older one. They treated me very kindly, loaded me with sweets and showed me many pretty things. I had come expecting to hear something of my dear dead mother that would add to the scanty knowledge which I had gained about her, but I was disappointed; it was to gain not to impart information that the ladies had sent for me. I saw that they looked upon me as something queer and foreign to them, something to be examined with amused curiosity. They questioned me about my papa, my lost mamma, my aunt, and my life at Enbridge and how I liked it.

I tried to be guarded in my answers, but I was not, I was helpless in the hands of the three questioners, I found myself telling things they had no right to know and saying things I should not say until I was ready to cry and ask to be allowed to go home. They noticed my distress in telegraphic looks to one another, and one of the ladies took my hand and led me to a little table, saying,

"Here is a beautiful book which you may look at. If you are like your mother you love books. You will never, it is likely, see a book like this again."

It was truly a magnificent book, bound in purple velvet, heavily gilt, with a coat of arms and a monogram in gold on the back. It was the poems of Lady Flora Hastings, the *vourneen bawn* as the Irish call her. I became quite interested in this book, and turned the leaves with a feeling of delightful awe. The faint sweet perfume that clung to the leaves was an odor wafted from the highest of high life. I felt the honor of handling such an aristocratic book to my very finger tips. A small part of the glory of it would surely be reflected on me. The poems themselves were splendid for they mentioned the greatest and highest persons with the familiarity of acquaintanceship, breathed of palaces and palace gardens, castles and towers. I was lost in the wonderful book when I was recalled to present things by the subdued tones of the ladies talking about my mother. I had been carefully taught that it was mean and unladylike to listen to a conversation not addressed to me, but I did listen eagerly, because everything about my dead mother was a mystery to me. I excused myself to myself by saying that I could not help hearing when they talked before me.

"Poor Nora," said one of the ladies, "to think of her burying herself in a poor Presbyterian manse, to live on some miserable stipend, as I think they call their income."

"I think Nora did as well for herself as could be expected," remarked the one whom they called Evaleen. "She was clever it is true but much too plain to be a very great attraction. If she had been wealthy now, it would have been different."

"It might have been different as it was, if Lady Fitzgerald's patronage or relationship amounted to anything," replied the other.

"Well, one should surely think so," assented Miss Evaleen, "but then we do not know all the circumstances."

The oldest of the ladies remarked in a soft voice, "You forget that she was very distantly related to Lady Fitzgerald, and only a governess; what could she expect?"

"I do think she might have done better for herself," said one of the younger ladies. "Don't you, Evaleen?"

"I do not really know if she could," replied Miss Evaleen. "She had not a mob of admirers to choose from. There was old Colonel Skinner, he was quite in love with her, but he had such a wretched temper, his first wife led a dreadful life with him; and young Skeffington admired her exceedingly, but he was a weak, dissipated little wretch. I do not know but she was

happier for the little while she lived in the Manse than she would have been with either of them."

"I suppose if Lady Fitzgerald had lived she would have provided for this little one?"

"I dare say she would, if she had no nearer demands on her benevolence. It would have been like her. She got perfectly absurd with the dreadfully levelling doctrines of these Evangelicals; absurd enough for anything. Both Nora and she imbibed the theological notions of the Presbyterian minister that Nora married."

"Had Nora any fortune at all?" said the one called Evaleen.

"Not a *sou;* but she had high descent, through the O'Neils, up to Brian Boru, or Hiram King of Tyre, for aught I know; the native blood is derived from Phenicia, is not it? It was queer for her to find her level among County Down Presbyterians."

"She was always queer, but very excellent, and all that. She was a little puritan saint, but she actually believed that her heart was as wicked as that of the commonest wretch."

I listened to their conversation and I felt mean because I did, but I heard little to satisfy my curiosity. I resented bitterly the tone of languid indifference with which they talked of my mother. She was a poor relation, and that seemed to cast a slur over the excellence they acknowledged. And dear, good papa, with what supercilious contempt they spoke of him. These ladies could not be my people, or akin to me; I would rather, I felt, be desolate and alone than with them, or of them. The memories of my father and my mother were high memories to me. Up to their standard I desired to grow. I could not bear to hear them spoken lightly of. I was glad when it was time for me to go, and I made my adieus with the determination never to come back. I was very silent about this evening, silent to Marion and all the rest of the girls. I always was silent when I was deeply hurt—hurt enough to come to a determination.

CHAPTER XII.

O, thou child of many prayers!
Life hath quicksands,—life hath snares!
LONGFELLOW.

I saw the ladies many times afterwards, before they went away, but they could not induce me to go back to visit them again. Walter came to school to Himmel-en-erde when Annie came back after the midsummer vacation. I was glad, and we renewed the confidences and mutual castle-building that had been such a comfort in the past. Walter told me that Mr. Caldwell was dead, and I was sorry—sorry that I had disliked him so much, and had felt his dislike to me so resentfully. I remembered how angry he had been over our difference of opinion about the catechism. He did not get over his anger easily either. I noticed that he did not say to me "My dear child," where the catechism directed him to say it, though he did to the rest of the scholars, saying sternly, "CHILD" instead. I was a rebel and ought not to be forgiven. And he was gone past all anger now. How I wished I had felt more kindly towards him.

Another bit of news Walter brought was that Arthur had left Uncle's for good. He had been more than usually rebellious, and Uncle had given him his indentures and let him go as an unprofitable servant. From the day of the scuffle, when he got his hair singed, Aunt and he had not once spoken to one another. Poor Arthur!

After Walter came I partly fell off from close companionship with Marion Lindsay, and resolutely set myself to study and to redeem the time. My serious thoughts were revived, for Annie and some others were preparing for confirmation. It was a great grief of

mind to me, knowing that I had been going still further away from God, that now He had chosen Annie and I was left. I clung to Miss Borg for advice and encouragement, spoke to her of my determination to seek His face till she began to think of me as a promising child of the covenant. I often wonder at the mistakes eminently good people make concerning the religion of others, in their goodness of heart. I had a natural religion that rose in glad thankfulness in the spring of my life. I was trained to call upon God in trouble or danger, to thank Him joyfully for deliverances, to praise Him for common mercies. I wished to receive His blessing, to be partaker of the happy safety of the saints, but I had no desire to die unto sin, if the sin was pleasant to my young heart. I did not know anything about the sinfulness of sin —about sin at all, unless it blossomed out and bore fruit of wicked deeds. I did not greatly desire holiness for its own sake—indeed I was afraid of it. I knew that some one thing was lacking, but, others thought, because I *did* think on these matters seriously, that I was a Christian, and had become one by a gradual educational process.

Once again I determined to strive to become a Christian, to get the want supplied of which my whole nature testified. I was willing to make sacrifices. I gave up reading, except the Bible, of which I picked out the historical parts, especially Judges and Kings. I prayed very often, taking great pleasure in the pathos of my prayers, and if they touched my own feelings sufficiently to draw tears, I then thought that God would be moved thereby to look upon me with favor. I believed that I must deny myself something,—give up something that I loved well; so I gave up the companionship of Marion Lindsay, whom I loved, and attached myself to the company of my cousin Annie, who disapproved of me, and had prejudiced her intimate friends against me with tales of my foolish exploits at Enbridge, and insinuations, caught up from Aunt, against my mother. I often talked to Annie of the coming confirmation. I longed to know what transformation had happened to her to enable her to sit at the Lord's table and know that she was not eating and drinking unworthily. I was more and more dissatisfied when we talked of this. Annie never convinced me that she had gained any more of the secret of the Lord than I had, but only that she was on better terms with herself than I was, and then I feared for myself the great sin of judging and condemning another, and so condemning myself. Sometimes, in our conversations, I backslid into fun and made Annie forget herself and laugh as heartily as I did. Sometimes she kept her gravity and rebuked me from a lofty height, and left me a prey to unexpressed remorse.

My compositions, at this time, were filled with devout aspirations and moral reflections. Miss Borg gently urged me to dedicate myself wholly and publicly to the Lord in the rite of Confirmation along with my cousin. I held back, not perceiving in myself any change to justify me in so doing. I was reasoned with again and again, and assured that in children, sheltered from evil influences, and taught in the way of the Lord from their earliest years, conversion was so gradual that, like the opening of a flower, the process was imperceptible to mortal eyes, and was known only by the results. It was the lack of result that troubled me. If I could only have said, "Whereas I was blind, now I see!"

I was told that what I felt was only the doubts which the most mature Christians feel. Annie, from the height of her placid assurance, enquired if I thought I had repented enough.

I knew very well that she meant had I repented of slapping her, and pulling her hair, when she called my mother a

Moabitish woman, and I could not say that I had—at least not much.

I did repent of many things so much that it pained me to remember them. It pained me more to know that I was quite likely to do the same things over again should circumstances tempt me. I repented of calling the twin Livingstones, who were remarkably small of their age, Liliputians and Puk-Wudgies because the names fitted them, and grew to them, and they did not like it a bit. I repented of teasing Lilla Gaylord, an East-Indian, with a dash of native blood in her veins, and a wonderful love for bright colors and shining ornaments. I was sorry I had called her richly embroidered trousers, panjammahs, and her bracelets, bangles, and and told her she was arrayed in barbaric splendor, and was fine enough to be Queen of the Cannibal Islands. She was teased out of displaying her abundant finery and dropped wearing the most of her jewelry; and she had forgiven me and loved me, especially when I helped her with her arithmetic and composition, but, I felt it was mean—I was mean to do it, for she was a stranger in a strange land when I tormented her. I repented of having said to Annie about a strange German minister, that his cheeks were as large and his eyes as small as a sow's. Annie said to me solemnly, with her small, white finger lifted in rebuke, "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." I declared he was not the ruler of my people, and Annie severely retorted, "He is the Lord's anointed anyway," which was crushing. There were many other minor things but these were the chief enormities.

I held back, wanting to know myself forgiven, to be able to answer to myself one of the questions which preceded Confirmation with the words, "He loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*." When, from my seat in the gallery, I saw Annie and her companions (one of them was Lily Adair the object of so much of my childish worship) in bridal white, making a profession to be the Lord's, receiving the Confirmation blessing from the minister—his hand on the head of each white-robed kneeling figure in turn,—I felt as Esau must have felt when he said, "Hast thou not a blessing for me? bless me, *even* me also, O my father."

It was so, after a time, that my own feelings, joined with outside influences, combined to make me desire Confirmation. I felt far off, I was advised to draw near to Him in the Ordinances, so I too was confirmed, blessed in the name of the Lord by the good minister, kneeling, white-robed, with my companions. I thought it would be easier to resist temptation if I publicly pledged myself to be the Lord's.

The next vacation, I was sent for to come home, and Aunt took care to impress upon me that she had no faith in my late profession. Jamie had not forgotten me, but claimed my services as if I had been but a day absent. Aunt employed me, and grumbled and grudged at me as she used to do. The new apprentice in Arthur's place, a son of John Ferris, was a quiet lad who did not make such a diversity of life as Arthur had done. I often thought of Arthur, with his temper and his pride what would become of him? I could not help feeling anxious about him and praying for him. Aunt mentioned him once in a casual way, saying to Uncle, "Arthur has turned out just as I expected. I saw him on Ballymena street, and he was quite drunk. He looks nearly as dissipated as that Doyle." Aunt turned to me and added, "I suppose you sympathize with him deeply, Elizabeth?"

"I am very sorry for him, Aunt," I replied.

One Sabbath afternoon, we were all gathered round the long table in the kitchen reading our Bible lesson with Uncle, Aunt sitting by. It was a disagreeable day out doors, a cold sleety

rain was pelting against the windows. There had been a succession of such days, and Bella Wiley had remarked that we were going to have a green Christmas, which would make a fat churchyard.

The dismal weather outside made the warm cheerful kitchen seem more cosy. Our lesson was about Eli's bad sons, for whom sacrifice or offering availed not for ever. The strong willed, wicked men who dashed themselves against the bosses of Jehovah's buckler, measuring their strength against His who rideth upon the heavens, who followed the course of their own choosing till it ended in a bloody death, dishonored and accursed on a lost battle field. And Eli, who could measure the despair of his heart, as he sat watching for tidings from the battle which he knew could only be evil? "Israel has fled * * * there has been a great slaughter * * * thy two sons are dead * * * the ark of God is taken." Slain by the heavy tidings, he fell backward, broke his neck and died. What had he to do any more with life?

Uncle said that he was often severe with us because he feared, unless he restrained us in small things, that we might run into evil and bring judgment from God on him as Eli. He said Arthur was a warning to us of the consequences of rebellion and disobedience, and urged the duty of submission to those who were set over us, whose wisdom and experience were safer guides than our own self-will.

Poor Arthur, his name was pointing a moral for us! We heard the hall door open, then shuffling footsteps, as of some one who had difficulty in keeping on his shoes, came along the hall.

Tom jumped up and ran to see who was there. Turning to his father he bawled out, "I say, pa, here's Arthur."

Sure enough, in walked Arthur accompanied by Scrieven Doyle. That gentleman's appearance had not improved since he attended the Christmas festival in the Moravian village. His clothes had tattered out more, and flapped about him in limp flags of distress. Arthur looked worse. He could not, in so short a time, get rid altogether of his fine appearance; he was still handsome, but his reckless abandonment made him look diabolical. They were both very drunk, of course, or they would not have been there. They stopped near the door, and Arthur propped himself against the wall, with his cap on the back of his head, in the very attitude of maudlin drunkenness which he had assumed to mimic Scrieven Doyle long ago, when we went to the field for potatoes. His clothes were muddy and weather-stained as if he had been lying out about ditch backs.

"I've—I've come back to see you all," said Arthur, in a thick voice.

No one spoke. All of us children stared at him with all our eyes. Aunt set herself to look daggers of reproach at Arthur, Bella said afterwards. She was in the background staring with open mouth and taking notes at the same time. Uncle turned away his head, it was a sorry sight to him.

"Here's a go!" said Doyle, staggering forward a step and trying to balance himself. "I say, Tom Henderson, have you no bit of veal on hand to welcome back your prodigal! not even a toast-cake, eh! Every one as dumb as a beetle. That's a pattern of your white-livered christianity."

"They have come past all the people going home from church, in that plight," said Aunt to Uncle, in a low voice.

"This is what you have brought yourself to, unfortunate boy!" said Uncle, sternly.

"I came in to see you, Elizabeth," said Arthur, with a miserable attempt

at swagger. "I never did care a curse for the rest of you. You've grown a big girl, Elizabeth."

Another silence, all of us looking at him as before.

"These are respectable visitors to be seen coming into our house on the Sabbath day," said Aunt, bitterly.

"We didn't come to visit you, my old hen," said the unfortunate Doyle, screwing up his face in the endeavor to wink at her with the eye that was not bruised. "Come, Atty, my boy, we're not wanted here."

He caught hold of Arthur's arm to lead him off.

I think the large, comfortable kitchen, we all sitting round the long table at our Sunday lesson, young Ferris in the place where he used to sit, had an effect on Arthur. He pulled away from Doyle, and said, making a step toward me, "Shake hands with me, Elizabeth, before I go. Think of this," and he held up his thumb, shaking with drink and exposure.

"Elizabeth, I command you to stay where you are," said Uncle. "Arthur, you have made your choice, go away to the friends you prefer." "No one could touch you without pollution," added Aunt.

Arthur began to cry—Oh, it was pitiful to see him! "Shake hands—shake hands with me, Elizabeth, for God's sake, and say you pray for me. I'm lost, I know I am."

"Come our-a-this," hiccupped Doyle. "We're not wanted here. Come long, Atty."

"Elizabeth!" said Uncle in an awful voice, as I crossed the room and shook hands with the wretched creature.

"I do pray for you," I said, "I wish you could pray for yourself."

"God bless you, Elizabeth," were his last words, as he was led off sobbing, by Doyle, Aunt going after them and locking the door to prevent their return. I had not said what I wanted to say, I never did, some way. If I had only said to him, "The Son of Man has come to seek and save that which is lost." I would have run after him through the rain to say it if I dared.

"Is that the kind of people you choose for your friends, Elizabeth?" said Aunt triumphantly, when she returned from locking the door. "If you were my child, as I'm thankful to say you're not, I would whip you within an inch of your life for what you have done in defiance of us. Annie would as soon put her hand in the fire as into that wretched creature's."

"Be quiet, Mary Ann," said Uncle. I looked at him, his face was very pale, even his lips were white. Before Aunt could answer he said, "Let us pray."

He prayed that sin might not have dominion over us; that God would choose us for His own and keep us unspotted from the world. Then he poured out strong prayer for the poor lost boy who was without father and mother, out homeless, by his own wayward choice, that stormy night, and he asked pardon if he had been the unwitting means of driving him away from all good influence.

Aunt took great exception to this prayer for Arthur. She said there *were* reprobates like Eli's sons, children of the wicked one, going astray from their birth, and she was sure Arthur was one of them.

"Hush, Mary Ann," said Uncle, softly. "Do not measure God's patience in your poor little peck measure."

I kept looking earnestly at Uncle, I hoped he would go after Arthur and bring him back, but he did not. Sabbath night closed in stormy, with wind and rain, and my thoughts would wander to the poor outcast who had no earthly father to arise and go to, saying, "Father, I have sinned."

Next evening I was out with Bella Wiley, milking in the byre, when Scri-

even Doyle appeared in the doorway. He was sober and not quite so disreputable looking as he was the day before.

"Well Doyle," said Bella, "You are not a bit ashamed of yourself, I suppose?"

"I'm a hard case, shame and I might have been married long ago, we have not been near akin this long time. Is Elizabeth here?" he asked, looking over the cow I was milking.

"I am here, Mr. Doyle," I said, getting up. "Did you want me?"

"We are both sorry for coming to the house yesterday. We were very drunk, and Anthony Cae dared us to come, and we bet we would, and we did; but Arthur is in a bad way to-day. He told me to tell you, that if ever he reforms, it will be owing to your remembering him, and shaking hands with him, in spite of them all."

"Not in spite of them, Mr. Doyle, but because I was so sorry, I forgot myself."

"I would advise you to clear out of this, Scrieven Doyle," said Bella. "Elizabeth has got enough of blame for Arthur and you,—a pair of worthless scamps."

"Don't mind her, Mr. Doyle," I said, "but it is better for you to go, for fear Aunt should come out and she would be angry. Tell Arthur to try and be good. It is dreadful for him to be that way of his own choice. It is far worse for you Mr. Doyle, to try to lead a boy astray who has no father. You know better what this life leads to than he does, try to lead him back and come back yourself. God will forgive you both and you will be happier."

"Here's the mistress!" said Bella, resuming her milking in a great hurry, "I knew how it would be."

Scrieven Doyle disappeared, but not before Aunt saw him, and, oh dear! how she did scold me. She talked as if I had sent for him, as if such as he were the chosen companions of my life. When she cooled down she questioned Bella and me as to what he said to us, carping and cross-questioning as if we were criminals on trial. She felt great contempt for Arthur's prospect of reformation, and declared she believed he was born bad.

"Who told Aunt, Bella?" I asked, when we were alone.

"I expect it was Nat or Tom, they were playing in the yard when Doyle came in,—the wretched looking creature!" said Bella with intense disgust. "I think you have too much pity for the likes of them. I do not wonder, for once, at your aunt being angry at the thought of such as them speaking to you, they are not fit to live on the earth."

"God wants them to get better, I am sure, Bella. Christ died for sinners, and when He was on earth He pitied them, and left them word that whosoever will come to Him He will in no wise cast out. If they would only come."

"Well, they won't," snapped Bella, "but your Aunt will have a fine time watching us to see if Arthur will come back to speak to you."

We returned to school without seeing or hearing anything more of Arthur, but the idea of him being lost like Eli's sons caused me to mourn for him secretly. Aunt lent me Young's poems to take back with me to school, that I might, she said, read attentively the poem on "The Last Day," and learn to have less sympathy with hopeless reprobates. I read the poem carefully and continued to feel great pity for Arthur, and I prayed that neither he, nor I, nor any one, should feel as the poem describes on that day.

"Alone,
Cast on the left of all whom thou hast known;
How would it wound! What millions would thou give
For one more trial? One more day to live?
Flung back in time an hour, a moment's space,
To grasp with eagerness the means of grace:
Contend for mercy with a pious rage,
And in that moment to redeem an age?"

I read these lines, felt sick over them, and wished that Arthur could read them and perhaps the terrors of the Lord might terrify him back to God.

The days sped tranquilly away at school. I learned some things, and read everything I could lay my hands on. School life was so tranquil and happy that I became intensely Moravian. I forgot to mention before, that Uncle Tom was a Moravian and therefore preferred their schools for us, though he attended the Presbyterian church at Enbridge with Aunt. One of my favorite teachers, a calm, dove-eyed woman, spoke of me as a teacher for a small class of little ones in the Sabbath school. I was appointed, and grew to like my work. I began to take great interest in the missionary reports and to wish secretly that I were a missionary. Life at Grey Abbey had gone away into the far distance, and the Moravians, their life of missionary endeavor and self-denial, was of absorbing interest to me. The names of Count Zinzendorf, Christian David and Hans Egede, John Cennick and La Trobe, grew familiar to my ears instead of Wishart and John Knox. My castles in the air were built at Demerara or Maracaibo, South Africa or Labrador, where I was to be a devoted missionary doing a great work.

When I was fifteen I was recalled to actual life and Enbridge to help Aunt. Nat and Tom were sent to school at Himmel-en-erde. A cousin of Uncle's who lived at Lisburn, persuaded Uncle to let Annie stay with his family and attend a fashionable school there, where she was to finish her education.

Aunt had added twins, a boy and a girl, to the family, Jamie, grown up nicely, still demanded unlimited stories, and the one hundredth psalm occasionally, to keep him in order. There was plenty to do, and I fell into my old place. My life among the Moravians had ended.

CHAPTER XIII.

Thou art leaving us all, love, and much may befall, love,
To warp and to wean thee from Infancy's ties;
Thou wilt tread fairer places, and see brighter faces,
And riches and beauty shall dazzle thine eyes.
ELIZA COOK.

When Walter was fifteen the question came up, "What is to be done with him?"

Uncle Tom said if he wished to be a minister, like my father, there was still something left to help him through a college course.

"Your father's books are very valuable, they would help," said uncle, "and there might come help from other sources."

"I will never learn to be a minister as if it were a trade," said Walter, decidedly. "No one should enter the ministry unless he is called of God. I would not be willing to sell any of my father's books, they are more to me—to us, than they could be to any one else."

"Perhaps you would like to learn the trade, and succeed to the business when I retire, which I mean to do in a few years. Neither Nat nor Tom have any liking for trade. How would you like that prospect, Walter?" said uncle, kindly.

"You are very kind, sir," said Walter, with his face, that expressed so much affection and gratitude, turned full upon uncle. "You have so many dependent on you,—and I have felt helpless long enough—I want to be doing something and seeing something. I want to take the shortest cut to independence."

"What is it?" said uncle, in alarm. "You don't think of enlisting; you are not tall enough, and you are too young."

"No; I want to join the army of workers, but I want to have my own way, uncle."

"Bless the boy!" said aunt, striking in impatiently. "What do you mean?

Can you not speak your mind at once, and not go beating about the bush!"

"The Semples are going out to Canada, and I would like to go with them and try my luck there. I would come home if I did not succeed and take my place on the board," said Walter.

Uncle was much averse to Walter's trying the world so young, but Walter was so anxious to go, and aunt advising that he should have his will, he consented unwillingly enough. "You will always consider this your home," he said, "and come back when you have tried independence, and find it not so pleasant, after all, as home and friends."

"I mean to have a home for you before long," Walter said lovingly to me, when we were alone together. "They put too much upon you. Your nickname of Cinderella is beginning to have more truth than poetry in it. Never mind, you and I shall live together yet in our own cottage under the maple trees of Canada."

It was very strange to every one, but old Uncle Jack opened his heart and his purse to help Walter in his outfit, and so, in a lesser degree, did Aunt Mattie, though both protested loudly against his going "awa amang fremit folk instead o' gaun tae college in a wise-like way."

Every one was astonished at the old couple's generosity. Bella Wiley said to me that it was "oil out of the flinty rock."

So Walter emigrated to Canada, a bright, handsome, winsome lad of fifteen, with pluck and determination to push his fortune and make a great man of himself, and in every success he won I was to have my share. The bitterness of parting was sweetened by the hope that he would open for me a door of escape from my life at Enbridge. The days dragged wearily past after Walter left. It was a stormy spring, and, when the winds roared round the house, the possibility of shipwreck filled me with fear.

Aunt, who took a gloomy pleasure in the dark side of things, ("Hervey's Meditations among the Tombs" was her favorite author) and who, besides, had a belief that I had no feeling because I expressed none, so unlike her sensitive Annie, often gave audible voice to my forebodings.

"Well, children," she would say, "you can be merry, and that wind is raising a storm out on the wild Atlantic, that may, perhaps, shipwreck poor Walter."

When the time was past which it was likely he would spend on sea, Tom said, "I suppose a fellow may smile now, mother, Walter must be safe on shore."

"I would advise you," said aunt, "to put off making mirth till you *know* he is safe. Even if he is on shore, I have heard of trees blowing down in these Canadian forests and crushing people to death in a moment."

My fears made me watch for the old postman, taking care to be at the hall door when his hour for coming round came. The old man noticed me watching for him, and was as anxious to bring me a letter as could be.

Annie had returned from Lisburn quite a grown-up young lady. She was handsome and accomplished, and altogether perfect in aunt's loving eyes. Looking at the contrast between us, aunt seemed to dislike me more and more. I had a great deal to do, and was expected to leave whatever I was at to find for the children anything they had mislaid. I was expected to notice every thing forgotten and neglected, and supply every lack of service. I had a natural taste for dressmaking and millinery, and aunt was quite willing to avail herself of it, but bitterly resented every hint that I was in any respect useful in the household. She was always reminding me of the cost of my education, and of the outlay my maintenance added to the household expenses. When anything was forgotten or neg-

lected, I was told how humble and thankful I ought to be, how useful I ought to make myself, remembering that I did not stand on my own father's floor.

As if I did not feel that every hour of the day. Annie's goodness, gentleness, stylishness and beauty were brought forward so often in contrast to my deficiencies that I was afraid I should learn to hate her. The quiet helplessness, that never expected to please, which I felt, was a constant exasperation to Aunt, who sometimes could not express the bitterness she felt towards me. At last, one bright morning, old Joe, the postman, brought me a letter, surely different from any letter that ever before rustled in his post-bag. It was thick and heavy, and spotted all over with postmarks, as became a travelled letter. Every one rejoiced, even Aunt was as glad as could be, though she thought Walter should have written to his uncle, to whom he was so much indebted, instead of to me. Of course with the whole family gathered round me I was obliged to read it aloud, instead of escaping into a corner with it as I wished to do. It was dated, Gledbury, Upper Canada.

MY DARLING SISTER, ELIZABETH,—I have got safe across the Atlantic; have not been eaten by sharks or knocked under by icebergs, nor have I encountered any hardships worth speaking about. I have taken the first employment that offered, hired with a gentleman who was in Quebec selling timber. I am determined to make myself so useful that he will not be willing to part with me. When I came here first, I brought home the cows, fed the pigs, looked after the sheep, carried water and broke up wood for the fire. I am now employed in the store, which is more confining. Mr. Ramsay, my employer, has a store, what we call a shop at home, and sells everything, dry goods, groceries, farming implements, stationery, medicines, crockery and whisky. He has a saw mill; and has men in the woods making timber every winter, which goes to Quebec to be sold. He is a thin, tall man, does not speak much, and is always in a hurry. The hours for work are simply all the time we are awake. There is no time to rest except the Sabbath, and it is cut as close at each end as possible. Nobody has time to make fun except a dry joke dropped now and then as they fly round at their business. Life here seems an everlasting hurry-scurryation. Mr. Ramsay walks at a sharp pace, eats as if he were bolting for a wager, and is always meditating what new plan he can take for making money quickly, or how he can engineer more work out of his men. I am getting to like this energetic driving life, one feels as if he were of some use in the world. The worst of it is, I want to rest on Sunday instead of going three miles to church. Every body is very kind to me. Do not think I am lonely, I am as merry as a cricket, I have no time to be lonesome. Give my love to everybody. Tell Uncle Henderson that I will be home with my fortune made before Ferris has his seven years' apprenticeship served. I am gathering some curiosities for Aunt, and Aunt Mattie, which I buy from the Indians who come to the store. Tell Aunt Mattie that I will go back to County Antrim to eat some of her apple fadge, some day. Has Arthur turned up again, repented and reformed? I think of everybody and of every place I ever knew, and dream of them at night. I love everyone on the other side of the sea. Even the baker's thieving dog would get a pat on the head if he walked into the store in a slack time. That reminds me to tell you that we see but little money here. We are paid in all sorts of things. We have a large store-house filled with every description of farm produce taken in exchange. It makes a great deal of heavy work. I have packed barrels upon barrels of eggs that are to be shipped to Montreal. We have home-made cheeses and cakes of maple sugar, about the size of tiles and almost the same shape, piled up in the store-house as high as peat stacks. We have rows of tennets, or firkins, of butter in the cellar. In the fall of the year they buy lard, tallow, pork, butcher's meat, fowl, knitted socks and mittens. In short, everything the people have to sell, giving store pay as they call barter. Cannot I write like a man of business? Grain is just beginning to come in, soon we will have all the bins in the granary full. We will sell for cash all we do not require for the shanty, thus having a double profit. This is the way to get rich in a hurry. I wish I could get you all over here to stir you up and make you feel alive. They have such a different way of expressing themselves on this side of the sea that I feel as if I were learning another language. I understand some verses of Scripture better than I used to do. Last Sunday, when going down to church, along a sandy road, the sun burning hot, shining as it does not know how to shine over there, I thought of the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. I never saw any meaning in the words before. I tell you that the glare of the sun and the reflection of the heat from the sand made my head feel like Jonah's when he was sitting in the sun watching Nineveh. I understood what a venerable old lady from York State, meant, who lives near us, and was coming home over the same hot road, when she said, "I calkilate that yure abeout's much tuckered eout's I be?"

I'm abeout tuckered eout writing bein as it's twelve o'clock. Give my love to everybody that I ever saw and to all in the house, the men, the children, Bella, and every one, bushels of it

to Uncle and Aunt, Benjamin's mess to yourself, and hoping that we will soon be united in Canada.

Your loving brother

WALTER RAY.

P. S. To give you an idea of the system of barter here, I exchanged, yesterday, a paper of needles for a few onions, with a high stepping young lady who came a good many miles to make the trade; and sold a stick of candy to a little lad and was paid with one egg, which I hope was not the nest egg abstracted on the sly.

Every one enjoyed Walter's letter, it was read to all our acquaintances, Aunt Mattie and Uncle Jack came over to hear it. They all decided that Walter had drawn the long bow in his descriptions, but they enjoyed the letter and praised the lad, who was so different from his sister, they said.

Life was so hopelessly dreary to me that I wrote to Walter, reminding him that I was older than he by some years, and asking him if there was anything I could do to earn my living where he was, for life at Enbridge was intolerable. Aunt grew harder to me every day, and Uncle Tom, though a just man, saw me through the medium of Aunt's opinions and thought me very perverse. Every road to independence seemed barred against me. Every opening was crowded with applicants. A teacher was wanted for a small school some miles from us, and I heard that one hundred and forty applied for it. I sometimes thought, as I looked for a way of escape from Aunt's bondage, that I was the one too many in the world.

A gentleman, who had received a government appointment in Australia, wanted to take out a governess with his family. The children were young, and, hoping I might suit, I would have applied for the situation had they been going to Canada, but they were not, and Canada was my land of promise, because Walter was there. I thought of going over to Miss Borg, to know if she could get me embroidery to do, that I might earn a little to help pay my passage. Before I got an opportunity of going, another letter came from Walter, containing money to take me out to him. He had not spent all he had with him, having engaged with Mr. Ramsay, who paid his way to Gledbury, soon after landing. When Mr. Ramsay understood that Walter and I were alone in the world, and wanted to be together, he advanced as much more as was necessary, and trusted to Walter to repay it.

Gladly I laid aside my daily tasks and set about getting ready in earnest. It was amusing to see how aunt missed my services. She had persuaded herself I was a burden, and when relief came, she was angry that I was glad to go. She took no more notice of my services than of sun or rain, but resented Annie's having to take my place. The children, accustomed to me, clamored and found fault. Annie grumbled and complained, and, worse than all, when things were neglected that I had been accustomed to do, aunt was annoyed most because I saw the difference it made.

I went over to bid good bye to Miss Borg, and found her ill in bed, her chamber darkened, and one of the sisters, as nurse, attending her. She was glad to see me, strengthened herself to speak to me, and made me tell her all my plans. She gave me her council as she used to do, only more solemnly, for we both knew it was the last time.

"I will not say good bye or farewell to you, my child. You are packing up to journey to a strange country. I also am packing up for a flitting, but, I am going to a country where I have an inheritance. We will say adieu, for into the keeping of my God and yours I give you. See to it that we meet again."

With the pain of parting on my heart, I went from Miss Borg's sick chamber to the burying ground, took a last look at the grave of Lily Adair, walked round the village, bidding farewell to the place as much as to the people, or more, for, besides my teachers, I had

few acquaintainces. This little village, hallowed by kindness, familiar to my feet in the days of my gladness, where the light of the Lord shone round me, is the Ireland of my remembrance.

The night before I left, Aunt Henderson invited old Uncle Jack and Aunt Mattie to come over to see me. Uncle Jack gave me many good wishes, hoped that I would "have a' the buiks I wanted ower there," and brought me an old book of Scottish ballads for a keepsake. Old Aunt Mattie was for once affectionate. Aunt made a little supper, had fried oysters and punch. Old Aunt Mattie liked punch, and under its influence became quite demonstrative.

If I had not for so many years known better, I would have thought that I had been her especial pet all my life.

"I was aye fand o ye, Leesabeth," she said, "my hert was in ye, lass."

"You never let me know of it before and it is too late to tell me now," I said.

"Love is wasted on you, Elizabeth. You have a hard, cold, jealous nature. Any one but you would feel a little regret at leaving home and friends behind you, and show some natural affection," said Aunt Henderson.

With the remembrance of Aunt's injustice, and old Aunt Mattie's pinches I could not show kindness, for there was none in my heart to either of them. I was sorry to part with the children, kissed them all over and over again. Jamie, precious little Nellie, and the twins clung round me, and Annie made me promise to write to her. Uncle accompanied me to the ship to see me under the care of the family with whom I was going, recommended me to the protection of the captain and gave me this characteristic advice, "Remember there is an obligation on you to walk as your father's daughter should. Look for help and advice where you know it is to be found."

While we were in Belfast, before the ship sailed, there came to me a desire to see Grey Abbey again, to look at the graves of my father and my dear mamma, and the old home, but there was not time. I made a compromise by going up to McComb's book store, to see the author of "Two Hundred Years Ago." I was not known to him, and I had not courage to make myself known. I bought a book for the sake of looking on his face, remembering that my father liked him.

Uncle Tom's face was the last I saw, as the ship moved down the lough, and we soon were out on the tossing Atlantic. I was very sick, and lay in my berth by the little window, the breadth of my hand, of glass thick enough to withstand the dash of the waves, affording me a dim, religious light to read by, when I was able. When I recovered enough to go about I saw plenty to interest me. Every thing was strange and new to my eyes, from the icebergs we heard about, and the whales we might have seen if they had come near enough instead of spouting up water at the very limit of the horizon, to the tumbling shoals of porpoises driving past, and the flocks of dainty petrels paddling on the crest of the swells with their delicate feet. It was wonderful to watch the sailors tacking the ship and heaving the log; delightful to lean idly over the bulwarks and watch the sun drop into the sea from his glorious throne in the west, and the calm eyed stars come out and look at their own shadow in the water, and the broad track of moonlight trembling over the uneasy waves, till it was time to go to bed and dream of green fields and babbling brooks.

There was a poor mother in the steerage, with a very sick child, and I got into the habit of going over to see it. Everyone in the ship was concerned about the baby for it was the poor mother's only one. She had had many more but they had died, one after another, and her heart was set on this sick little one, and it slowly pined away. She

thought if it would live till we got ashore it would recover. When we were about six weeks at sea, the baby died. The sailors said it would die because a shark had followed the ship. The poor mother was frantic with grief, and dreading that the baby would be thrown into the sea, she sat in her berth holding the little corpse in her arms and would not let it go. The captain persuaded, her husband reasoned with her, but she sat rocking and moaning over the dead baby as if she did not hear them. A good many sat up with her all night, I among the rest, they sang hymns that had comfort in them but she showed no sign of listening or heeding. Towards morning a sweet voice began to sing Cowper's hymn.

"God of my life on Thee I call,
Afflicted at Thy feet I fall,
When the great waterfloods prevail
Leave not my trembling heart to fail.

"Friend of the friendless and the faint
Where should I lodge my deep complaint,
Where save with Thee whose open door
Invites the helpless and the poor.

"Did ever mourner plead with Thee
And Thou refuse that mourner's plea?
Doth not Thy word still fixed remain
That none shall seek Thy face in vain?

"That were a grief I could not bear
Did'st Thou not hear and answer prayer
But a prayer hearing, answering God
Supports me under every load."

The verses, or the tune, or the sweet voice, or all together drew the woman's attention and she wept, for the first time since the baby died, passionate weeping that soon exhausted her, worn out as she was with grief and watching, and she fell asleep, sobbing heavily even in her sleep. They took the dead baby softly from her arms, the little canvas coffin was ready and they laid it in tenderly, those rough men, as if they were afraid to hurt it and placed it on a plank on the gangway. The captain put on a black velvet cap and read the burial service. The shark, that had followed us, swam alongside, as if he were listening. When the prayers were ended there was a splash and a plunge and a great deal of flying foam.

"Did the shark get it?" I asked, breathlessly, of an old grey headed sailor.

"No, he missed it," he replied.

I suppose the splash awakened the poor mother, she missed her babe and raised a great cry. The women, fluttering and sympathetic, rushed down to her. The captain ran into the cabin, brought out a loaded musket and fired at the shark, and hit it, for I saw blood. It gave a great splashing jump and opened a black cavern of a mouth that might, I thought, have swallowed a boat's crew.

"Have you killed it?" asked one.

"Given it the toothache," said the captain, laughing.

They all dispersed; the sentiment was over. The old sailor stretched out his arm with tatooing on the wrist, and pointing to what seemed a low bank of cloud far away on the horizon, said, "There is land," and I too forgot the woman's grief in the joy of getting to the end of our voyage.

We anchored at Grosse Isle; were inspected, the doctor, who was not a doctor at all, standing by, looking as medical as possible; passed triumphantly, and sailed up the broad river towards Quebec. I knew the meaning of that line,

"Mine eye in vain is seeking one green leaf to rest upon,"

for I had looked eagerly after a floating blade of grass. After nearly seven weeks of sea and sky it was delightful to watch the grand dark woods floating past in a sombre panorama, with here and there a cleared space, bright with growing crops, and little villages of white houses clustering round a church with its tin-covered spire flashing in the sun. At last we anchored before Quebec, and looked up at the rock that has witnessed such daring deeds, city crowned, keeping watch over the broad river. The first boat brought Walter on

board and we were together again, and soon found ourselves on board the steamer for Montreal. Sailing up the beautiful river, seated on the great steamboat's upper deck with Walter beside me and as fair a country as there is on the earth, I suppose, passing before my eyes; this was enjoyment. There was a group of Indian women sitting on the floor of the upper deck working away quite unconcernedly, surrounded by finished specimens of their handiwork; baskets made of splints of the inner bark of some tree gaily stained in many colors, little ornamental boxes of birch bark, and many very pretty trifles covered thickly with beads. They were surrounded by a crowd of purchasers, lithe, active men with a half sailor look, who bargained with a great deal of action in a fussy foreign way, many of them having rings in their ears. Walter said they were French raftsmen returning from Quebec with the earnings of a long winter in their pockets. Ever since I left Enbridge, whether it was that being unused to travelling, strange sights and sounds had a bewildering effect on me, or the cessation of Aunt's constant orders with their running accompaniment of "Why did you do this?" "Why don't you do that?" "When will you do the other," I felt like one walking in sleep, I could hardly realize that I was free, and with Walter, and actually looking at the strange sights that passed before my eyes.

CHAPTER XIV.

'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
O life not death for which we pant,
More life, and fuller that I want.

TENNYSON.

Walter intended to have me board with a farmer near to Mr. Ramsay's, but neither Mr. Ramsay nor his wife would hear of such a thing. "Your sister will come here, of course, and make her home with us, if she can content herself," they said kindly. Mr. Ramsay's family met me with a largeness of welcome that surprised me. I seemed to have come into a place where kindness and hospitality were practised on a grand scale. The family lived in abundance, there seemed no want of anything under heaven. It was a royal, wholesale kind of life, that suited with the magnificent proportions of the country, its boundless forests, its mighty rivers, that made all the rivers I ever saw before dwindle into streams, its mountain ranges, blue in the distance, that caused Demish, Devis and the Cave Hill, the only mountains I knew anything about, to shrink into hillocks. I dare say, people's ideas of the fitness of things expand or contract to suit the country they live in. The profusion in the housekeeping department, the *carte blanche* given to servants, (there was real supervision with the apparently boundless liberty), would have put Aunt Henderson crazy. The prodigal abundance, which she would have characterised emphatically as "doonricht waistrie," would have killed Aunt Mattie in a week. I wondered first at the great quantities of things provided in such prodigal measure, then at the provident care that let nothing go to waste of all this plenty. I wondered most of all at the executive ability of the household. Aunt had a large family and kept but one girl, but the bread came from the baker's, soap and candles from the shop, cake and that sort of thing, required only for occasions of state, from the pastry cook's, while all our good dresses, bonnets, and Uncle's shirts, were made by tradespeople. Mrs. Ramsay's house, on the contrary, was like a manufactory. Bread was baked in the house for the family, and for the workmen also, who were round the house in a swarm; pies and cakes were made in batches that would have made Aunt stare; the preserves and jellies, things pickled, and

canned, and dried, labelled and put away for future use in the store-closet, would have stocked a shop. Aunt made jams and jellies every year, but she mounted guard over them, and dealt them out like medicine, giving them away abundantly, however, in cases of sickness. They were as necessary as daily bread here.

Mrs. Ramsay made her own butter and cheese—would not eat any other; made soap and candles enough for her own use, and to spare for her poorer neighbors; wool was spun: stockings, flannel, blankets, and coarse cloth, were made under her supervision. All the household sewing was done in the house. All this Mrs. Ramsay and her daughter accomplished, besides the care of a small flower-garden, the pride of their hearts, with one servant and an occasional sewing girl or spinning-maid for a week or two. Seeing that I was interested in the household industries, Mrs. Ramsay showed me the piles upon piles of home-made blankets and quilts that she had laid away in her closets for future use, and the winter dresses of homespun, making me notice the fineness of the texture, and the brilliancy and durability of the dyes, which were all her own handiwork. Enjoying my admiring wonder, she showed me a very nice cap and gauntlets of otter skin which she had made herself, tanning the skin also, as a present for Mr. Ramsay at last New Year's day. Mr. Ramsay thought at first she had sent to Montreal for them and was very proud when he knew they were produced by her own skill, as well he might be. I made myself useful to Mrs. Ramsay, by showing her old country fashions, helped her with dresses and bonnets, embroidered a waist for baby's christening robe, showed Charlotte Ramsay different stitches of fancy work, taught her to write the angular hand, which had come into fashion for ladies, and helped her to make ornamental trifles for the drawing-room.

The spirit of the country came over me, and I attempted things boldly that I had never tried before, and with a measure of success, too. And so a good while passed. I was still wondering what path would open to me that would lead to independence. My life in Mr. Ramsay's, though pleasant in its diversity of occupation, reminded me too much of my position of betwixt and between in Aunt's household. They were as good and kind to me, and as respectful as if I were a dear friend. I was useful, I knew, but I could not feel independent. I wanted to do something that would be acknowledged work by Walter and the world.

One day, I was sitting with Charlotte Ray on the verandah, teaching her a stitch for a sofa-pillow, when a bright-eyed man, in a respectable suit of homespun, came up to the house and asked for me.

I said, "I am Miss Ray." He immediately stepped up briskly and shook hands with me like an old acquaintance.

Charlotte, with a little smile on her lips, said, "This is Mr. McLennan, from Glenshie, Miss Ray. Walk into the house, Mr. McLennan."

"Thank you, Miss Ramsay. It is just as pleasant here, this fine evening."

Miss Ramsay brought him a chair, and he sat down beside us. After remarking a little on the weather and the hay harvest, he leaned back, and making his chair rear up on its hind-legs, took out a large pocket-knife, caught up a little bit of stick, and began to cut and carve at it, as a mark that he was at his ease, and then spoke his errand.

"I have come to see if you would hire to teach our school, Miss Ray. We want a teacher, and I saw a letter you wrote for the girl here, and I came over to see you about coming to teach in the school."

Here was such an opening as I

sought, an opportunity of trying what I could do by myself, but what were the duties? "I have never taught, I am quite inexperienced. I would like to teach very well, but would prefer being an assistant until I am older, and have some knowledge of the duties of the place," I said to him, hesitatingly.

"If you are sure you will come, you will soon learn what to do. The school is small, a new section cut off from the old one, where the children got too many. It is easy to teach them, they are beginners," Mr. McLennan said, with a persuasive air.

I was perplexed; this seemed a providential opening to that independence for which I longed,—but if I should try and fail! Neither Uncle nor Aunt Henderson taught me to place a high estimate on my abilities. When Aunt summed up the list of my awkwardness, carelessness, stubbornesss, and ingratitude, with the final ending that I was of no earthly use to any one, and how thankful she was that she was not my mother, it had a depressing effect. The more I hesitated, the more eager Mr. McLennan was to secure my services. At first his keen, dark eyes looked me all over with the expression, "How young you are? How little you are? I doubt if you will succeed." While he urged me to accept the situation, Mrs Ramsay joined us on the verandah.

"I am come to look after Miss Ray's interests, Mr. McLennan," she said. "You must not coax her away from me, unless you can make it worth her while. What salary will you give?"

"We will give her as much as twenty pounds currency for the first, and her board, if she will board round. We will give more again, maybe, if all things go well."

"What does that mean?" I asked.

"It means that you will board at one house for a week or a fortnight, and then go to the next, for the same length of time, and so on, till you go round the section, and then begin again," said Mrs. Ramsay, laughing.

"I would not like that. I should have no home," I said quickly. "I would not do that at all."

"Of course you will do no such thing," said Mrs. Ramsay, decidedly. "If the section is not willing, Mr. McLennan, to board her at one place and try to make her comfortable, she shall not go at all. I do not wish Miss Ray to leave us, but if she would like to try teaching for a while, she can; but you must take good care of her and find a nice home for her where she will be as kindly treated as she deserves to be."

"That is quite right and kind of you, Mrs. Ramsay, to speak for the interests of the young girl. I am an old man and have girls of my own, and I will be kind to her, and look after her as if she were my own child."

As they talked about the board, my mind was taking stock of what I knew. I glanced doubtfully at my arithmetic, complacently at writing and history, and hopefully at other studies, and wondered if my knowledge of fancy-work would be of any service. Then I said, answering the language of his eyes, that I was afraid I was too young to manage growing boys. "They will stand in no awe of such a little person as I am," I said, irresolutely.

But Mr. McLennan overruled all my objections, and it was decided that if a comfortable boarding-place was provided, I would try the school for six months. I did not understand the relative value of money, and I thought twenty pounds a good deal. I heard when at home that the teacher of the poor-house children had fifteen pounds a year with board, and it was considered so desirable a situation, that there was a host of candidates, and the successful one had powerful friends who interested themselves in her case.

I knew that Mrs. Ramsay was a little sorry to part with me, and I was glad

that they felt kindly towards me, but I preferred to go to work. Mr. McLennan said, as he prepared to go,

"Now, if I undertake that you shall board in one place, have a room to yourself, and be as comfortable as we can make you, you will surely come? There are two more trustees besides myself, but they agreed that they will onsent to what I do. I will come for you in two weeks. Before then you will need to go to the school superintendent, Minister McGillivray, at Blair Athol, and get a certificate, and be ready when I come for you. It is not easy to get away in harvest-time, so be you ready when I come for you." So shaking hands with all present, in high good humor with himself, he mounted his grey horse and rode away.

I thought that getting a certificate was a mere matter of form, but found that it had to be preceded by an examination, more or less severe, according to the nature of the examiner. It was a dreadful ordeal, but when I had undertaken to teach, I must go through with whatever was necessary.

I had to go alone, for it was hay harvest, and neither Mrs. Ramsay nor Charlotte could be spared to accompany me. I was directed to go straight on through the Gledbury Settlement till I came to a cross-road, which would take me to the Blair Athol Settlement, and the first large white house I came to would be Minister McGillivray's. I set off with the comfortable assurance ringing in my ears that the distance was a mere nothing—only seven miles. Seven miles seemed a mere trifle of distance to these Canadian people in their large country, but to me, who had never been farther than a mile or two from home on foot by myself, seven miles in harvest heat, over an unknown country, was a serious undertaking.

The roads about Gledbury were innocent of the great McAdam, and they were not so tiresome to the feet as the roads at home; besides, the miles were, or seemed to be, shorter, and there was a border of grass on each side of the road, which was soft and springy to the feet. I walked on briskly through the Gledbury Settlement, found the cross-road, struck into it, and, after walking for some time, I forgot the distance I had to go, and gave myself up to enjoyment. I travelled through miles of hardwood bush. I was among the sugar-maples for the first time. Lofty and beautiful trees almost over-arched the road with their thick branches. The way was so grassy and so lone that it reminded me of a path through a gentleman's plantation. I wondered that this pleasant place, these stately trees, forming green arcades, opening cool vistas into shady places, rich in every variety of leafage, afforded no passing glimpse of a great house. No quaint porter's lodge pleased the eye, and suggested that all this loveliness had a lordly proprietor. I came to a sluggish little stream, encroached upon by brushwood, half choked with submerged logs and bushes, and spanned by an old bridge of logs, which were moss-grown at the ends. Here was a beaver meadow, and by the little stream, where it crossed the meadow, was a row of great drooping elms, splendid aristocrats of trees, that could not be improvised on short notice. There was an old clearing on the slope beyond the beaver meadow partially grown up again. The second growth of trees, basswood and maple, elm and oak, quivering aspen and feathery sumach, had sprung up as Nature ordered; some singly, showing off every leafy spray to the best advantage; some in massed clumps of solid leafiness, others in stately natural avenues, leading off to open spaces where there might have been a lordly tower, a lady's bower, or anything else lonely and romantic.

Never before had I known anything of Nature's landscape gardening on such a grand scale. What a splendid deer-park this would make, I exclaimed,

sitting down to enjoy the scene on pretence of resting myself. I thought, with a little twinge of regret, that this spot of delight probably belonged to some sturdy yeoman who would clear the magnificent trees off without a thought to make way for tasselled corn, or golden wheat,—who would have no eye for Nature's beauty only for utility. And it is well. This Canada is surely the land of promise for the people —the hard-handed diggers and delvers of the soil.

Perhaps, said I to the listening chipmunks, who were whisking and scampering about and enquiring in shrill chitterings what business I had to be moralizing there, perhaps this spreading Canada contains an answer to the agonized question which humanity in want of work and want of bread wrung from Ebenezer Elliott:

"When wilt thou save the people,
O God of mercy, when?
Not kings and lords, but nations;
Not thrones and crowns, but men?"

The chipmunks are witnesses that, there and then, I wished for every man willing to work and only asking leave to earn bread for his little ones, a home and a farm under the maple trees of this splendid Canada. Every true worker here will, while carving out for himself individual wealth, help to create an empire!

With this magnificent wish I got up from my log seat and wandered on, enjoying the gay green wood and the costless generosity of my own thoughts. At the same time, by a vigorous use of a green branch, according to instructions given, I tried to keep the clouds of mosquitoes at bay, I wonder if the Egyptian flies were mosquitoes, singing a song of triumph over their power of tormenting? If they would bite and not sing, or sing and not bite, either would be sufficiently annoying, but with both together it is insufferable. And those treacherous black flies, that draw blood before you know you are bitten, I wonder if they boast to one another of an ancestry that came over from the banks of the Nile? By and by I began to wonder how long seven miles was. I knew I must have walked a good long piece. True, I had walked slowly, but I had started early, and only sat down once to enjoy the scenery. It was certainly past noon, at least I thought so as I peered up at the white sun, and no sign of Blair Athol or the white house of the minister. The road stretched on, bordered with stately trees, but no clearings, no fences, no houses, nor signs of human occupation. Coming down a little hill, I came suddenly on two deer browsing on the underwood. They looked up with great startled eyes, and then bounded off instantly, their funny tails waving white in the air. I walked on, and seeing no more deer, I began to realize that I was very tired. I had left the large trees and the high land behind me; the road now lay along the bank of a muddy sluggish little river, and the trees were dark evergreens. I was in a pine swamp. I began to think that I must have lost my way. The road now swept round a sharp turn, following the bend of the river, and when I turned the corner I saw a little clearing among the pines. A little shanty was built close to the fence, so small and low that it seemed too miserable for a human habitation. Two or three tattered and sunburned little children were playing merrily before the door in the sand, fat and contented. It was dreadfully hot here, the encircling pines fenced in the heat and fenced out every stirring breath of air. A man was mowing in the clearing, dressed in a home shirt, a coarse straw hat, and—nothing more. A woman and a young girl were busily engaged in raking hay. They both stopped working, and leaning on their rakes, stared at me. I felt the heat walking along the road; these people, hard at work in the hot sun, felt it too, I am

very sure. The woman and the girl, her daughter I suppose, with the exception of broad-leaved straw hats, were dressed in the same style as the witches of Kirk Alloway. I was going to enquire about the way, but was frightened at so much undress, and so passed on, leaving the whole family looking after me, an expression of dirty contentment underlying the surprise they felt at a light muslin dress and a white bonnet in company with a stranger passing alone through these forest solitudes. A few acres more and I felt like turning back to ask my way of the slightly dressed people when the road came abruptly to an end at a saw mill. I perceived that I must have missed my way, though I was not aware of it, not having noticed any road branching off. I stood bewildered, looking across the muddy little river. The mill was on the other side, and there was no way to cross but on a stick of timber thrown over at the edge of the slide. I did not think I was as sure-footed as a mule, and I feared to try walking the plank. As I stood hesitating, a person appeared at the mill and called to me if I wanted to cross. Before I could answer he came over for me. I told him I had left Gledbury early in the morning for the Rev. Mr. McGillivray's at Blair Athol, and, though I had carefully followed the directions I had received, yet I must have surely missed my way, for they did not tell me I would come to a mill.

"You do not exactly know where you are," he said, smiling. "You followed the wrong road five miles back. You have been travelling away from Blair Athol ever since." He kindly took my hand, and led me across the plank and through the mill to the other side, telling me by the way that he would set me on the right road again.

"You must come up to the house and rest yourself. My mother will be glad to see you."

"I must hurry to get to my journey's end, after losing so much time, if you will kindly put me on the road," I said, with a natural reluctance to intrude on a strange family.

"You must rest before you go any farther. We are friends of your brother's, though you have never met with us before. I know you by your voice, it is so like your brother's. You are Miss Ray, lately from the old country. My father and mother came from somewhere about the same place. They will be delighted to see you. Just wait a moment till I lock the mill-door, and I will go up with you."

I saw that there were two or three mills here, and great piles of lumber built up beside them. He locked the mill and with the key on his finger walked with me up the hill towards a nice wooden house, painted white, with a verandah all round it. "I did not tell you where you are," he said, "This is Jessop's mills, and I am Richard Jessop. You must have heard your brother speak of us?"

"I hear him speak of so many, but as I do not know them I do not take much notice," I said.

"The water is low and the mills are not doing much these days. I am glad, however, that I happened to be at the saw-mill when you came, or you would have found it difficult to cross."

"Difficult, sir!" I said, "it would have been impossible."

"I do no say that," he answered. "You would have attempted to cross—and you would have succeeded. Trying is half way to success."

I took notice of this saying, not as anything new, but I laid it up as a word of encouragement to help me in my new duties. When we got to the house, he showed me into a pleasant parlor where a young man was sitting in an easy-chair with very white hands crossed before him. He was evidently an invalid, for he did not rise when we went in. A pretty, fresh young lady sat by the window sewing.

"This is my brother, Robert Jessop, and my niece, Amelia Marston," said my companion, adding, "I found Miss Ray at the mill, on her way to Minister McGillivray's."

Miss Marston came forward and greeted me as kindly as if I had been expected, took me into a bedroom, and removed my bonnet with her own hands, poured out water for me to bathe my face, for she said I was roasted with the heat, and waited on me like a sister.

It was indeed a very red face I saw in the glass instead of my usual pale one. I bathed my face, brushed my hair and came back to the parlor, feeling a little cooler, and found Mr. and Mrs. Jessop, who welcomed me with great kindness. Old Mr. Jessop asked me a great many questions about the old country, my voyage, my impressions of Canada and its people, until I, remembering my unfinished journey, said I must be going. "If you will kindly put me on the road again," I said to young Mr. Jessop, "I hope I will keep it better this time."

Old Mr. Jessop protested that I should not leave the house that night. I was tired, unused to walking and had missed my dinner. "Get a cup of tea, good wife," he said, "and I will enjoy a chat with this young lady. We may turn out to be relations. Do you know, Miss Ray, that I come from Gray Abbey? I was born there; so was my wife. There were a great many Jessops there; I had an uncle, Thomas Jessop, who married a Ray. Perhaps I may turn out to be an uncle of yours, and my boys your cousins."

Mrs. Jessop bustled off to get the tea. Miss Marston followed, leaving me to the tender mercies of the old gentleman, who nearly questioned me to death. Dear me, the questions he did ask! and I never was good at parrying questions. Mr. Richard Jessop came to my aid, but in vain: he could not turn aside the torrent of questions. There was certainly a good prosecuting attorney lost to the world when Mr. Jessop settled in the backwoods of Canada. It was a relief when we were summoned to tea. The tea-table was loaded with different kinds of cake and preserves, hot biscuit, cheese and honey—everything that they possibly could put on it—and Mrs. Jessop told me she was sorry she had not known of my coming, as she would have prepared something nice for tea.

After tea Mr. Richard Jessop asked me whether I preferred going on to Blair Athol or remaining where I was all night. I said I would rather go on if I could.

"I am going past Mr. McGillivray's on my way to Mount Pleasant, and will drive you there," he said.

"You can call for her on your way back," said his mother, "and bring her here to stay all night."

"Of course bring her back," echoed the father, "till we finish our talk about Grey Abbey."

This kindness was perfectly overwhelming. I was really tired walking, and enjoyed sitting in the light carriage, and having a fast horse whirl me over the miles that lay between Jessop's and Minister McGillivray's. The noise of the carriage wheels brought the minister's wife to the door.

"I have brought you a young lady who lost her way coming to your place. This is Miss Ray, a sister of young Ray, Ramsay's clerk. She wishes to see the minister.

"Are you not coming in yourself, Mr. Jessop?" said Mrs. McGillivray.

"I will come in for Miss Ray when I come back. I am going on to Mount Pleasant," he said, and drove away.

"You have not been accustomed to travelling through the bush," she said to me, taking my hand to lead me into the house as if I were a child.

"I never tried it before," I said.

"You are strange to the country, my dear. I am glad the minister is at

home, so you will not have your journey for nothing."

She was a pretty little woman in a home-made linsey dress and plain muslin cap. Her voice was peculiarly sweet and musical; her "my dear" sounded like a caress or a blessing. Opening a door leading from the sitting-room she spoke to the minister in Gaelic, and he answered in the same language. She led me into the inner room, and I stood in the presence of the Rev. Superintendent of Schools. He was a tall, massive, rugged, gray-haired man, closely shaved as to his beard, but with such bushy gray eyebrows that they almost concealed his bright, dark eyes. There was something in his face that reminded me of a mastiff, strong, sagacious and kind. He looked like one to be trusted once and forever. His fair-faced, sweet-voiced wife seemed to be just what was necessary to add patience and sweetness to wisdom and strength.

"And so you think of teaching, my young friend?" he said. "Well, the teacher, like the poet, is born, not made. Have you the divine gift of drawing the little ones near you? It is not altogether what you know—though that is important—but what you can impart, and how much you care for the children under your authority."

This ideal of teaching was far beyond mine. All that had troubled me was, did I know enough to teach? I began to distrust myself altogether as I listened to his words.

I said, "I am afraid I am very unfit. I am young and have no experience in teaching, and I am not very thorough in anything." I could not keep my voice from trembling a little.

The minister took off his glasses and looked at me kindly, saying, "We must not let you get discouraged before you begin. Youthfulness is a disease that wears off in time, and self-distrust is not a bad symptom if it is not carried too far. Do not get nervous. Take a little rest before we begin the examination."

He began like Mr. Jessop to question me about my home and friends, my voyage out, and intentions for the future, nodding his head reflectively at my answers. Then he glided off into politics. He found me a good listener, as I well might be, for I was delightfully ignorant upon the subject. He explained to me the meaning of the terms Liberal and Conservative, giving me many reasons, which seemed absolutely unanswerable, why dissenters should be Liberals; why the people of Canada should be the same, and would be, if they understood the value of their birthright. He brought everything out so clearly that I did not see how any one could differ from him. "We will never," he said, "submit to be in the condition of the peoples of Europe, who, as your gifted countryman observed, 'believe that a small part of mankind are born booted and spurred, and the rest bridled and saddled.'"

He told me of some dreadfully unjust and selfish people whom he called the "Family Compact" (I wondered if they were a royal family), who were overthrown, after almost ruining Canada. He told me of the new member whom the Blair Athol settlement had, with the assistance of some others, returned to Parliament: of his learning, talents, liberal sentiments and eloquence. I believed in that man's excellencies at once. "True, he is a Catholic," he said, "but he is far in advance of many Protestants in liberality of sentiment. Why, he was denounced from the altar by the priest of his own parish." He went to a file of newspapers, and brought several and read extracts to me from the member's recent speeches, dwelling with special delight on certain parts. "When he said *that*, he was thinking of Blair Athol," he said triumphantly. "He is in a very hopeful state of mind. I do not mind telling an intelligent young

lady like you that he has, on several occasions, come to hear my preaching, and been impressed—*impressed*—with the arguments brought forward. I spoke plainly to him here in this room on the errors of the religion which he professes, and he allowed there was great force in what I said. Indeed, he told me, if ever he changed his religion, he would undoubtedly prefer the simple, grand gospel as we believe it."

What a hypocrite I did feel, sitting there listening with an appearance of interest, putting a safe question now and then, when I caught a corner of what he was intending to convey to me, and all the time wishing that honorable member was in Jericho; wondering if I would pass; what questions he would ask; when it would be over; and, if successful, when I would begin. To my dismay Mrs. McGillivray had prepared tea, and we were summoned to it while he was explaining to me what was meant by the Secularization of the Clergy Reserves. In vain I informed them we had an early tea at Mr. Jessop's, and that I could not take tea again: they both declared I must break bread with them the first time I came under their roof. The fare was very plain—the dignity of poverty was there. While we were at the table Mr. Jessop came back, and, as soon as we rose from the meal, the examination was proceeded with. By this time I was as nervous as could be. His conversation had opened a boundless prospect before me, of my duties and my unfitness to fill them. Everything I ever knew seemed slipping away from me. First I read—prose and poetry—with a consciousness that I had lost the management of my voice. He gently shook his head; I saw I was disappointing him. Then I wrote a selection from his dictation. My hands were swollen from the effects of the mosquito bites, and were stiff, and I was shaking with nervousness besides. I was considered a fair writer at school, but this specimen of my writing was horrible.

"The spelling is quite correct," said the minister gently, "but could you not write a little better?"

For reply I showed him my hands.

"Ah yes, I see. The mosquitoes like old country blood; by and by they will not trouble you so much," he said. "Try again, perhaps you will do better. Write something yourself."

A couplet of Montgomery's ran in my head and I wrote:

> "Were this frail world our final rest,
> Living or dying, none were blest."

"That is better, and you will improve by practice," he said, wishing to encourage me. I then parsed for him a very simple sentence. He then asked me a few questions in Geography—the exact location of certain places that were scattered, like the Jews, from one end of the world to the other. Then came the arithmetic, which was a favorite study of the good minister. I knew well that it was not there my strength lay. I lost my head altogether, and was hardly sure what five and five mounted to. How hot and miserable and mortified I did feel over simple questions; trying to see if any real difference existed between six dozen dozen, and half a dozen dozen! Discovering how many heaps that would reach the moon might be raised out of a quadrillion of leaves of paper (English numeration) each the four-hundredth part of an inch in thickness! As if ever any one would want to do the like! The length in miles to which a pound of flax might be extended by a certain Catherine Woods of Dromore, who spun a hank of linen yarn containing so many cuts, of so many threads, each so long! How to divide seventeen camels, so as to give one-half, one-third, and one-ninth to three individuals! I stumbled through these, not without suggestions from the kind-hearted minister, who now brought out his

crowning pet question to top off with —a horrible hat of plums, that some dreadful boys had got hold of, and spilt and scrambled for and tossed into every possible combination of fractions! It was a very long example. I think those wretched boys must have fought over the plums for a long summer day. Why could they not eat them and have done with it! If they were ripe plums it was some comfort to think that even boys could not eat them after all they came through. If I had been myself, and alone, finding out about those plums, it would have taken me a long time to follow them through all the pitching about, dividing, scrambling for, and redividing and scrambling again that happened to them. But as it was, with the minister sitting before me waiting, and Mr. Jessop in the next room waiting, the figures swimming before my eyes, I broke down and began to cry. The worthy minister must have had great debatings with himself. He did not like to disappoint me, and how could he give a school over to the tender mercies of such an ignoramus? He was disappointed in me, I knew well. He sat thinking, with his brows drawn down over his eyes until no one could have pulled the wool over them any farther. I cried out my little cry while he was shut up behind his eyebrows deciding for me. At length he opened his eyes, took off his spectacles and, figuratively speaking, came off the judgment-seat. He talked of teachers, and scholars, and of different methods of imparting instruction, trying to help me in this indirect way. Then he said kindly, "My child, the school that wants your services has been vacant for some time. It must be kept open a certain number of months to secure the government apportionment. Now, as you can never know what you can do till you try, I will give you a third-class certificate for six months. Between this and Christmas you will find out whether you have a talent for teaching or not. When the Inspector for the counties comes round he will confirm your certificate, I hope. I will come up to the school and see how you are getting along some day."

The minister and his wife both urged me to stay a few days with them, until the Sabbath was past, and go to hear Mr. McGillivray preach.

"Their hoard was little, but their hearts were great."

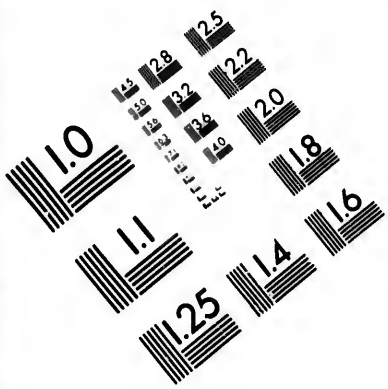
I was glad they were so kind as to ask me, but I could not content myself to stay, so I returned to Jessop's with Mr. Richard; endured the old gentleman's questions with patient heroism; took meekly his rebuke for my ignorance in not being able to inform him of the present condition of the old ruins which gave Grey Abbey its name, or of the date when Phelim ier oe O'Neil sacked the Abbey—which I do not think he ever did; and at last got a good soft bed and a good sound sleep. I slept late the next morning. When I arose, vexed at myself for being tardy, breakfast was over, and the men had gone off in different directions to the business of the day, so that the invalid son and I had breakfast together. After breakfast I admired all Mrs. Jessop's housekeeping triumphs, and was warmly invited to come back to see them. Miss Amelia Marston showed me a shorter road back to Gledbury and accompanied me nearly all the way, and so, with my certificate in my pocket, I returned safely to Mr. Ramsay's.

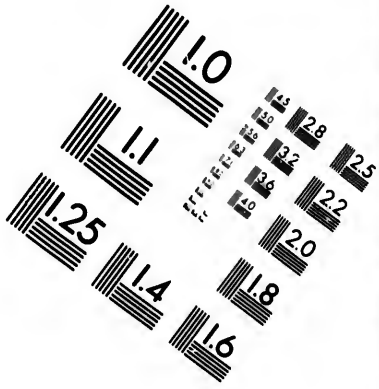
CHAPTER XV.

Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

LONGFELLOW.

Walter was disappointed that I had not obtained a certificate of a higher grade, and for a longer time. I did not think it necessary to tell him what an





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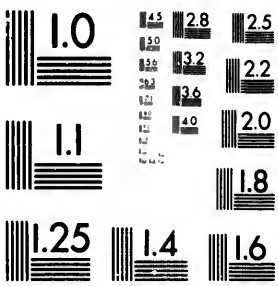

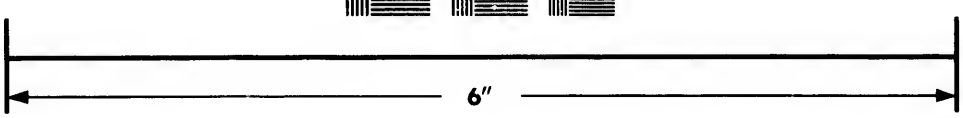

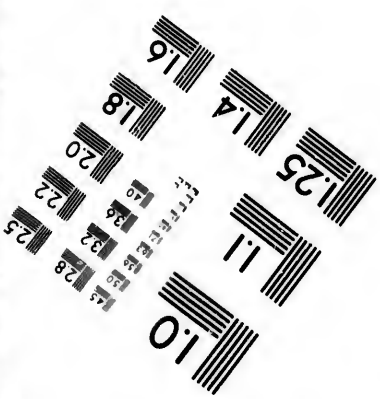

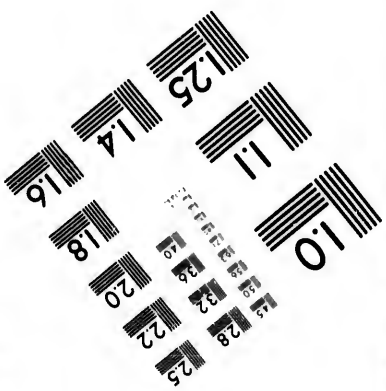

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escape I had from the fate of getting none at all. He thought I was remarkably stupid to lose my way on a plain Concession road. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay had decided, in my absence, that they would like to retain my services, and made me an offer to that effect. I preferred going to teach, though I was very glad that they valued what I had done for them as an equivalent for my board since I came.

It was something of a trial to me, after all my dreams of independence, to think of saying good-bye to Walter and the Ramsay family, and to go away among perfect strangers. Walter said he would go over to Glenshie to church on fine Sabbaths. It would be farther than to Gledbury meeting house, but the exercise would be beneficial. Miss Ramsay teazed me a good deal about going away into a back settlement to teach, telling me I would be among Hottentots and other barbarians. I took this as a compliment, for I knew that Charlotte said things because she was very sorry I was going. On the appointed day Mr. McLennan came for me on horseback.

"I hef got for you as good a place to boord as there is in Glenshie," he said, triumphantly, "and with a countrywoman of your own. I will come for your trunk next week, when I'm coming with the waggon to Jessop's mills."

"How do you expect to take me?" I asked, in amazement.

"You will ride my horse—she's a quiet brute. I will walk beside you. I can walk fast. I will keep up with you, never fear."

"Ride your horse, Mr. McLennan! I never rode on horse-back in my life. I certainly cannot do that," I said, decidedly.

"That is a pity that you have not learned to ride, Miss Ray. You will hef to learn to ride. It will be a great loss to yourself if you cannot ride. You will hef to ride behind me to-day."

Seeing that I was unwilling to try this plan of travelling, he said, persuasively, "That is a fery good plan, Miss Ray. Gret ladies hef ride in that fashion before this day."

Riding double I had heard of and read about, but never expected to try it for myself. "I have a satchel that I must take with me," I said.

"Neffer mind that, I will take that before me on the saddle."

He mounted himself, and by dint of great persuasion brought his horse close to the block and kept him there while I, with the assistance of his foot and hand, scrambled up behind him, and, according to directions, put my arm round him to hold on. The horse did not like carrying double; my skirt flapping about his legs annoyed him, I suppose. He ran sideways, capered about, lifted his front feet together as if he had half a mind to rear, thought better of it and only kicked, and plunged about in a heavy sort of way, like a gambolling cow, till Mr. McLennan lost his patience and admonished him with heel and hand.

"You will excuse me if I hef to swear at the beast?" he said to me between his teeth, as he struggled with his horse.

"You need not swear on my account," I said half-laughing, though I was frightened, "Had you not better let me get off."

"No, no, you will stay where you are. She will hef to do my bidding. She will hef to do that."

The horse understood *that* after a while, and consented to make the best of it, as I was doing, and jogged off, carrying with him Cæsar and his fortunes, in a small way. This was how I travelled into independence.

My companion was of a communicative turn, and, as we rode along, told me something of the notable persons in the section, from Squire McPherson, their great man, to the little old woman who lived in a hut all by herself, and had power to bewitch cattle, raise

storms, and afflict with sickness or ill-luck all who vexed her.

We left the large clearings and comfortable farm-buildings of Gledbury behind us and struck into a low swamp of the dark evergreens of the country. The mosquitoes were very bad here, and my companion, seeing how they annoyed me, endeavored to break off a branch for me that I might act on the defensive; but, his horse objecting, I begged him to desist. I was afraid of another scene like what we had at starting. By this road we reached Jessop's mill and met Richard Jessop, who teased me as if he were an old acquaintance about my first lesson in riding.

"Do not be astonished if I go up for you some Friday evening, for father wants to put you through another course of questions; he wants to discover the relationship that he thinks ought to exist."

As we rode away from Jessop's mills, Mr. McLennan told me that the mills were a great place to hear news, for old Mr. Jessop would never fail to know anything for want of asking. He said that Gledbury, which we had left behind, was an old settlement that had been peopled by refugees from the States, called United Empire loyalists. Some of them were of Dutch and some of French descent, though there were a few Lowland Scotch and Irish among them. "These settlements here are all filled with Scotch people, like myself," he added complacently.

When we came to a place where four roads met he informed me that three Highland settlements met there, Glenshie, Blair Athol, and Badenoch, peopled by Islesmen and emigrants from Perthshire, Inverness, and the Western Highlands. The Corners was a sort of village. There was a church, a tavern, a blacksmith shop and a few other houses, and a school-house, from which issued a noise that proved they were not cramming down learning quietly.

"Our children used to come here, but there were too many," said Mr. McLennan, "and we made a school-house of our own. The teacher here is a college man. We cannot afford the like of that; so we make shift with you for awhile." Now was not this speech candid, and complimentary to me?

Another long swamp to go through, and we then stopped at a gate that closed the entrance to a green lane. This gate was made on a peculiar plan. The top bar was almost twice as long as the gate; the projecting end, which was on the hinge-side, was weighted with heavy stones, secured in their place by wooden pins. It seemed impossible that any one but a giant could swing open such a clumsy thing, but a little sunburned boy, who was playing about there, opened it for us with perfect ease. We trotted along up this lane under some fine elms; came out on a meadow through which the river ran; over this we crossed on a low wooden bridge, and came to the farm-house which was to be my home for the next six months. It was a log building on a slope, with a little patch of flowers before the door, and a bower grown over with hops arching the little walk that led to the house. The garden, bower, and all, stopped short before it reached the house, leaving an open, grassy place round the big doorstep. A big girl, with a cast in her eye, stood in the doorway and looked at us without speaking, until Mr. McLennan called to her to bring a chair and help me to dismount.

"This is the new schoolmistress, Mary, that I hef brought to you. Where is your mother?" said Mr. McLennan.

"She is in the back-clearing, at the hay," said Mary. "I will call her."

"I will leave the schoolmistress with you, Mary. I hef no time to stop. I will come to the school and meet you there in the morning, Miss Ray. See that you do not be late, and now I will

say good-bye to you." He shook hands, got upon his gray horse and rode off.

When he was gone, Mary, who was a thin, dark girl with a sullen expression, and such a squint that you could not tell where she was looking, brought her best eye to bear on me, and looked me over with undisguised contempt.

"You are very little to come to teach here. You must have great courage," said she, breaking silence.

My courage was at such a low ebb that a good cry would have been a relief. To keep back that tendency I asked her to show me my room. The room in which we were, I could see, was the living-room. I have learned that word since I came to Canada. It means a kitchen, parlor, sitting-room, and bedroom, all in one. It was quite a large room, but dark, for the window was shaded with scarlet runners that were trained over it. The floor was uneven, the boards being worn into hollows in some parts. The partitions dividing this room from the rest of the house were of boards, dark with age, but everything was just as clean as could be. A large chimney, into which was set a cooking-stove, with a great fire in it for baking purposes, though the day was so hot, occupied most of one side. On each side of the chimney was a door. Opening one of these doors she brought me into a small room, looking like a box, with its wooden walls. It did not contain as much as the prophet's chamber. There was a bed and a chair, with a little looking-glass hung upon a nail, but nothing more.

"This is your room" said Mary.

I looked round, and said, "It is very small. Have you not a larger room?"

"None you could get," she replied, with a little grunt of satisfaction. "What would you have? Is it not good enough for you? This is my mother's bedroom. She gave it up for you, and sleeps in the bunk. The next room is bigger; the boys sleep there. You might have that only the boys are out and in all the time. They would be in before you were up and after you were in bed. You would not like that. You will be well enough there. The other teachers we had boarded round."

I looked at her with astonishment. "I understood from Mr. McLennan that this was a new section, and that I was the first teacher," I said.

"Maybe he made you think so," said Mary, "but he did not say so, for he could not without lying. It is a new section. It is not but a little while since it was split off, because the section was too big. Before that we used to go to school to Bay Chaleur."

"Bey Shallore," I said in astonishment. "Had you a Turk teaching here?"

"You must be a fool," replied Mary, politely, "if you do not see that that is a nickname. It is a place near the sea where he came from. He was always talking about it and they called him after it."

"I see."

"Since the section split off we have had two teachers. He did not tell you that, I guess."

"No, he did not," I said.

"The first came at New Year's. He was an old sailor. I don't know whether he knew any learning or not, but he knew how to get drunk and to swear at the scholars. They did not need to pay him to teach that, they can learn that at home," she said, with a bitter smile.

"How long did he stay?" I asked.

"Not long, not more than six weeks. One day he was full of whiskey, and as cross as the old boy, and he took to whaling the scholars, and they turned on him, and wallopped him out of the section, and he never showed his face since. The next was a half-breed, a grand scholar they said, when he was sober; but he set the children against him at the first, and they smoked him out."

"How did they do that?" I enquired.

"They fastened him into the school when they got leave and he stayed behind a minute. They stopped up the chimney, none of the windows would open, and he was nearly smothered. He left right away, and there has been no school since. The scholars are a wild set. I wonder how you'll manage them. They need a deal of thrashing to keep them in order."

Thrashing does not seem to have been a success, I thought, but I said, "Mr. McLennan could not have thought them so hard to manage or he would not have engaged a female teacher."

"Oh, he hired you to keep the school open long enough to get the government money. There will be enough to pay you; you will cost them nothing this half year, and they think you'll teach them something if they don't chase you. You will have to teach them English, anyway, for you have no Gaelic.

"Have the children no English?" I asked in dismay.

"One or two of them have a little," said Mary, noticing my dismay and enjoying it. The people are not very well pleased that you are not willing to board round. They think you're stuck up," she added.

Here was a pleasant prospect for me. I ventured to ask if she was to be one of the scholars.

"No, indeed," she answered with a toss of her head, "I will not go to school to any one smaller than myself."

Well, this was one comfort. During her revelations she busied herself getting tea, and when it was ready, she went to the door and raised a "Hoich hallo," closing her hands round her mouth like a speaking-trumpet, that must have penetrated to the back-clearing, wherever that was.

By and by the harvest people came trooping in. Mr. Morrison, a small, thin, dark man, lame, and with a pair of lovely dark eyes. His wife, a tall, strong, black-browed woman, with a martial step and port that made her look like a disguised soldier. She wore a red handkerchief, turban fashion, round her head, a home-made blue linsey dress, with no superfluity about the skirt, a woollen apron, and a pair of men's boots. The soul of one of Claverhouse's dragoons might have transmigrated into Mrs. Morrison's portly body. She strode through the house as if she had spurs on her heels, and a sabre at her side. She fingered her lip as if she were feeling an imaginary moustache, spoke with a ring of command in her voice, chewed gum as if it were tobacco, and spat about her in a masculine way. She enforced her orders with oaths that might have been learned "with the army in Flanders," and should have been left there.

I thought of a line of Young's,

"Although the volley rattles on your ear,
Believe her dress, she's not a grenadier."

Her children,—there were a lot of them, all boys but one little girl, the youngest, and Mary, who was evidently the eldest,—were nice, gentle, curly-headed children, who did not seem to mind their mother's roughness, and had little merry jokes and asides among themselves. Mrs. Morrison did not make herself as disagreeable to me as her daughter had done; on the contrary, she welcomed me most cordially. She said,

"You are spunky to undertake to teach such wild little devils as you will find here. I bet my boots you will give it up in a fortnight. If my young ones trouble you, just you complain to me and I will hide them for you."

I took my tea silently, for I was very tired and sad. Twelve miles on horseback for my first ride was a little wearisome, and this reception was disappointing, to say the least. I had imagined that I would board at the house of people like the Ramsays or the Jessops, and feel a little at home.

Mrs. Morrison noticed that I was grave and silent, and began to speak quite kindly to encourage me.

"Are you fond of reading?" she asked.

"Very," I answered.

"Have you read Rousseau's works?" she enquired.

I was surprised. He was the last author I should have expected to hear of in the backwoods of Canada.

"I have not seen any of his works," I said, "I have seen his name mentioned in Cowper's poems."

"I have read his works,—and Paine's, and Voltaire's," she said, with a little stop between the mention of each author. "You would not read any of them, I suppose."

"I do not know," I answered, "I know nothing about them but their names. I supposed they were not good books."

"You are one of the straight-laced ones, I see; I will take that out of you," she said, with a laugh.

"I did not expect to hear of such authors in the backwoods of Canada," I said.

"We were not always in the backwoods of Canada. I have been over a good part of the world before I settled here. Mr. Morrison was a soldier. I ran off with him when his regiment was stationed in Limerick. Would you take me for a Limerick woman?"

"No, I would not, certainly," I said, looking at the hard, dark, peremptory face.

"I have followed that man round the world," she said, with a little laugh, nodding at her husband. "I have seen war, and many a queer sight in my time, before we became settlers in Canada."

It was not for nothing she had got the military air.

When I retired to bed, sleep was out of the question. The little crib had been so heated through the day by the cook-stove, that the close air was stifling. I tried to raise my window, which was half in my room and half in another, but could not. I bore the feeling of suffocation as long as possible, and then dressed myself and determined to go outside to breathe. Mr. and Mrs. Morrison were asleep in the "settle-bed bunk," as they call it, Mrs. Morrison snoring, in martial fashion, beside her quiet husband. The door opened with a latch and I passed out. The dog raised himself, and, after a brief examination, lay down again. The moon was at the full, walking royally among the stars. Who is it that compares the harvest-moon to the shield of an unfallen archangel? Christopher North, I think. How gloriously she silvered the little river that looked blue under the midnight sky, and the great drooping elm beside it, and flooded all the landscape with radiance! I looked up with a homesick feeling; thoughts of my mother, who was a sacred mystery to me; of my father, who served God above many; of my dear mamma, who did not leave me with a step-mother's memory of her, who was just and loving to me; of the quiet Manse life, succeeded by the dreary years at Enbridge; of longing for liberty and independence, all crowded on my mind. Now I was an independent worker, and the prospect before me did not seem a bit nice. It was enough to frighten even a bigger person, I thought. I felt a longing for wisdom and help that I had no words to express. A voiceless pleading for all my needs drew my whole soul upwards, and heaven seemed nearer to me than ever it was before. A stillness, filled with God's presence, was all around me, till I half expected a still, small voice to whisper, "Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

I was recalled to earth by the voice of Mrs. Morrison inquiring in war-like

tones, "What in thunder are you out star-gazing at this time of night for? Do you want to catch your death of cold, and not be able to yell at the young ones to-morrow?"

I looked in terror at the door; that martial matron was standing there, her red turban gleaming in the moonshine; she was in the same simple style of undress in which Jane Shore did penance.

"It was so hot in the bedroom that I could not go to sleep," I answered, meekly. "I tried to lift the window and could not. I came out to get cool."

"It was as well for you that you could not open the window; you would have been as hoarse as a drake in the morning with the night air blowing direct on you. Why did you not send your fist through one of the upper panes, if the room was too close? Come right in, and get into your bed at once," she ordered.

I obeyed, came in, and slipped quietly to bed. The heat, shut in there, was still so great that I did not fall asleep for a good while, and when I did I tumbled down precipices, and was pursued by wild horses with red turbans on, till morning.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way."
LONGFELLOW.

Next morning was the eventful morning to me. After breakfast Mr. Morrison limped in with a stout hazel switch about five feet long.

"It is as thick as my thumb," he said, "and that is the lawful size for beating children, apprentices, or wives."

I should have liked to see him attempt to beat his wife with any sort of rod. I took it with thanks, telling him I was getting quite frightened.

"Don't say that," said his energetic wife. "Keep a stiff upper lip."

"Whale them well, whip in what you teach."

With this parting advice I started for school, accompanied by the two youngest children; the rest stayed at home to help in with the hay. The little girl, Alice, carried our luncheon in a little Indian-made basket. Arrived at the school-house, which was about a mile and a half distant, I found a group of dark, red, and flaxen-haired children waiting about the door. Two men were sitting on the fence whittling. They shut their knives with a snap and jumped down on my arrival. Mr. McLennan was coming from an opposite direction, with the key in his hand. The two men he introduced to me as the other trustees. One of these gentlemen was very dark-complexioned, and his whole face was covered with a forest of short black beard, except a little semicircle of clearing, under his eyes, which looked out from beneath heavy black brows. Cheeks he had none, forehead he had none. I think he must have monopolized the beards of a cohort of his relatives to make such a one of his own. This hairy man was the chief speaker, and grumbled a little about my size and youthfulness.

"You are fery unreasonable, Norman, son of Malcom McInnis," said Mr. McLennan, my trustee. "You cannot expect a big teacher for the fery small salary. She will be bigger and wiser if God does spare her."

"Precious goods are done up in small parcels," I said, smiling to cover a little annoyance.

"So are poisons, my young leddy," answered Mr. McInnes, with a smile that made him look like an amiable bear.

This interchange of stale jokes made a laugh, and we felt more at ease. Mr. McInnes volunteered to come and thrash the children for me, if my powers failed. Looking round on the little ones, he threatened in the most

awful manner what would happen to them if they behaved badly. They gave me a few directions as to my duties, chiefly to be severe and to make them have their catechism every Friday, then they all took their departure and left me to take possession of my new kingdom in peace.

So, by many paths, I came to be installed as teacher of School Section No. 2, Glenshie. The school-house was a little log building with three small windows. A clumsy chimney came out so far into the floor as to leave a deep, dark corner on each side. One awkward double desk, hewn and hacked with knives, with initials cut deep into it, mottled with great splashes of ink, stretched from one end of the room to the other. A shelf in one of the dark corners by the chimney held the copy-books and slates, when out of use. There were no maps, no blackboard, nor ever had been. The floor was loose and uneven, the whole place was not any too good for a sheep srable. I had a new register, and the first thing to be done was to put down their names. Here came in a difficulty. They did not speak English fluently,—most of them did not speak it at all. The Morrison children, who did, were set to interpret, and being full of sly mischief, translated literally. What could I make of "Mary, the daughter of big Norman," or "Donald, the son of black Norman, the son of Malcolm McInnis," or "John, the son of Angus, who was the son of Murdoch, who was the son of Kenneth," or "Katie the black, daughter of Alexander the red?"

I could not make the register a book of genealogies in that way. After some trouble, I obtained from the mischievous little Morrisons the clan name, and filled up the register with Campbells, Camerons, Grants, and many varieties of Mac's, portioned out rightfully among the little Donalds, Duncans, Marys, Katies and Alecks present. There were forty-five names on the register this first day; of these, twelve did not know their letters. They were all small; one Kenneth, the son of Rory, the son of Duncan, was the only one present at all likely to belong to the mischievous squad that smoked out the last master. But they were restless and full of sly tricks. While they sat staring at me over the top of their books there was an undercurrent of pinches, kicks, cuffs, and hair-pulling.

"Where did your last teacher sit?" I asked.

"There was a high stool for him," said one, "but the boys burned it."

"How did your last teacher open school?" A long silence, then the youngest Morrison piped out, "He said a prayer."

"That is a good way," I said. "Kneel down, all of you, and shut your eyes, and we will pray."

I took the Lord's Prayer. "Give us this day our daily bread," meant every help I needed that day. I then began to classify them. All who could read, read in a sing-song voice, which was not to be wondered at when they thought in another language. There were two grammars, but not a geography or history in the school. As to arithmetic, I found I need not task their brains with the hat of plums for some time yet. I do not know how the forenoon passed; I had not got them nearly classified, when a youngster sang out, "Twelve o'clock." I looked at my watch (it was papa's watch, and Walter, who got it when he came to Canada, lent it to me), and found the noon mark on the floor and my time only a few minutes different. When school was dismissed, the scholars, with whoop and halloo, dispersed to eat their dinners outside. Alice Morrison, opening the basket, gave me my dinner nicely wrapped up in paper. This child was attracted to me—I hoped she might like me. She is a wonderful little white dove to find in the backwoods. As I

sat eating the two biscuits which were my allowance, I recalled what Minister McGillivray said to me: "Have you the divine gift of teaching? Can you draw the children to you?" I had a greater problem to solve than the hat of plums, as I sat looking through the little window to the alder-fringed Grace river.

"I must succeed," I said to myself. "If I fail, Aunt Henderson and Aunt Mattie will know, and say, 'I told you so,' and Walter will think they were right when they said I was not worth my salt. How am I to do these children good—to lead them up higher?" I asked myself. All my ignorance and cowardice came up before me. I knew nothing practically of governing—of keeping order. I had only learned how to obey. I had no theory of education, no training to teach, and then I was so little and young! I was glad that I loved children,—glad that I had learned patience with Jamie and the other little cousins at Enbridge. Was it superstition to take comfort from the hope that as my father really feared God above many, God, for his sake, would help me a little? I got through the afternoon some way, and went home heavy-hearted, and found a nice little dinner waiting for me, watched over by Mary Morrison.

A few days passed, the school gradually increased, and I felt more and more my own inability to manage. The trustees had informed me that I must give four reading lessons a day. There were so many classes, on account of the difference of books, on account of the want of books, that it was hard work to get through with the lessons, and there seemed to be no time to even attempt to govern them. It was a great distance to the nearest store, money was scarce, they traded on the barter principle, so they must wait till they had time to thrash grain, and they were only in the middle of hay harvest,—these were good and sufficient reasons for the scarcity of books, and for the absolute want of pens, pencils, and copy books. Some of the parents did not speak English at all, and in their eyes one English book, as a reader, was as good as another. One little fellow, just beginning to read, brought a tattered copy of Gil Blas as a reader, and another a dog-eared remnant of Jack Sheppard. As I struggled along through the lessons I thought constantly, what shall I do? Every day when the scholars were gone I prayed for guidance, and laid plans for the next day; every morning I came with renewed hope to begin, and all the day long I felt like some one who was managing a boat and did not know how to steer, and for want of skill was drifting at the mercy of every current. I had an idea that my helplessness was apparent to the scholars, and that some of them enjoyed it. I felt discouraged enough to throw up the school before many days had elapsed, but this I dare not do,—I must succeed. I was silent and sad, and shrunk into myself more and more. Mrs. Morrison watched me keenly, as if she knew of the struggle within me. She relaxed in her manner towards me and became pityingly kind. I hated to be pitied. but then it was nice of her to think of me at all. I noticed that this martial matron had a very pretty mouth, and that her smile—when she did smile—was very sweet to me. It meant compassionate curiosity as to how long the struggle would last. One evening she met me at the little gate.

"Tired out?" she asked, when I came up.

"A little bit," I answered wearily.

"You don't whale enough,—you cannot manage those children without whipping."

I smiled, for what could I say?

"Here's a crumb of comfort for you," she said, taking a letter from her pocket. "One of the neighbors was

over at Ramsay's store, and your brother gave it to him to bring over."

It was a letter from Annie, and had come enclosed in one to Walter. "They all missed me," she said; Jamie never went to bed without praying for 'Li'abeth to come back. Bella Wiley had gone to an aunt to learn the dress-making and they had a new girl who was not so nice. Aunt had been in Ballymena, and met Arthur walking on the street with a gray-haired gentleman. He was so altered for the better, and so well dressed, that Aunt would not have known him had he not lifted his hat to her and said, "How do you do, Mrs. Henderson?" with his old mocking smile. All sent love, and Aunt wondered what kind of a school it was that had gone to teach.

The letter carried me back to my old life at Enbridge. I remembered the time I was shut up to wind the tangled silk as a punishment for my attack on Annie. One thing I noticed that day, that it was worth while to take patience to get the right end of a tangled skein, for it was then easy to wind. "There is a right end to the tangled skein I am now trying to wind, if I could only find it," I reasoned.

"Children are all pretty much of a muchness," Mrs. Morrison remarked one day.

"Well," I said to myself, "if children are pretty much alike, what moved me when I was young will take effect on them." How I had hungered after love, after approbation, after the "Well done, Elizabeth," that never came. Mamma—dear, dear, mamma!—said so often, "You can lead Elizabeth anywhere by the heart." "I will love them," I said to myself, "and if love is a power, I will be able to teach them to love me, and then I will have an influence with them, and can use it for good." I went to bed joyfully that night, as if I had found the end of the tangle. The next day was the most discouraging day I had gone through yet. I could not keep them busy for want of proper books and other things. A heap of books, torn and defaced, dog-eared and spoiled, had gathered into the school by this time, but they were not very suitable. There was a variety of arithmetics, from an ancient copy of 'Gough, with all the first torn away, available only from vulgar fractions, that belonged to a lad in addition, and a still more dilapidated copy of Voster,—the hat of plums had been unearthed out of one of these,—sundry fragments of Thompson, Grey, and Walkingame. I would have given them all for one blackboard. One class had English Readers. Fancy the infliction of listening to children who did not understand the language in which they were reading, floundering through stately extracts of the calm, grave thoughts of those ponderous old fellows who flourish in the English Reader! It would have made every hair of their wigs stand on end with horror to have heard them.

That day wore wearily away, listening to the drowsy hum of the lessons. The idle children were playing pranks, and complaining of one another, in the specimens of forcible English which they knew. Their big brothers went to shanty far away up the Grand River, and learned a kind of English about the caboose fire which was to the point, but not always agreeable to ears polite.

The children, I could see, had always been accustomed to consider the teacher as their natural enemy,—one to be worried by every means their active little brains could invent. How was I to bridge the gulf between us, and draw them near to me, and get them to work willingly? I had spoken to them repeatedly about books, pens, copybooks, and other things that were needed. They said, "We will get them when father has time to go to Mount Pleasant." But that time seemed long in coming, to my impatience.

I went home more depressed than

ever. My dinner was waiting for me. Mary never relaxed in her habitual sulkiness, with occasional gleams of caustic humor, but my dinner was always ready.

Mrs. Morrison was, I thought, even more profane than usual. Getting into a passion was not at all necessary to drive her into profanity. Swearing was a luxury to her, and she raised it, by her originality of expression, to the dignity of a fine art. It was a strange thing, but the old soldier, her husband, never swore, neither did the children. She monopolized the accomplishment herself.

Everything combined to make me feel dreadfully. I made my escape out of the house, and walked up and down by the little river, musing on my difficulties—how to draw the scholars to me? how to make them willing workers? Next day when I went to school I found a good many big boys among the scholars. One of them was almost a man grown, with a beard beginning to crawl over his face.

"The fellows who smoked out the schoolmaster," I said, mentally, as I wrote down their names.

I felt a good deal like some hunted animal brought to bay. I wonder how I kept outwardly calm, while my heart beat as if it would choke me. I had to wait a little to steady my voice, so as to speak without trembling. I was well aware that the scholars knew I was afraid of them, and that they were enjoying it. There was the usual cuffing and hair-pulling. There was also triumphant whisperings behind the books. I wonder if desperation gets the name of courage. I felt myself get pale in my effort to be calm when I turned to face them.

"My scholars," I said, "I am only a stranger among you, brought here to teach you." It came to me all at once what to say, when they stopped their mischief to stare at me. "Willie Morrison," I said to the oldest little Morrison coming to school, "come here and interpret for me. I want every one to understand what I say. You have been accustomed to have men teachers, and I am sure you were surprised, when I came, to see a girl teacher, and not a very big one. When I came here I heard a very bad account of you. I have watched you since I came, and I tell you I do not think you are any worse than other children. I think you have made a mistake, that is all. You think your teacher is to be on one side, and you on the other, and that you are to learn only what he can compel you to learn. More than you think this, for the first present I got when I came here was a rod. I have been some days here, and I have made up my mind that I will not undertake to whip learning into you —I will not try to compel you to learn. I can teach you a good many things if you want to learn. I have to earn my living somewhere, but I will not live in strife. I would like you to be friends with me, for I am far from home, but if you are to be my enemies, if you will not be friends with me, I will go away to-morrow, The world is wide, and there are other schools besides this one."

I felt the soft little hand of Alice Morrison steal into mine. I took it as a good sign and held it, and felt a little stronger for it.

"It is for you to say whether I will stay or go; but remember, if you choose me as your teacher, you must stand by me." The idea of my going away of my own accord had not occurred to them, and it took them by surprise.

"All of you who wish me to be the teacher here stand up."

The majority rose at once, the rest after an instant's hesitation. I was pleased to see that all were on their feet.

"Now, remember I am your teacher, —you have chosen me. You are my scholars, and I will teach you all I know, and do all the good I can. I will

confess to you in the words of a great man that I am not as learned as Pontius Pilate, to know Hebrew, Greek and Latin, but I can teach you a good deal if you are willing to learn. I do not believe that it is altogether your fault that it is supposed you need so much whipping. There is a mistake somewhere. I know that you can be as well-behaved as any children anywhere, if you like. Let us—you and I together—try to make this school second to none in Canada for order and obedience. Then we will let people see what School Section No. 2 can do in the way of learning. Order first, learning afterwards." Willie Morrison, who interpreted my maiden speech for me, had been a great trouble to me since he came to school, inheriting, as he did, martial blood from his warlike mother, and a power of doing mischief slyly that I suppose came from original sin. He had kept all round him in a ferment. The spirit of chivalry woke in him, as he rendered my words into Gaelic. He was my friend and helper from that day.

After school I sat down to think. I believed I had got the reins in my hand, but was I able to drive? I had found the end of the tangled skein, could I wind it up? I must get them to work while the effect of my words lasted, that was clear. I would send for pens and pencils, ink and paper with my own money. It was worth more than money to me that they should be kept busy, and they would pay me back; I would not be a loser, even if they did not. Then I must improve the school so that they would take pride in it. I must have more desks, a blackboard, and a map of the world at least. This decision arrived at, I walked home briskly with hope narrowed down to a purpose. After dinner, with Alice Morrison for my guide, I went off to find Mr. McLennan, and told him of my wants. He was as much astonished as if I had asked him for half a kingdom.

"I will not stay, Mr. McLennan," I said, "merely to keep the school open. I want to do my best, and that no worker can do without tools. I am asking for as little as possible, and if I do not get it I have made up my mind to leave."

"It will not do for you to leave us that way when you have begun well. I will go up to-morrow and see what I can do," said Mr. McLennan.

He did come and fasten a shelf desk to the wall on wooden pins, round two sides of the room. Considering the smallness of the room, it was the best that could be done. He made a rack to hold books and a blackboard also; but I had to wait many days for the map. On the next Saturday we had a cleaning bee. When the walls were as white as lime could make them, the windows thoroughly cleaned, blinds made for them out of some material I had by me, the floor scrubbed, the gaping old fireplace filled with green boughs, and the blackboard in its place, the school-room did not know itself, it was so fine. I made a few mottoes for the walls, to keep before our minds the new order of things. The supplies came from Mount Pleasant, and we began to work in earnest. I had gained one step: the children and I were together—were on one side—and there came a taste of pleasure into the teaching.

CHAPTER XVII.

"The twig is so easily bended,
I will banish the rule and the rod;
I will teach them the goodness of knowledge,—
They will teach me the goodness of God."

CHARLES DICKENS.

The next thing I had to consider was how to get rid of one or two of those dreary reading lessons and brighten up the rest. As we had occasionally to have recourse to an interpreter, I determined to have a lesson in English instead of one of the reading lessons. I had some

opposition from the children themselves, who were wedded to the four lessons; but, as they felt their progress in the language, and tested its usefulness when occasion arose, they became gradually reconciled, and the English lesson became a recognized institution. As soon as I was sure they understood me, I often told them little bits from history, as how easily the Picts and Scots harassed, and the Saxons conquered the ancient Britons because they were divided among themselves; and how, on the contrary, England was unconquerable in the time of the great Elizabeth, because that great Queen and her people were united. These lessons always ended with a little talk about the honor of the school. I told them of the dreadful riot I had heard in a school which I passed on my way to Glenshie. The teacher was speaking to some one at the door and the scholars, caring nothing for the reputation of their school, were trying to see who could make most noise, and how glad I was they were not my scholars. "If any one came to speak to me," I said, "I would like you all to remember the motto, 'Study to be Quiet,' and go on with your studies, keeping so still that you might hear a pin fall."

Remembering the pleasure Bible stories gave me when a child, I thought to wake up an interest in the Bible lesson, and wanting a gorgeous back ground for my first attempt, I chose the book of Esther as our reading lesson. I had some difficulty about enough Bibles, but I overcame it, thanks to Squire McPherson. They had always been accustomed to a Scripture lesson, so that was no innovation, but they had not taken any interest in it, partly from being deficient in the language. To interest them, I did not confine myself to the text but heightened the splendors of Shushan, the palace, by descriptions of oriental luxury borrowed from the Feast of Roses. Then we read the lesson and every one gave an opinion of what we read. All their sympathies went with the disobedient Vashti. Alice Morrison thought Vashti was afraid to go to the king. "After drinking for seven days they would be dreadful," she said. "They are bad enough here when they drink for one day."

As the interest deepened about Esther's fate, they became more earnest with their other studies to have more time for the Bible lesson. I must confess these were precious half hours to me, and I took as great an interest in the stories as when I heard them first in the Manse at Grey Abbey. One day during Bible lesson, when we had just hanged Haman, to the great satisfaction of the boys, a rap came to the door. I pointed to the motto "Study to be Quiet" as I went to open it. It was the good minister of Blair Athol on horseback, followed by a shaggy grey dog, which had a strong resemblance to himself. He would not alight or come in, being bound farther, but had brought me a work on education, which he thought might be useful to me. He enquired kindly how I was getting on, and then said suddenly, "Why, have you no school to-day?"

"Oh, yes, I have school, and my scholars are increasing every day. There are fifty-eight present to-day," I said.

He never said a word, but dismounted and came in. When he saw them all so busy, and the improvements we had made in the school, he was much pleased. With pardonable vanity I drew his attention to their writing, in which they had made great progress, for I remembered my failure at examination before him. He made a little speech of approval and encouragement to the children. I went home that evening with my head among the stars.

Mrs. Morrison said to me, "You are succeeding better than I thought you would, but don't think you have conquered every difficulty. Some of the

worst boys in the section have not come to you yet."

I did not heed her warning. Everything was rose-colored now. I was tasting the sweets of power for the first time, and though intoxicating, it was passing sweet. In spite of Mrs. Morrison's warning I thought, in my folly, that I had overcome all my difficulties, and that a smooth path lay before me. "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall," and my fall was not long in coming.

The book Minister McGillivray gave me was "Abbot's Young Teacher," which I studied carefully after school, when I shut myself up to plan the next day's work. I found a difficulty in getting help from it. Every rule for governing took so much time to administer, and I had so many classes because the school was very large and the books so diversified. Then those four reading lessons could only be partially dodged, and above all, when I got through with the work that must be done, I was very tired. It is true the children did not limit me as to time, for I believe they would have stayed with me till sunset, but I had to send them away and stay behind to arrange the next day's work. Mr. Abbot spoke of appealing to the moral sense of the majority in all cases of wrong-doing. I thought that my boys loved and hated, but that a high moral sense of anything required to be planted in them, and time given for it to grow up. All the time I could spare for trying moral suasion and trial by jury was what could be cribbed from the review lessons and the catechisms on Friday.

I had two catechism classes—one the shorter catechism, and the other the Catholic catechism. The trustees insisted on Friday afternoons being given up to the shorter catechism. Then some Roman Catholic parents insisted that their catechism should be also taught, which was only fair. I did honestly want to be fair and equal with them, so as the shorter catechism had proofs to the questions, I took the trouble of writing out proofs for the other, which had none. The children were delighted, and learned the proofs very readily. I daresay I did not select the same texts as proofs that would have occurred to the reverend compiler of the catechism, for there did seem a difference of opinion between the questions and the proofs, but I copied them out of a Swiss paper, and they were selected by a clever man. However, they gave offence, and all the Catholic catechisms were quietly withdrawn. This gave me a little additional time to try Abbot's plans. I needed all my plans, for trouble was near. A few new boys had come to school, who did not care for the mistress, and were proud of it. I thought, "I will let them alone,—they will come round in time." Since I came first to the place, I had noticed that swearing was a besetting sin among the boys. They were great swearers, and their power of calling names was perfectly wonderful. Both these faults seemed to grow worse after the new boys came. In an evil hour, when I was more than usually provoked, I said rashly, "I will give a good whipping to the first boy I find guilty of such a disgustingly wicked practice as swearing."

It was dreadfully hot weather, at the beginning of the harvest of fall wheat, and the children, in the sultry days, were out and in of the river like flocks of water-fowl, before school, at noon, and in the evening, as their dripping hair testified.

One very hot morning, when school was called, a good many were absent. I supposed they were in the river, though I was sorry they were so tardy. Among the truants was one of the last arrivals, one whose nature I could not touch, a fine-looking boy, but bold, defiant and reckless. After school was opened for a while, they came in, and took their places. As I glanced at their

heads, I saw that they had not been in the water very lately.

"What has kept you so late?" I asked.

No answer. It was quite evident, by their faces, that they had agreed not to tell. I marked them tardy, and heard distinctly from Angus Van McErracher, the boy who was my trouble, the whisper, "What do we care for her marks?"

Then seven little girls came in, one of them, little Alice Morrison, all with dripping locks and blue lips, showing that they had been a long time in the water.

"Where have you been all the time, children?" I asked.

"In the river," they answered.

"I would rather, if you must bathe in the morning, that you would take an earlier hour, so as to be in time for school. You should not stay in so long either; you are blue and shivering; you may be ill."

"The boys would not let us out," said Alice Morrison. "They stole our clothes, and kept us in the water till we were crying. When we told them you would be angry, they swore big oaths that they did not care for you or your anger. We told them to quit swearing, and they swore the more, and made bigger oaths, that we might have something to tell, they said."

I turned to the culprits. "Boys, come here," I said.

They rose and sauntered over to me, with a defiant air.

"Is this true?"

"You can believe it if you like," said Angus Van; "we don't care."

I turned sick as the consequences of my rash threat came home to me. To thrash five big boys, every one of them taller than myself, or else break my word given before the whole school.

"We must attend to business just now," I said, "begin at your lessons at once." I wanted time to think, and all my thinking amounted to was, over and over again, "What shall I do? oh dear! what shall I do?"

The boys idled over their lessons, and I took pains to explain rules in arithmetic, and geographical terms to them as if nothing was the matter. When noon came I requested them to stay in, which they did. The loss of a dinner was small punishment. As I bent over the copies I was setting, whispers reached me of the tragic consequences that would follow if I laid a finger on them. We had no Bible lesson in the afternoon, or Bible story. I had lost heart! When school was let out in the evening, the five boys remaining with me, the scholars hung round the school, listening at the door, peeping through the windows to see if I really would whip the big boys,—if they would let me, or what they would do.

I went out and sent them all home. When I came in and sat down in my accustomed place, feeling more like a culprit than the five boys who sat in a row before me, I could evade the question no longer.

"Boys," I said, trying in vain to speak calmly, "when I threatened a whipping to any boy guilty of swearing, I was foolish enough to hope no one would swear. I have done wrong to undertake to punish sin. Only God can do that: It is His law you have broken; and yet I must either whip you or break my word." All the trouble that had been gathering all day welled up. "You have been cruel to torment the little girls, and cowardly to me. Oh! boys, how could you do it?" I choked up, covered my face with my hands, and cried as heartily as ever I did over my childish sorrows at Enbridge. Dear me, how I did cry! My weeping always was a tropical shower.

"Don't cry, Miss Ray, don't cry," said Angus Van, at last. "We have done wrong. We are willing to take the thrashing that you may not break your word."

This breaking down of the culprits only made me cry the harder. At last,

I do not know how, I got up, and with Mr. Morrison's stick, of lawful thickness, gave some stripes to each one and sat down. Covering my face with my handkerchief, feeling that I was really the beaten one, I said, "You may go, boys." They lingered awhile, and then, in rustic fashion, said they were sorry, and went away.

This adventure humbled me. I had been pluming myself on my success, and now I felt all weakness, foolishness and failure. Would I ever become sufficient for the place? This failure made me long for the consolation of a sight of my brother's face. I had not seen him since I came to Glenshie. He had promised to come to church at the Corners, but there had been no preaching since I came, and the church was shut up; so, as I could not do without seeing him any longer, I formed the bold determination to walk over to Gledbury. I went home to dinner to Morrison's, contrary to custom, to dress for my little journey and tell them not to expect me after school. It was wearing on to four when Richard Jessop came in.

"I have been to the other end of Glenshie," he said, "and my mother asked me to call coming back and see if you would come over to our place with me."

"I was intending to walk over to Gledbury this evening, I am longing so much to see Walter," I said.

"You could not walk to Gledbury this evening. It is quite a long way. I am glad I happened to come to-day. You will come with me?"

"Yes, I will be happy to go with you. A ride in the right direction is not to be refused. I am very glad to be saved from walking."

As we drove along Richard Jessop said to me in his bantering way, "You have come to be a lady in request, since I discovered you on the other side of the river from the mill. Father wants to settle relationship. He has made a new discovery of probabilities. Mother wants your help to cut a dress, like one of yours, for Amelia. Amelia wants you to teach her a stitch for a sofa pillow like one she saw with Charlotte Ramsay. Robert wants to talk to you,—Father and he will quarrel about that, I'm afraid; and so I, as common servant of all, am sent after you."

I did not get to Gledbury after all. I cut the dress, began the sofa pillow, talked Grey Abbey to the old man's satisfaction, but could get no farther than Jessop's mill, till it was too late to go on to Gledbury. After all, I knew I could not have any companionship with Walter while he was in the store, and Mr. Jessop said they would bring him to the mills on Sunday after sermon. Mr. Jessop had, he thought, really found a clue to a relationship between us, through some maternal relative who was a Henderson. It was in vain that I reminded him that Uncle Tom was only an uncle by marriage and not a blood relation. He drew from me the fact that Uncle Tom reckoned his descent from Henderson, a martyr, in the early days of Scotland's Kirk. His relative did the same, and so he established a shadowy relationship between us that seemed to please him mightily. Sunday morning I went with the Jessops to hear Minister McGillivray preach, and heard the longest sermon I ever heard in my life. I did not see either how it could be shortened, without spoiling it. This man loved his people, had a great deal to say to them affecting their interests, and he said it. What would you have? Duty must be done. A shorter sermon would have left something unsaid, which he felt he must say and say now. The thought was imperative with this man, and if he explained himself at length, I for one was glad and took my share gratefully. I enjoyed the sermon the more because I saw in one of the pews my brother's handsome head. A great sense of contentment

fell on me because he was near. I could have listened to Minister McGillivray till sunset. But judge of my horror when, discoursing on the trials inseparable from our condition here below, he said: This truth is finely expressed in the following couplet, written impromptu by one of the candidates for a teacher's certificate:

"'Were this frail world our final rest
Living or dying none were blest.'"

Walter turned round and saw me, and gave me a look. I was strongly tempted to rise and explain, but I thought better of it. The Jessops brought Walter over to dinner, and I suffered a good deal of teasing about appropriating Montgomery's lines. Something is the matter with Walter, I thought, as I went a piece of the way to Gledbury with him after dinner. He tried to be gay and tease me as he used to do, but it was forced. I asked him tenderly what was the matter, and he told me to be quiet, and not turn myself into an interrogation point like old Jessop, and be forever asking questions. This was so unlike Walter, that I came back to Glenshie greatly troubled about him.

One thing I wish to mention that I noticed about this time: my school cares and trials seemed to have dismissed the question of personal religion from my mind. I needed help I knew, but it was help to govern and teach that I sought after, not help to lift me nearer to God. The boys whom I had pretended to punish gave me no more trouble,—they were in fact my helpers; for, as the school grew, and I was determined they should understand something of what they learned, the terrible four reading lessons made monitors a necessity. I had them all through my own hands twice a day, besides the English and Bible lessons,—the rest of the lessons were heard by monitors. My school was now a constant source of pleasure to me, despite the hard work. And it was hard work. When there were knots to untie in the coming day's arithmetic, I have been shut up in the school-room till after sunset. One thing was a great trouble to me, the elder boys, who had gone over a good part of their various arithmetics, never would trouble themselves to find out the reason of anything. The problem on hand was to be done, they were to multiply by this, divide by that, add here, subtract there, and that would get the answer—and that was all about it. To learn a rule and apply it, was a new thing to them, and they did not take up new things easily. I was afraid to turn them back, for they had a lordly disbelief in female attainments in arithmetic, that was thoroughly manish, and would be apt to believe that I turned them back because I could not carry them forward. Of course I wished the limit of my knowledge to be an unknown quantity to them, but again I wanted them to learn in a manner that they would feel they were learning. They believed in me, and thought me wonderful—for a girl—but the teacher of the other section, their old teacher before the section was divided (the gentleman whom I had mistaken for a Turk), had been in college and could find "any sum in the world," they said, "in some mysterious way, by algebra." Of course when he had led them to where they were it would be a confession of ignorance to turn them back. Abbot helped me out of this difficulty, suggesting that "Any one, who understands arithmetic, should be able to make an arithmetic," I picked out a few of those who had run farthest before their knowledge and proposed to put them into a higher class, and have them each make a key to the arithmetic. When they discovered that they encountered slight difficulties in Numeration and Notation, over which it required some lessons on the blackboard to lift them, they surrendered at discretion, and I had no more trouble with them in this line. I had trouble enough

in going from one arithmetic to another to study their various ways of putting the same thing, to be able to speak to each boy with the authority of his particular arithmetic at my back.

No wonder the Bible history lesson was a relief and a treat to me. One beautiful thing in my children,—they were my children by this time, and they will always remain my children,—was the freshness of their minds. Scripture narrative was not threadbare to them. As we grew more and more acquainted, and talked together freely, their bright sayings were delightful. They were very stiff in their opinions. In reading about Jacob they despised him fiercely for his meanness and trickiness. It was in vain that I pointed out to them that he believed the promise, while Esau despised it and schemed for the blessing to confirm the birthright. A boy retorted that "when God was Almighty he did not need the help of Jacob's schemes to fulfil that which concerned him." They actually rejoiced when retribution overtook him, and his sons deceived him as he had deceived his father. They had no sympathy with his anguish when he saw the blood-stained robe of his lost son. They never forgave him for the tricks of his youth, till he stood in the tent door, his grey head bowed with sorrow, expecting nothing but disaster, and saw the waggons coming and heard the news, "Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt," and he fainted with the incredulity of the sudden joy.

We spent many half-hours among the glories of Egypt, for its wonderful river, palm-trees, pyramids, temples, holy isle and city of a hundred gates, were all delightfully new to them. I hoped that the story of the children of Israel, once honored guests, then bondmen in Egypt, serving with rigor, seeing, under a cruel law, their pretty babes flung to the crocodiles, would enlist the chivalry of their Highland hearts on the side of the oppressed against oppression. I hope it was so. Remembering how Walter liked to hear of the wars of the Lord, I read with them the great battles of the Bible, till they knew the battle of Siddim, the defeat of the five kings at Gibeon, the decisive battle of Merom, the overthrow of Sisera at the foot of Mount Tabor, and the defeat of the Midianites by the well of Harod, better than they knew about Marathon or Hastings.

Whatever I was able to teach them, many a thing they taught me. Many a lesson they brought out of a Scripture incident that I did not know was in it. I was telling them one day of the woman who was gathering sticks during the three years' famine, to cook her last meal, and was asked for a morsel of it by Elijah, with the assurance that God would make the remainder sufficient during the scarcity. I asked them how God helped her, and expected them to say, "He multiplied the remainder," but little Edgar Morrison said, "By sending her a boarder." Many a time since I have found the truth of this,—the blessing that multiplies coming after the faith that divides.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"The one great rule on which I acted still,
To wit that I should work my own desire
And do in all things after mine own will."
THOMPSON.

When the children adopted me as the teacher of their choice, the parents took me into their hearts, and I was as happy as they could make me. I liked them all extremely. Their ways, their customs and opinions were as new to me as I was to them. I often fancied to myself that life in Glenshie was as interesting as Walter Scott's novels,—with this delightful difference, that I was seeing instead of reading. Seeing the incidents before one's eyes ought to be of more absorbing interest than wait-

ing until they were gathered, dried and pressed into books.

Mrs. Morrison, except for vicious attempts to throw doubts on Revelation, and her habit of ransacking heaven and the regions under the earth for sacred names to make free with, or terrible ones to dare, in her familiar use of the dreadful words that describe eternal condemnation, was both kind and thoughtful. She had read a great deal, and seen a great deal of the wide world besides. I often wondered at the fact of meeting a countrywoman of my own so completely amalgamated into Scottish life as Mrs. Morrison was. She spoke Gaelic as well as her husband; it was always the home-language with the children,—in fact, she seemed most of the time to forget that she had ever drawn breath on the green island. I said to her one day:

"It seems so strange to me that you are an Irishwoman! How did it ever come about?"

"My own self-will brought it about," said Mrs. Morrison in a reflective way, feeling her chin as if she were stroking the beard that was not there. "I suppose you would hardly think I had ever been counted good-looking?—I was then, though my good looks died away long ago. When I was seventeen, the boys used to talk about my beauty as if it was something wonderful. I was counted the best figure, the best dancer, and the most fearless rider in the country round. My people were farmers,—I think I told you that before; but I didn't tell you of the uncle that spoiled me with his loving flattery. He was a great reader, and so was I. He taught me to think so much of Rousseau,—I read novels and nothing else, and lived in a world of my own. I was spoiled, if ever any one was; went where I liked; dressed as I liked; was at every dance in the country round, and was called the belle of the county. Sometimes my mother would advise,—but she was a weakly, timid woman, and Uncle put her down with, 'The girl shall have her own way. She'll ride in her carriage and four yet. She's a wife for the best lord in the land.'"

"I met Hugh at a ball, at many a ball, and well I knew, by the signs and tokens, that he worshipped the ground I walked on, though he never said a word to me. If his tongue was silent his eyes said enough. Well, I took the small-pox, and lost the clear red and white that made my face look pretty. You did not notice it? Well, you would if you looked close, but I know the marks did wear away a good deal. When I got up out of bed, he was, I found, the only true lover I had. He was only a sergeant in a Highland regiment, and my people were neither to hold nor to bind when they knew I cast an eye of favor on him. I pleased myself all my life, and the heart that was true was the heart for my money. He did not like to ask me to leave a hot and full home to follow a soldier over the world, but I told him no other man born would ever put a ring on me. We ran off together,—faith, they said it was I ran off with him,—I've followed him over the world and I never rued it; I'd do it all over again to-morrow. My friends wanted to forgive me and be reconciled to me,—I was an only daughter, you see; but they had flouted at him and his country, and I wouldn't be reconciled, nor take their forgiveness. I ran past my uncle, and him standing with his arms open for me,—that's all I'm sorry for to-day."

"Do you never write to your people at all?" I asked.

"No; I did as your Bible recommends—I forgot my father's house and my own people, and followed the fortunes of war with my husband. Mary was born in Gibraltar, after we came home from Burmah. Neil was born in Guernsey. When he was discharged, after he lost his health, we lived with his father and mother in the Highlands for awhile. When we came

here we brought the old people with us. The old man has been dead this many a year, but the old woman's alive and hearty, andl c ng may she be. And that's about all, and I'm a confounded fool for raking it up." And Mrs. Morrison smoothed down her blue woollen apron and went about her duties with a more than usually martial stride to cover her foolishness in talking of the past.

I often wondered what was in the little dark, silent Highlander to win the love of this strong-minded woman. The question had to go unanswered, like many a problem of human life.

About this time a Mr. McLachlan, from Scotland all the way, preached in the church at the Corners, both in Gaelic and English. He was only a passing minister, and stopped to preach on his way to somewhere else.

I never heard a sermon before that time like that sermon, and very few since. Whether he was the greatest of preachers, or my heart was more prepared, I do not know. One thing I do know, it tore off my covering of self-complacency for ever.

His text was, "Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God." He spoke of people who were dead in trespasses and sins, an awful present death—a death to all that was great and godlike, leading down to an eternal death. A dead soul is without God in the world, for God is not a God of the dead, but of the living. It was awful to listen and hear these truths brought so near and made so plain.

Then he spoke of another class of dead people who had died to sin, and received from God a strange new life—not entrusted to their own weak keeping, as Adam's was, but laid up with Christ, safe in a bank that never breaks, safe in the eternal fatherhood of God—a life given to us as a free gift, a life so precious that the gold of all the universe, the gems of all the crowns that ever sparkled in earthly sunlight, could not be mentioned as a price—a life bought with blood and anchored safely within the vail. He described also the blessedness and the safety of the man who had the hidden life—how all woes and sorrows, every blow aimed at him by circumstances, fell outside of him; the impossibility of him being poor, or sorrowful, or forsaken; the wonders he was able to perform; what he was able to endure, till men asked him in astonishment where his strength lay, but it was hidden where his life was—with Christ in God.

I knew all this before—not so fully or so eloquently told, perhaps—but I knew it. The glorious privileges of those inside of the Ark, the unspeakable desolation of those outside, he made plain; but the sermon ended before I could understand as plainly how the dead in sin might cross over to the ranks of the dead to sin. I could have cried when he said, Amen. I felt earnest enough to stop the minister on his way from the pulpit to ask how I might get that hidden life.

I came home so slowly that when I turned into the green lane I was alone. I stopped under the elm tree. No one was near. I fell on my knees to call upon God, but I could not pray; my words fell back on me. Everything seemed unreal. I fancied a mocking voice said, "Call now if there be any that will answer thee!"

I was about closing school one evening some days after this, when Walter came in.

I was so glad to see him! He sat down till I dismissed the scholars, and then I said:

"What brings you here to-day? It is a lucky chance, whatever it is."

"I had business for Mr. Ramsay over at Badenoch, and I ran up from the Corners to see you," he said.

I looked at Walter, I heard a change in his voice, and I saw a change in his face. I took alarm and said quickly,

'Is anything wrong, Walter, that you look so strange?"

"Do I look strange? No; nothing is wrong. I hope what was wrong is put right. Come with me and I will drive you home; I have not time to linger."

I put on my hat, a broad-leafed, home-made article, a present from one of my scholars, and got into the buggy with him.

We overtook little Donald Morrison on the road, who jumped up behind for a ride, and then jumped down to open the gate.

Half way down the lane grew my favorite big elm tree. It was such an elm as would have been written about had it grown in the old country. It would take Scripture terms to describe fitly its vigor and the spread of its mighty branches. The feathery lightness and grace of every spray, showing in relief against the clear sky, only a poet could do justice to.

"Under that great elm is a favorite resting-place of mine when the day's work wearies me," I said to Walter.

"We will stop here, then," said Walter; it is just the place for what I have to tell you."

Little Donald Morrison, who was hanging on behind, dropped off and ran away home, leaving us alone. The Morrison children are wonderfully nice in their ways, never intrusive or ill-bred, but full of bashful Highland courtesy. When he was gone I turned to Walter, who was looking up through the branches of the big elm, and said,

"Well?"

He turned to me, "Elizabeth, I have found peace in believing."

I am sorry to confess it, but my first feeling was pain—"Walter is taken and I am left."

"You know what this means?" said Walter. "You, too, have professed Christ, Elizabeth."

"Tell me about it, Walter," I said. I could not say to my brother, so beautiful in his happiness, that my profession had brought me to be on better terms with myself for awhile; that it had not brought me to the peace that flows like a river, and now I was convinced that it was an empty profession.

"I have been troubled in my mind ever since I heard Minister McGillivray preach first," said Walter. "I was in great trouble after hearing him preach on 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' I could not get rid of the words. One day some fellows were in the store chaffing with Mr. Ramsay. They accused him of being proud. One said, 'You feel as big as if you owned all creation and had collected your rents.' 'I expect to own a good bit of it before I die,' said Mr. Ramsay, laughing in that self-satisfied way of his. 'It will be but a little bit you'll ever own of it, though you should wear away your soul scraping it together,' said the other."

"I thought of that all night, 'It will be a little bit you'll ever own if you wear away your soul for it.' All that I could get or hold of this world began to look so small, and my soul so precious. I heard another sermon from Mr. McGillivray on 'Follow me.' While he was preaching I felt my heart go out after Christ, I felt all my soul going into a consent to follow Him, and I am happy. I was so happy that I asked for time the next day and went over to the minister's to tell him. Mr. Ramsay gave it grudgingly enough, though I have never asked for an hour since I came to him before. The minister and I talked a long time, sitting by the study window, looking down towards the Grace river, flowing along at the foot of the meadow under the elms. I have been thinking a good deal, Elizabeth, thinking this long time, and searching the Scriptures every spare moment I had, and I knew what was the desire of my heart. I said to the minister, 'See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?' He said,

'If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest.' I said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and my Saviour.' So we went down to the river and he baptized me."

"Oh, Walter!" I said, "but papa got you baptized before."

"I know, dear, but I had believed for myself and I wanted to get baptized as my own act, obeying for myself Christ's command. This is what I wanted to tell you."

A silence fell between us for a while; then he said:

"It will not make any difference between you and me, Elizabeth?"

"No, my darling," I answered; "nothing, not even death, shall part you and me."

"I have entered a road where there is no turning back. Pray for me that I may go straight on, not turning to the right hand or the left," said Walter earnestly. "I will leave you here now; I do not care to go up to Morrison's, and I must hasten home."

So saying he left me, and I sat for a long time under the tree thinking. There had fallen a great blessedness on Walter I knew. I did not feel as he felt. I feared, oh! so much, lest any separation should cause us to drift apart. Whatever private thoughts I had, school was to be taught, and it was necessary to forget my thoughts, or seem to do so, in order to make myself agreeable to the ruling power at Morrison's afterwards. There was to be a Sacrament, as the country people expressed it, at the Corners. Two ministers were to be there, and Mr. McLachlan was to preach once more on that occasion. Word was sent to me to give it out in the school, that the children might carry home the news and warn out the people. This was on a Friday, and, as I felt very restless, I determined on Saturday to go down to Mr. Jessop's, ostensibly to see how the sofa pillow progressed, really to divert my mind from the strain of one thought; even Mr. Jessop's enquiries I thought would be a relief. I was made to feel myself very welcome, and found the sofa-pillow progressing favorably. I met a stranger there, a tall, blue-eyed man with fair hair, who was introduced to me as Mr. Ronald McAlpine, from the lower end of Badenoch. Before I was there long, they began to talk of the prayer-meetings which were being held every evening in Blair-Athol, and of Walter's baptism. Mrs. Jessop was very much alarmed for fear her Richard should follow Walter's example. I did not think Mr. Richard very much in earnest about anything, he was so full of jest and laughter. He never seemed to have considered anything seriously, but to be full of whims and mirth-provoking ideas; but the human heart is deep, and some thoughts do not readily come to the surface. He went away to the prayer-meeting after tea, despite his mother's rather irritable remonstrance.

He said to me, with his hand on the door, looking at his mother, who felt baffled and vexed, "Mother feels as uneasy, Miss Ray, as a hen sitting on ducks, for fear of any of her brood taking to the water," and he disappeared amid the laughter that followed.

Robert Jessop looked at me with his sad, earnest eyes, and said:

"You don't like these jests, Miss Ray."

"There are different points of belief in different denominations, but the central truth stands firm—we have a Saviour who is able to save us from our sins."

I drew near to him, saying, "Have you this hidden life, Mr. Jessop?" We were apart from the rest a little, and no one but he heard my question.

He turned on me a look so glad that it transfigured his face. "Do you care? Have you an interest in these things? If I did not know that my Redeemer liveth how could I bear to feel my heart and flesh faint and fail? I laid my hand in His who is my peace, the Lord my Righteousness, long ago. I wish it was really with Rich as mother

fears. If he were only safe in Christ, let him follow where his conscience leads; but I see no sign of any serious change."

When silence fell between us I drifted out on the veranda and stood at the end of it, looking down over the mills to the dark pine woods beyond the river. Away there in the west was Walter rejoicing in the Lord. He and many others were to be publicly added to the Blair-Athol church soon. I think these occasions are to a church like the feast of the ingathering to the Jews, a time for great gladness of heart.

Inside was Robert Jessop slowly wasting away, but bright with the same precious faith as Walter had found. I had no such assurance, despite my profession. I felt more of an orphan that night than I had done since I came to Canada. I do not know how long I stood there looking away over the dark woods towards Walter till tears of self-pity came into my eyes.

"You are very pensive, Miss Ray," said Mr. McAlpine behind me.

"Yes, I am a little sad," I answered. "Walter and I are alone in the world, and we are so much apart."

"I have a greater reason to be sad than you have," he answered.

"I do not know how that can be?" I said. "You dwell among your own people; you should be happy."

He stood silent a little, and then said, blushing like a girl, "No, I never saw Happiness except a glimpse of her round a corner. I covet that happiness that makes Robert Jessop not afraid to die. I suppose I will never attain it, for I forget all about it in other things often and often. And yet, though I only seek it by fits and starts, I cannot be happy without it. I envy you secure people."

"I do not feel secure a bit, Mr. McAlpine, though I am a member of a church. I desire but I have not, like yourself. I am not like Robert Jessop or my brother, rejoicing in hope," I said, sadly.

"I have a book here that first made me long for more than I can get out of this present life," he said. He took the book out of the breast-pocket of his coat and showed it to me. It was "The Heavenly Footman," by John Bunyan. He insisted on lending it to me, telling me that he would call on me for it at the school as he passed. I wondered at this man, whom I understood from the Jessops to be quite a sharp and successful man of business, keeping his religious aspirations such a secret, and yet telling them to me, a perfect stranger. When I returned into the parlor Mr. McAlpine, Amelia Marston and Richard (now returned from the meeting, if he had been there) got into a discussion on doctrines, and the length to which Christians might go in amusements. Mrs. Jessop was away at some household duty, the old gentleman was in the kitchen questioning one of his workpeople, and I drew near to Robert Jessop. I felt as if he could help me. He had considered the soul's hunger and the sufficiency of the Living Bread more thoroughly than I had ever done. He spoke of Jesus with perfect love and trust, from such a near acquaintance with him that he reminded me of dear Miss Borg. She and Robert Jessop were near of kin. The love of Christ does make "aliens near of kin."

"I wish I could be with you a great deal," I said. "You could help me, I know. I am full of doubts and fears."

"My dear Miss Ray," he answered solemnly, "human help can only go so far and no farther. You must go in to the King. Christ, you know, is set as a King upon the holy Hill of Zion; from Him alone will you get the secret of the Lord, which He gives to them that fear Him, when He shows them His covenant."

When, at length, after family worship, I was conducted to the glory and solitude of the spare bedroom, I made a vow that I would never give over seek-

ing till I found this assurance, and in the comfort of this resolution I fell into a deep, dreamless sleep.

Next morning there were large preparations to take every one to the church because it was Sacrament Sabbath. I think the Highlanders of Glenshie regard the Sacrament Sunday as the Jews did that feast of which they said, "That Sabbath day was an high day." A large waggon with a span of coal-black horses was brought to the door.

"That will take a Methodist load," said Richard to me. I had never heard the term before, and Robert explained:

"The Methodists," he said, "have been often the pioneer preachers of the backwoods. Those of their people who had horses went round gathering up the people who had none and were not able to walk the distance. They loaded down their teams, taking all that could possibly be packed into the waggon or sleigh, and so the term arose. This term, therefore, became to me a testimony of how the early Methodists helped one another to come within the sound of the Gospel. Grand preparations of all sorts had been made beforehand at Jessop's, so that all might be at liberty to go to church, and also that they might bring home with them as many who were far from home, or strangers in the country, as they could gather up. This was one of the customs of Glenshie. Mr. McAlpine took Miss Marston with him in his buggy. Robert Jessop drove a small light carriage,—I wondered that he ventured out at all, he looked so frail. He asked me to ride with him, telling me that Richard would collect such a load as he went along that my weight might be the identical feather that would break the camel's back. Mr. Richard declared his horses would draw all that could be packed in the waggon and our horse and buggy with ourselves besides, without feeling it much of a load. Richard felt very proud of his horses, and indeed they were a fine team, beautifully matched, and went along as if a load was no trouble to them at all. As we drove along, Robert Jessop spoke earnestly to me of the necessity of serving the Lord fully, of being wholly given up and dedicated, without keeping any part back, in order to secure the greatest happiness. He said:

"A Christianity filled with ifs and buts, doubts and fears, is a poor thing in life or in death. If Christianity, that portion that we have attained to, will not do for us what it promises in this life, how can we trust it for the swellings of Jordan and the Beyond? I am drawing near, as we all are, to the eternal world; what should I feel, if I only thought of Christ as a Saviour—the Saviour. I lay my hand on Him—all unworthy as I am, and claim Him as my Saviour, my Lord. Nothing less than this satisfies my soul. Jesus, my Beloved, is mine and I am His."

"I have always," I said, "trusted God, the God of my father, and believed in Christ,—I do not remember the time when I did not; but it is in a sort of a hereditary way. I feel no such assurance, no such personal trust and joy, as you describe—as Walter feels; and he has been but a short time seeking," I added with a tone of injury in my voice. "In spite of my profession I feel as if I was separated from Walter, as if he had gone in to join shining ranks, where you are, Mr. Jessop, and where I cannot come."

"I do not know any plan you can take to get this assurance, Miss Ray, but to drop the righteousness you have and come to Christ anew as a sinner. If the covering you are wrapped in is too short and too narrow throw it away; do not struggle to cover yourself with it any longer. Come to our Lord for a new robe. Take hold of one of His golden Whosoevers—Whosoever will—and be brought into assurance by 'the wicket gate which stands at the head of the way.'"

I felt a little offended with Robert Jessop. I knew I had a want, but I did not think I was as needy as he seemed to think me. I, with my godly education, and my struggles after God, I needed something—I knew not what, but not everything—a piecing out—an adding to—a supplying of some deficiency, without which I could not be completely happy, but not such a complete change. "This Robert Jessop," I said to myself, "must think very little of me and of all the advantages I have had, if my experience, my whole past life, goes for nothing."

I had been telling the Lord in prayer, that very morning, how utterly unworthy I was of the least of all His mercies; how needy, orphaned and lone I was, and here I was hurt that Robert Jessop seemed to take me at the same valuation I put upon myself in the presence of my Maker. While I sank into silence and thought of these things we came to the church at the Corners. Glenshie church was very different from Blair-Athol church, which was built like a school-house, with small square windows. Glenshie church was very large, white and lonely-looking. Not a single green tree grew near it, in this land of trees. The tall, arched windows stretched up as if they were standing on tip-toe to look into the galleries—and succeeding.

When we drove up all the vacant place round the church and the burying-ground was filled with people. On each side of the road were saddle horses, waggons, buggies, carts, and every possible style of Canadian conveyance, drawn up to the fence, to which the horses were tied. Still the people were gathering. Men on foot with staffs in their hands; women carrying their shoes; men on horseback, with some one behind them (as I had ridden into Glenshie first), some with the wife behind and a little one in front perched on the pommel of the saddle. Richard Jessop was disembarking his Methodist load, and it was a wonder how he had stowed so many into one waggon.

English was to be preached in the church and Gaelic outside. The Gaelic minister stood in a waggon, one of his elders standing behind him holding an umbrella over his head to keep off the sun. The people, seated on knoll or tombstone, were clustered round him. We went into the church, which was crowded in every part. There were three rows of seats in the body of the church. A great gallery swept horse-shoe fashion round three sides, and its seats, rising tier on tier to the ceiling, were packed with people. I never saw so many people together in my life before. This packed crowd, with hushed, attentive faces and eyes turned to the minister (country people do look at the minister), made me think, with a feeling of awe, of all these souls that might be saved and could be lost. I thought the minister might say to himself, "Whence shall a man find bread that these may eat?" Blessed are those ministers who know Him who carries the keys of the granary!

I expected that Walter would be there, but he was not. He could not be in any corner of that great congregation without my heart telling me where to look for him. The sermon was on the text "And the Lord shut him in." It was another grand effort and held me spell-bound; but it did not seem to help me, except as it caused me to covet more intensely the security of those whom the Lord shut in—His people, elected according to the foreknowledge of God.

From the church I went home to my boarding-house. No persuasion of the Jessops was sufficient to take me home with them. I shrank from Robert as if he were a physician who used the probe unsparingly.

My duties in school ran on pretty smoothly; I was queen there. The

weather was delightful, the green lane along which my path to school lay was "a thing of beauty," and a daily joy to me. I tried to still the craving I felt by throwing myself more entirely into my duties, striving with all my heart to find pleasure in them, until the young minister came who compelled my thoughts to return to the same subject.

CHAPTER XIX.

> It was autumn, and incessant
> Piped the quails among the sheaves.
> LONGFELLOW.

One morning, as lovely a morning as ever dawned on Glenshie, I was sitting on the broad flat stone that lay in front of Morrison's door and served for a step. This stone was a favorite perch of mine. It was so extensive in its broadness and flatness that it might have served as capstone to a pyramid. I was sitting on this stone, looking at that part of Glenshie which was visible from my perch. I cannot sufficiently admire this bright, new, fresh-looking country, which owes so much to nature and so little to art. The sky was cloudlessly blue and bright, the land level and rich through the wide clearings, with a background of forest, where roundheaded, leafy maples spread their umbrage wide, mingled with the graceful droop of elms, sturdy butternut and stately ash; and far off, at the limit of my horizon, on a low ridge, serried ranks of upward-pointing pine bristle up against the sky; nearer are a few feathery hemlocks. They tell me that through the haze of the beautiful Indian summer these woods glow and burn as if they were dyed in sunset. Down at the foot of the little grassy slope, on the brow of which stands the Morrison homestead with its very extensive doorstep, runs the Grace river, winding along through the meadow, green with aftermath. Beyond are fields all golden with the ripening harvest. An old American magazine has wandered into this out-of-the-way place. There is a political article in it which says, "If the country is tickled with a straw it laughs with a harvest." The farming here, I think, is not tickling but scratching, yet the harvest is laughing all around.

Is there anything on earth more beautiful than a field of ripe oats, with its feathery golden heads rustling richly as the warm breeze ripples over it! The broad field on the other side of the river looks like a sea of tossing gold. Next is a great field of wheat, its martial-looking ears standing rank on rank, an exceeding great army, holding up their barbed heads as if they were prepared to defend the plenty with which they are laden. They will have to surrender, however. Mr. Morrison and Neil are over there swinging their cradles and laying them low. I hear the sharp swish that tells how the cradle-scythe cuts through their goodly ranks. I wonder if ever I will feel reconciled to see the cradle take the place of the poetic sickle, which still lingers in Glenshie in the hands of old men, matrons and maids, in spite of the innovating efforts of the young men who are trying to introduce the cradle. I ought to be, for every labor-saving machine proclaims that labor—humanity—is precious in this delightful Canada, and holds out hope to the crowds who are vainly asking leave to toil in the Old World. No one will do that here; Canada seems busy as a hive of bees. Every house is a small manufactory. This morning before I came here, eleven cows were milked, numerous calves fed, and a big cheese made of new milk. While I sit here enjoying the picture spread out before my eyes, I hear the old grandmother crooning a Gaelic ditty, sitting within the open door, where she is busily engaged in twisting stocking-yarn with her spindle, and thinking, I daresay, of that other Glenshie of which this is a Canadian namesake, where her foot in merry girlhood stepped on Highland

heather; for the hearts of these people turn from their rich fields and free homes with love-longing to the barren rocks, heathy glens, and cottar huts of their own native land. Mary is singing beside her birring wheel, Mrs. Morrison is down at the river, in a dark blue petticoat and bare shoulders, sitting on her heels on one stone pounding some clothes with a flat stick on another. By and by all available help will go up to bind after the cradles. The little children are playing about, talking Gaelic, managing the most astonishing sounds with perfect ease. I have a new book on my lap; I am not reading, only pretending to read—the sights and sounds around me I find more interesting than any book. The book is a "Child's History of England," which I am hoping to be able to introduce into the school. I have read one sentence:

"The little neighboring islands which are so small on the map as to be mere dots, are chiefly little bits of Scotland broken off, I daresay, in the course of a great length of time, by the power of the restless water."

I drop the book on my lap again and go off into a speculation: if Glenshie and its kindred settlements of Blair Athol and Badenoch are not bits of Scotland broken off from the much-loved land by a more relentless agency than even the tossing billows of the Atlantic.

While I think it is nearing nine o'clock, but my ruling trustee told me, as there was not regular preaching on Sabbath, I might take a holiday whenever there was an English sermon. Sermons are an event in our lives here, and most of them are in Gaelic. I have listened to a Gaelic sermon quite often, but it is a little dreary to me. I understand a few words, which, like milestones on a lonely road, serve to mark progress towards the amen. There is to be a sermon to-day in English; I have, therefore, availed myself of the permission and given to the children, or taken to myself—whichever you like—a holiday. I am not at all certain that Mrs. Morrison will approve of my so doing. She is fond of Established churches, was brought up an Episcopalian, but with her husband adheres to the Established Kirk of Scotland—that is, so far as she adheres to anything.

The wave of disruption has reached here, and people are discussing the matter and taking sides. It has so happened that the occasional ministers who have lately officiated in the Kirk on the hill have been of the Free Kirk. Of their ministrations Mrs. Morrison has a very low opinion indeed. The last resident minister, the Rev. Isaac McWhirter, belonged to the Establishment; but his salary was small and ill-paid and his family large, so he had forsaken the flock, which yielded him so little of either fat or wool, and returned to Scotland. This is what I am told, and as there is no resident minister we are very thankful to those who come occasionally. I, for one, am rejoiced at the prospect of an English sermon.

I was just saying to myself, "I will get up and go into my room before Mrs. Morrison comes up—for we had a passage of arms last night, and the billows of her wrath may not yet have subsided." The cause was this: From the border of the St. Lawrence arrived a few days ago a distant relative of her husband's, who was also a great favorite of hers—a pretty young fellow, well-dressed, blue-eyed, curly-haired, named Angus McTavish. There was a dance in honor of his arrival, at his father's. I was invited, but declined going. I am a great coward, although I have the usual share of curiosity that falls to the daughters of Eve, and would like well to see Highland dancing; yet I have heard so much about the respectable, large-sized keg that is necessary to "fire the eye and warm the blood" on these festal occasions, that

I could not get my courage up to go. Besides I do not know how to dance, and was enjoying the luxury of a headache; so I went to my own room early, and took refuge in bed. I was not asleep—headache is not favorable to sleep—when the irresistible Angus came to compel me by argument to go to the ball. He knocked at my door, and begged and prayed, besought and lamented—Mrs. Morrison adding her voice to help; but I was inexorable, telling him, through the door, that I would gladly go to meeting with him, which was all that my strength was capable of promising.

Mrs. Morrison would not believe in my headache, or inability to dance, and would persist in thinking that I had slighted their relative, and was quite angry in consequence. I was, as I said before, thinking of retreating, thinking that

> "He who runs away
> May live to fight another day,"

when I lifted up my eyes and saw my two new acquaintances with the Scandinavian names, Eric and Olaus McSweyn, coming over the meadow.

I have settled in my own mind that these young men, twins by the way, are descendants of the sea-kings, and have in their veins the blood royal of the Norse rovers. I noticed that Eric had a gun in his hand, and hoped that he would not take Mrs. Morrison out on her crag in the water for a solan-goose, (what are they like?) or some other strange waterfowl, and shoot her. Such lamentable mistakes have occurred. With this benevolent hope I went in lazily to dress for church. That useful American magazine had furnished me with a hint for making a bewildering bow of ribbon,

> "Which I will pin
> Below my chin,"

I said to myself, adjusting it at my three inch square looking-glass. The effect was as fine as could be desired. I was still patting and coaxing the ends to stay in a certain position when I heard my door open without turning round, and Mrs. Morrison's voice saying:

"It is past school-time, Miss Ray.'

"There is no school to-day," I answered, turning round. "The trustees empowered me to give a holiday in consequence of the meeting. Are not you going?"

My door shut quickly, Mrs. Morrison having no English equal to the occasion. When I came out I found Mary Morrison and the two Scandinavian princes—all purposing to go to church with me. Mrs. Morrison was chatting to my two princes in high good humor.

"You look splendid, Miss Ray," she said to me; "I hope your headache is better."

I assured her it was quite better.

"They say this preacher is a crazy boy," she continued, "so I hardly think it is worth while for any of you to go."

"Let us go to hear the crazy boy, by all means," said Eric McSweyn. "We have heard a good many wise men, and they have done us little good, perhaps a crazy boy is just what will benefit us."

We set out to church in high spirits. Over the bridge in the green lane we were joined by Angus McTavish, who crossed the brook, which was his boundary, on stepping-stones, and running gaily up the bank, called to me that he was going to be my partner to church. I assured him he was welcome, and enquired how much headache and weariness of limb he was taking to church with him as a legacy from last night's ball. He declared he was sound in head, heart and limbs.

"Was Donald Monroe your fiddler?' enquired Olaus.

"Yes, he was, of course, the glorious old fellow! Miss Ray, have you seen this first of fiddlers and best of Highland bards?"

"I have seen him, but I was not aware that he merited such high praise," I answered.

"Ah, if you understood Gaelic," said Angus rapturously, "if you understood 'the blessed speak,' you would not say so. You would hear his songs! You would admire them, and acknowledge that there is nothing in English to compare with them."

"There are some good things in English," I observed quietly.

"Yes, there are good things," admitted Angus, "but the language is tame—without the fire and feeling that are in the language of the hills. If the Queen, our own dear *Bhan Righiun*, understood Gaelic, and heard Donald's songs, she would say that such a poet as he is deserves to be pensioned by Government."

"He was very near deserving the Provincial Penitentiary this morning," said Eric. "He was trying to climb the gallows tree. He came very near having his wife's blood on his hands."

"Were they fighting again?" asked Mary Morrison. "They will not stop short of murder."

"It's her own fault, and all she gets serves her right," said Angus. "Donald says that her tongue clips like the devil's scissors. I do not know how they clip, but she can cut to the bone."

"What was the quarrel about this time?" Mary Morrison asked. "The last big fight commenced with her telling him to take his foot out of the way."

"Who knows?" said Eric. "It began, I think, after Donald came home from the ball. 'He was nae fou, na nae that fou, but just a drappie in his 'ee.' When he is a little off the square—liquor mellows him—he is kind, almost affectionate, and she gets savage; so anything and everything sets the fight agoing—at least so I think. I saw her just after the fight. Our cows were not found last night, and I was looking for them. I was coming down through McLachlan's sugar bush and I came upon her suddenly. She was on her knees with her cap off, and her long gray hair streaming down her back. She was praying. I tell you she was just telling her Maker all about it, and the character she was giving Donald was not flattering. I felt sorry for the poor old woman. If she is ill tongued she is as ill treated. I didn't want her to see me, and I stopped short, and do you know, she had in her hands a little baby's cap and a curl of fair hair!"

"That was her baby's hair, that died on her way out from Scotland," said Mary Morrison; "they often quarrel about it. Father knew them both in the old country. He says she was the prettiest girl in the country round when she was Mary Cameron. After Donald's first wife died, leaving him with four little boys, he courted her. Most of his prettiest love-songs were made about her. She was then *Nighean dileas doun*, the faithful, brown-haired maiden. But they were not long married when they quarrelled like cat and dog, and they have kept it up ever since."

"Here is Evander Monroe coming after us," said Angus. "Walk slowly till he comes up, and we will hear all about it. We have plenty of time."

There were a good many besides our party on the way to meeting that morning, for the Glenshie people are great church-goers. We are joined by Flora McSweyn, sister of the twins, Christian McDonald, and my especial favorite, fair, serious-browed Katie McGregor. And still the conversation went on about the quarrel between the poet and his wife.

When Evander overtook us I heard Angus ask, "What was it about this time?"

"I was not at home when it first commenced. The ball was kept up till broad daylight, and I lingered awhile after father left. I saw some of the

girls home before I went home myself. When I got there, they had got upon an old subject, the merit of the gentleman Camerons, compared with the want of merit of the black Monroes. Then they got to talking of my stepmother's little girl that died when we were coming out. He told her that the child died because she could not raise it, and she said—well, what she usually says. I have heard it all often enough, so often that I was not listening, and when he jumped on her like a tiger I let him alone. I was angry enough to jump at her myself, because she said something about my mother; but, when I noticed that she was black in the face, and her tongue out, I jumped to part them, and I had a job to do it. I thought she would be gone before I could get his fingers loosed from her throat. He was warm with whiskey and red hot with rage besides, and I could not make him hear.

"After I had got him off her, I had to struggle with all my might to keep him from her. But when he noticed her lying still without motion, and as black as a stove-pipe, he cooled down and came to himself a little.

"I got water and dashed it in her face. It was a long time before she came to, and when she did she gave a shiver, and struggled up to her feet and got out of the door. She went away through the bush, and has gone to the Squire's I guess—she always goes there. It will be a while before she gets rid of the old man's mark on her throat, the old cat."

"I wonder she does not get your father bound over to keep the peace," I said.

"We do not appeal to law for our family disputes," said Evander proudly.

"We do not need law; we are a law unto ourselves," said Angus gaily.

"You were very near having the law's strong arm down on you, Evander, this morning, anyway," said Eric soberly.

"I have done nothing but save a cross old woman's life; if the law makes a crime of that I will never do it again," said Evander, laughing.

I could not help glancing at Evander Monroe. He was the handsomest specimen of a Celt I had seen in Glenshie. Tall and straight as a mountaineer should be, splendidly luminous dark eyes, black glossy curls, regular, finely cut, olive-brown features, a firm, sarcastic mouth, and teeth even and white as pearls; well dressed, cool and self-possessed, he might have been a town-bred dandy. I notice in all these Highlanders how polite, cool and self-possessed they are; so sure of themselves; not a trace of rustic bashfulness among them. I wonder if it springs from the inherent pride of their nature, or from generations of feudal training, acknowledging no superior but the chief; or rather acknowledging the chief as the highest outcome, the blossom so to speak —"the highest top sparkle" of the grandeur and glory of the clan. I am forgetting about my handsome Evander.

"He is a fine-looking fellow," I said to Mary Morrison.

"Father says Donald was handsomer when he was young," she replied.

I had seen Donald more than once—a tall, thin, stern-looking, iron-gray man, with a face so hard, so determined, so dark—every wild passion carved into it—that one might fancy it would do as the figure-head on a vessel to represent a sea rover. I had often fancied that such a face belonged to him, mighty in battle, "*dhuine dhu glas*," or dark gray man, who founded the fortunes and gave the name to the Douglas family. But to think of him, young, handsome, melting the hearts of the fairest fair with tender songs sung to his own wild music, my fancy refused to go on such a flight. He might with a different instrument, blow up a clan's gathering or sound a charge; but teaching his "ungodly bit fiddle" to speak the praises of his sweet brown-haired darling—

nonsense! These were of course unspoken thoughts.

"Is your father coming down to-day to hear this young preacher?" I asked of Evander.

"No," said Evander laughing. "My father is not a glutton for the Gospel. He has preached and practised enough for one day, I think."

"They say the minister is crazy," said Mary, interrogatively.

"That's a story of Allan King's," returned Evander. "It is not always Gospel truth he preaches. Though I daresay he is crazy or he would not come here to preach for nothing."

"He may be wise," said Olaus, "but you think as Minister McWhirter said of the story about Samson and the foxes, 'This may be, my friends, but it's not very likely.'"

"Come, come, now, that is too bad! Don't wrong the absent," said Katie McGregor; "the minister never said that. No minister that ever stood in a pulpit would dare to doubt a Bible statement."

"Well, I heard him say it, Katie, and so did more than me. He was just one of the dumb dogs spoken of in Scripture."

"You cannot say that he fed himself and did not feed his flock," retorted Katie. "If it was poor preach, it was poor pay."

"He got more than he deserved when he got anything," said Eric decidedly.

We were at the church, and the unworthiness of the Rev. Mr. McWhirter was left aside until another opportunity, as we entered and took our seats. The church was well filled, considering that harvest had begun. The young minister, a slight, boyish-looking person, with a fresh, beardless face and downcast eyes, came along the aisle and went up into the close, high, one-legged pulpit. Neither in his prayer nor sermon was there any sign of insanity or even eccentricity; nor was there any striking display of eloquence. There was one thing only to be remarked, I thought: all he said was intensely real to himself, and he had the gift of bringing it as a reality before his hearers. He was not so eloquent as Mr. McLachlan—did not stir me up to self-searching as he did—but he carried me out of myself entirely. I had often wept over a story; that day for the first time I had tears in my eyes for the Man of Sorrows when "it pleased the Lord to bruise Him."

As we went home we were almost silent. We could not shake ourselves free from the influence of one who believed and therefore had spoken.

That evening there was a good deal of talk about Mrs. Monroe at Mrs. Morrison's. That martial matron had no sympathy with a wife who quarrelled with her husband. Indeed there seemed little pity for her in any heart. Her temper and her tongue was the excuse for Donald. I am afraid if he had killed her the verdict of her neighbors would have been that of the jury of London celebrity, who, sitting at a coroner's inquest on an ill-tongued woman who had been murdered by a sudden blow from her exasperated husband, brought in the verdict of "Served her right." Donald's talents, I suppose, make them partial to him. He composes songs so rapidly on every local occurrence that admiration is largely mingled with fear. I believe that no man in Glenshie gets into an awkward or absurd scrape but his first thought is, "I would not, for a good many dollars, that Donald should hear of this." But Donald does hear of it, and the event is celebrated in Gaelic verse, wedded to a tune, ready to be sung at the very first wedding, betrothal or christening, to the intense mortification of the victim, who has, however, one consolation that some one else will soon be in his place.

CHAPTER XX.

"Syne as ye brew, my maiden fair.
Keep mind that ye maun drink the yill."
—BURNS.

After school one day I went up, as I often did, to Squire McPherson's. There were great attractions for me in the Squire's home. There was not only the racy Highland welcome common to every house in Glenshie, but intelligence and refinement peculiar to themselves. It was pleasant to me to go up the hill, when wearied in my work, to the white house that stood so near the road that it seemed on it, as if it had stepped out to welcome you. A little while of their companionship was restful to me. I must confess, however, that my chief errand this particular evening was to see the ill-tongued wife that I had heard so much about.

Avoiding the front door, which would have involved knocking, and bringing from the basement kitchen Merran, of the tawny locks, the dark browed and dark-eyed maid of all work at the Squire's. I entered the garden by a little side gate, and came round to the glass door that led from the garden direct into the family sitting-room, where I found Mrs. McPherson and her work basket. I was not long seated when the lady asked if I had heard of the last outrage committed by that bad creature, Donald Monroe! I assented, and asked if she knew where his wife was?

"His wife is here,—escaped for her life. His finger marks are on her throat yet, quite black. I have kept her here—she always comes to us in her trouble. I have given her the spinning to do; she may as well be earning a little for herself as not."

"I have heard about her since the fray, until I have a positive curiosity to see her," I said.

"Well, come into the back-room with me; I have to talk to her about the blanket yarn. I am going to have all my white rolls spun for blankets this year."

"What a quantity you will have!" I exclaimed. "But you hospitable Highlanders need an almost unlimited supply of these things. Your house, for instance, has powers of expansion that would do credit to an Eastern caravansery. How many guests were here at sacrament time besides your own family?"

"We had fourteen, and yet we did not have all the dear friends whom we expected and were prepared to welcome."

The Squire's wife said this with all the dignity of Soloman's perfect housekeeper in her smile. I have not yet got over my astonishment at the capabilities of these Canadian housekeepers. Mrs. McPherson, for instance, knows almost to a thread how much cloth a given weight of wool ought to make. The soft fine dresses of brilliant scarlet and black plaid, for the childrens' winter wear, which might be worn by the children of a duchess, are all home-manufactured and home-dyed. Why, the heavy crimson hanging in the best parlor, which I thought was rep of the best quality is all home manufacture, only pressed at the mill. All these admiring thoughts were in my mind as I followed Mrs. McPherson into the spinning room, which was a kind of domestic council chamber.

I found Mrs. Monroe in the back room, sitting at the little wheel that flew round with a cheery hum, obeying a practised hand. She was a tidy looking woman, white haired, but fair-faced and comely for her years. The face was sad, and yet too young to match well with the snowy hair. She wore a large crowned cap, so white and fine, with so many frilly borders, that it made her head look like an overgrown blossom of the Guelder rose. She had on a tartan dress of home-

spun, a white neckerchief and a checked apron.

"This is our new teacher come to see you, Mrs. Monroe," said the Squire's wife in the Gaelic tongue, by way of introduction. She smiled and shook hands with me in Highland fashion. When her face lit up with a smile, one could well believe she had once been handsome with the glad beauty of the Highland hills. There was beauty yet in the small, dainty mouth and chin that dimpled with her smile like a girl's. There was nothing in her face, unless her real nature was hidden behind, to justify the description given of her temper; it spoke rather of impotent struggles with a fate from which there was no escape but into the grave. I had ample time to form my opinion while the council of two settled the questions connected with home manufacture. Any conversation I had with her was carried on through Mrs. McPherson, as she did not speak English; yet I felt, as I have often done with bright children, that her power of understanding our language was far in advance of her ability to speak it. I noticed her color as Mrs. McPherson gave me her version of the character and usual behavior of Donald, and the attack on his wife which so nearly ended fatally. She put up her hand and drew her kerchief higher as if to hide the discolored mark made by his iron fingers.

Mrs. McPherson was quite a partisan of Mrs. Monroe's, and I could perceive that it was not entirely for her own sake. Squire McPherson was the acknowledged leader of those who professed religion; foremost in every good word and work as became "a man and a leader of men." Donald Monroe was the leader of the publicans and sinners, clever, witty, unscrupulous, too fond of fun, with too keen a sense of the ridiculous to be fettered or hampered by the Golden Rule. So the two Donalds,—Donald Squire McPherson and Donald Monroe, poet and fiddler, stood to one another in the relationship of Highland chiefs at deadly feuds. Society in Glenshie was entirely wanting in those finely shaded lines that, in more refined society, make the boundary line hard to find between those who have set their faces Zionward, and those who care for none of these things. The border between professors and non-professors was broadly marked. Donald McPherson could not be, as he was, stern-browed and uncompromising in denouncing evil, without giving mortal offence to Donald Monroe, whose followers in Glenshie were largely in the majority. Donald, therefore, had ridiculed the Squire in songs, which had enough truth in them to make the lies effective. They were immensely popular with his followers, and swept like a bush-fire through the Highland settlements, echoing from bee to bee, from frolic to frolic,—becoming, as people say, a great success. The Squire did not resent these things as his wife did. They were very laughable, but no one, not even the sinners, believed them; and if they had, by Nature and grace he was so placed that he could say, "None of these things move me."

"While we were chatting in the sitting-room, to which we had returned, the Squire himself came in with his pleasant face, soft step and easy manner. He looks unlike a leader of men, but those who know Donald McPherson, know that the material is there that could lead a forlorn hope.

"So you are talking about my friend, Donald?" said the Squire to me with his accustomed smile.

"Yes, a little," I answered, "but I wonder a great deal that Mrs. Monroe gets so little pity; yet it is not common for a Highlander to beat his wife."

"No, and when he does, he does not knock her down for love like an Irishman; for we have the habit of being in earnest. Besides, Donald's wife has a most provoking tongue, lassie, and bitter words bring bitter blows."

"Was he kind to his first wife?"

"Donald is too selfish, too fond of his ease, his fiddle and the tavern, to be a good husband to any woman," said Mrs. McPherson, with warmth. "His first wife, the wife of his youth, as he calls her, was too blindly fond of him, too proud of his talents, too much his devoted slave, to find fault with anything her lord chose to do; whatever he did pleased her. Like Callum, the piper's wife, her hardest thought was a blessing, "God bless you, Donald," her hardest word. She took as her rightful share all the burden of life; he took all the leisure; so in the struggle to bear all, and do all for his sake, she wore out and died. Then he courted Mary Cameron, the beauty of the place, a petted home darling; wooed her with sweet songs and fine speeches, and carried her off in triumph from younger and fonder wooers. She, silly one, thought she was entering on a life that would be sweetened all through with the honey of his words, and lighted up with love glances. He expected his first wife's loving care and submissive duty revised and improved in this younger one. They were both, of course, disappointed. She had a little girl baby, and she thought her husband did not love her as he did his first wife's boys. To do Donald justice this was not so; he cared for no baby until it was old enough to amuse him. When they were coming to this country, seasickness pressed heavily on the little one. There were many kilted emigrants, all neighbors, who came out on the same ship with Donald—his companions and admirers; so Donald looked after his own amusement and took no special notice of the child. The mother, after a fruitless effort, ceased trying to make him notice, but nursed her bitter thoughts and her baby apart. When they got to fresh water the child did not rally; so the mother had no eyes for the strange sights and sounds that met them at Quebec. On the boat between Quebec and Montreal, Donald was less by her side than ever. As they steamed up the broad river there was ever changing scenery, strange and beautiful, to delight the eyes of the bard. The magnificent boat itself was, to his unaccustomed eyes, a floating palace of wonders. There were semi-sailor looking raftsmen returning from Quebec, with the hard-earned money that goes so easily, crowding round a pedlar of jewelry, purchasing sham rings, brooches, and other shining trumpery for sister or sweetheart at home; there were squaws, whose pretty baskets and nick-nacks, embroidered with beads, found ready sale, and the bar, that disgrace to steamboat companies, was not Donald's least attraction of all that was to be seen on board the big boat.

When they arrived at the limit of steamboat travelling, they got their luggage drawn for them and walked the remaining few miles. Donald, with swinging step, walked on with the company—the life of it—provoking the laugh he seldom shared. His wife followed wearily, with a bursting heart, carrying the dying child in her arms. There was a tempest of fierce wrath surging within her. Her life had been all disappointment, her pride and his careless selfishness had for years been digging a gulf between them, and now she thought it would never be bridged more. Some of the women lingered behind with Mrs. Monroe, but could not prevail on her to share the burden of the child with anyone. On she plodded wearily, holding to her breast the only thing she had to love, feeling that it was fast slipping away from her, and she so powerless to prevent it. Before they reached their destination she saw the change come, and sat down on a bank on the roadside. The women, her companions, sat down beside her, as silent as Job's friends before they began to sympathize, and for the same reason, 'They saw her grief was

very great.' Donald and some of his friends found them so, when they turned back impatiently enough, to see what kept them lingering behind, instead of stepping out like Highland women. To do Donald justice, he was sorry and ashamed both. When he went to touch the dead child, all the pent-up torrent of rage, jealousy and grief was let loose, and he bowed before the storm, making allowance for her bereaved rage that once. Since then she has never forgotten nor forgiven; and if ever he shows tokens of affection, which he never does except he has been drinking, all the old trouble breaks out again, to end as it has done now, in almost murder."

So we talked of Mrs. Monroe, her troubles and her faults, and she spun her thread and was quiet—the calm after the storm. In my frequent calls at the Squire's, I found myself often attracted to the room where Mrs. Monroe sat and spun. I had a secret pity and sympathy for this grey-haired Rachael, who sorrowed for her child with such fierce Highland love. Whether she felt my pity or not, she seemed to like me. I ventured to address her in a little bad Gaelic when no one else was by; she repaid me with some not much better English; so on the strength of committing assault on the two languages we got to be quite good friends; so much so, that she often gave me some sound advice.

"Och, Miss Ray," she would say, "don't make the bad merrage. The man's very sweet first—plenty sweet worts for you; it's *mo gradh—mo run—a bhean—mo ghaol—O thusa a's aillidh am measc bhan!* (which, when freely translated is, my darling—my love—fair one much beloved—O thou fairest among women) but when you get man you have strong master—not care any how much breck your hert; have little chile to wither up in your arms." With the help of gestures she would get thus far in her exhortation, then she would be obliged to fall back to the Gaelic, and I would lose her entirely in the tender depths of her native tongue—the language, as Squire McPherson impressed on me, of love or war, triumph or worship. I made many endeavors to gather up as much of this beautiful, unknown language as would assure Mrs. Monroe that no poet or fiddler need attempt to win my heart with his false songs, but I always failed. My attempts pleased Mrs. Monroe very much; she understood enough to know that her advice made some impression on me. When she advised black-browed Merran, the damsel got angry and shook her tawny locks, and said, scornfully, to me, "As if I had a tongue could clip like her's, or any other man was such a scamp as Donald." Poor Merran! the singular union of fair hair and skin with dark eyes and eye-brows seemed prophetic. She eventually drifted down to Montreal, and when in service there married a negro coachman.

In the meantime the spinning went on and the Squire's wool, thanks to Mrs. Monroe, was in the hands of the weaver, while Donald Monroe's wool, a great pack of long white rolls, was still trussed up in its woollen covering, secured against possible opening without leave by manifold pinning with sharp, spiky thorns. Out of this bundle was to have come, by the skill of his wife's fingers, a couple of new plaids of the clan tartan, and a web of cloth that in texture, color and finish was to throw all previous webs in the shade. No prospect of these now, while his wife spun at the Squire's instead of at her own fireside. She had no right to be there; the Squire had no right to harbor her, and make life from home so pleasant to her. It did not occur to him that it was his fault in any degree that his wife spun the Squire's wool instead of her own. He thought only of her implacable temper and sharp tongue, and the scandal, unpardonable in a Highland woman,

which her escape had caused, of having her domestic sorrows spread on every fence, judged at every fireside. He relieved his feelings by composing a new song on the Squire, which became immediately popular, and was sung and whistled, and went circling round Glenshie as if sent round by the fiery cross. I knew it by the ringing tune, but never acquired such proficiency in the language as to be able to appreciate Donald's works. I was the great exception, for at the time I speak of, which was long ago, before the Dominion of Canada had become a thought, you might have travelled in Glenshie a day's journey and heard no language but Gaelic. It was the house language even at the Squire's. Very frequently there was a sermon in the school-house when the young preacher was able. Gradually, since he came to the place, an earnest, listening spirit seemed to be spreading in Glenshie. Alongside of this an angry, gainsaying, doubting spirit seemed to have taken possession of some; while the rollicking sinners, of whom Donald Monroe was type and leader, kept laughingly aloof and cared for none of these things. Indeed the question that troubled Donald most at this time was, that his wool was lying in rolls while the wool of his enemy was in the hands of the weaver. This great grievance worked on his mind, until he determined to make an effort to get his wife to come home. One evening he went down to the Squire's and asked for his wife. She refused to see him, and this filled "to the highest top sparkle" his cup of bitter animosity against the Squire, who, he believed, was influencing her to stay and work there just to vex him. The Squire happened to come in just then, and the two men stood confronting one another—the Squire, who rather admired the bard, with cordial, kindly face; the poet in a white heat of passionate wrath.

"You are always preaching and praying, black Donald McPherson," he said, "and comparing yourself to David. You were never so like him as now when you have got my Bathsheba." With this Parthian arrow, Donald closed the door after him and stalked away, a grim smile dawning on his angry face. Mrs. McPherson did like a joke in a quiet way, so when the table was set for dinner, and the Squire waiting, Mrs. Monroe having not yet come, she would say to her eldest daughter, "Call now Bathsheba."

The unconscious Bathsheba lived on in her shelter, and her face began to look mild and peaceful, as if she were thoroughly enjoying her quiet life.

CHAPTER XXI.

> And the voice of his devotion
> Filled my soul with strange emotion;
> For its tones by turns were glad,
> Sweetly solemn wildly sad.
> —LONGFELLOW.

This strange young minister, who came among us as if he had dropped from the clouds, had come out from Scotland with his Bible in his hand to proclaim Christ in Canada, and to prove God if he would bless the message he carried or not. God had, they said, owned and blessed him wherever his feet had stood. He got into the habit of coming into the school whenever he happened to be passing. Whenever he came, he took the Bible lesson into his own hands and made it a lesson never to be forgotten. Christ was not a speculative fact to this young man, but a friend without whose company he could not go anywhere. He lived as seeing Him who is invisible. He spent long hours in secret communion with God, looking forward to a season of private prayer as a lover to tryst. This was the report of him given by those Christian people who had the honor of his acquaintance, who had journeyed with him, or entertained him as a guest. They described him also as a man unworldly, uncalculating

in a singular degree; as one who had as a little child accepted the simplicity of the Gospel. Hearing and believing all this, no wonder that his visits to the school were looked forward to with great gladness by me. Every Bible narrative, lit up by his acquaintance with the Lord Jesus, he rendered to us with the force of a personal recollection. His words had a vividness of coloring, a reality in them that went home to the heart. The children learned to look forward to his coming with as much eagerness as I did. We had our Bible lesson in the history of Job one day and I expected him to come, but he did not, to our great disappointment, and we had to go on without him. Next day at noon I was walking among the alders by the little river and I heard a subdued murmur near. I went over softly, saying to myself, "What mischief are they up to now?" Judge of my astonishment, a little cluster of children were gathered in an open space among the alders, holding a prayer-meeting! Alice Morrison was praying aloud. The dear, dear lambie had wants, and was asking God for supplies. I heard her say,

"O, Lord, make a fence about me, about every one of us, as you did about Job, that the devil cannot get over to tempt us to do wrong. We want to say no more bad words, to think no more bad thoughts. We want to be like Jesus."

I slipped away quietly, for I felt that the place where they knelt was holy ground. At the next Bible lesson I asked Alice Morrison if she would like to suffer all the trials Job had to endure.

"It would not matter," she said, "if I was fenced in."

"How do you know he was fenced in? What do you mean by that?" I asked.

"Satan complained of it," she answered. "He said, 'Hast thou not made an hedge about him?' He must have been trying to get over, and could not. I would like to be like Job, fenced in."

"God grant you your wish," I said, to myself, "and not to you only, but to me also."

In the meantime the harvest was being gathered in, many bees with much fiddling, dancing and drinking, being used as helps in the harvest labors. It is not at all uncommon to see people neglect work until they have to make a bee to catch up again. In spite of harvest hurries, there was a good attendance at every sermon. The boy-preacher, who was not very well, not having quite recovered from a sickness caught while ministering to the poor sick people in the emigrant sheds at Quebec, was still in the vicinity, preaching when he felt able, and wherever people would come to hear him, in the church, the schoolhouse, a barn, or a grassy hillside. The young people of my acquaintance were all, as well as myself, among his regular hearers. Mrs. Morrison in her own peculiar way, protested against what she called our incessant churchgoing. She declared we would become as solemn as a set of sanctified owls. Her mission seemed to be to turn everything into ridicule. All who attended the meetings were sham saints, who would be caught tripping some day. We were lineal descendants of Praise God Barebones,—would soon be snuffling texts through our noses with the genuine nasal holy tone. She took particular pains to draw me into argument on questions of historical fact connected with Bible narrative. I did not know what to say to her very often, for her arguments had been provided for her by Rousseau and Voltaire, of whom I knew nothing but their names. Her arguments, though clear, did not trouble me, for I had the remembrance of my father's life as an unanswerable argument to me. And God had seemed

near to me all my life. The foundations of faith which she attacked stood firm, for I knew that my heart's cry after God had not been sent out into empty space, but to a living,loving All-Father.

How many different threads mingled to make the thread of my life. There was the secret hunger after assurance,—assurance of friendship with God, and being safely enfolded in His reconciled love and care. I wanted this to be a personal matter,a secret of the Lord between Him and me. Then there were my school duties, that were so responsible that I was getting quite staid and thoughtful under their influence. And the children, whom I loved, brought me into sympathy with their homes, where there was always some joy, or sorrow, or anxiety in which I was interested. I felt as if God was binding my life in among these families, and I was glad for this. I was thankful to feel that my sympathy was of value, even to Mrs. Monroe as she spun, and thought over her life sorrow. I would have fitted ill into the life of a hermit you see. I had not heard from Walter for some time and a thread of my life always twined about him. I knew very well that if his new life went on and flourished he would grow unfit for his life at Mr. Ramsay's. Its bustle and driving were pleasant to him after his first flight from the home cage, but now he had a different estimate of life, and could not, I thought, conscientiously devote every waking moment to trade and money getting. If it is true that "the life is more than meat and the body than raiment," surely it is not right to live a life of exclusive scramble and scratch after dollars and dimes. And I was anxious to know whether he would slip back again into conformity with the life around him, or crave for a life more full of noble purposes and helpful deeds. Those who are determined to be hastily rich have to close their hearts against everything else and go over everything and through everything to the desired end. I was not, therefore, very much surprised when Walter came to me in the school one day to tell me he had left Mr. Ramsay's employ.

"I could not stay any longer," he said. "Every waking moment was claimed for business. I needed some time to myself since I found the Lord. We could not pull together as we should do. He wants his portion in this life; he wants it to be a large one; he wants it in a hurry, and he does not care how many lives he uses up to increase his gain. He was sorry to lose me, and we parted friends. I could help him once, I cannot now; I must have time to go apart awhile and examine the title deeds to my inheritance," and Walter turned his blithe, handsome face to me with a beaming smile. "Don't you think I did right, Elizabeth?"

"Yes, of course; I thought you had dreadfully long hours there. But, Walter, darling, what will you do?"

"One step at a time, Dame Durden. Don't fret for me. Our father's God reigns; all will come right. I am going over to Badenoch to see after a vacant school. I can teach, I guess, till something better turns up."

"Nothing better will ever turn up for you," I said, firing up; "something different may. Teaching is as lofty work as preaching, if only one can do it for eternity, as work that will never need to be ripped out."

"You say you have no assurance, Elizabeth," said Walter, hastily; "I think you are a better Christian than I am."

"I like you to think well of me, Walter,—it makes me happy," I said; "but it does not matter, after all, what you think about me, but what God thinks."

"That's true," said Walter; "but, to change the subject, I am going over to

Morrison's with you to-night. I hope they'll let me stay till morning."

"Of course they will. They are just as kind as ever they can be."

When we came into the lane we saw Mr. Morrison and the boys in the corn-field breaking off the ears. Walter jumped over the fence and ran to help them, and I went home. Next day Walter helped them to draw in the corn. At the house Mrs. Morrison and Mary were in a great bustle of cooking. The amount they accomplished—pumpkin pies, custard pies, and cake of every rustic description, flesh and fowl, cooked both ways, both roasted and boiled, like the potatoes at Ballyporeen—was enough to provision a small army. When evening closed in the barn-floor was piled up with corn in a great heap, and all the neighbors were gathered to free the ears from their envelope of husks. I went to the barn-door to have a peep at the huskers, was informed on by Mrs. Morrison, and captured and seated among them before I knew what I was about. Once I was in I was glad to be there. It was very pleasant to watch them and learn to help. The ears flew from the hands of the huskers to the growing heap with astonishing rapidity. Some were clearing away the husks that threatened to bury the workers. Mr. Morrison kept watch that none but hard ears were thrown into the heap. Soft ears he carried away in an Indian-made basket to store in some other place as feed for his pigs. Jokes flew from lip to lip as the corn flew from hand to heap, tales were told, and songs were sung; and what was most astonishing to me, Walter was the life of the assembly. He sang "Paddy Carey," "The Wedding of Ballyporeen," "I'll hang my harp on a willow tree," and "Love's Young Dream," as if there was not such a thing as a struggling soul in the universe. I wondered at this. There was a keen lookout kept for red ears, which entitled the fortunate finder to kiss the lass he selected. Mrs. Morrison's curly-haired relative was convicted of keeping a red ear in his pocket and producing it as a new one occasionally.

Soon the great heap was husked, sorted and carried to the crib to Mr. Morrison's satisfaction, and they all trooped in to supper. The table was loaded abundantly with the results of Mrs. Morrison and Mary's skill, and the huskers did ample justice to the supper. After supper the room was hastily cleared, Mr. Morrison produced a fiddle, and dancing commenced. Mrs. Morrison produced a dirty pack of cards and started a number to play in another room, and brewed whiskey punch, which she served to all comers. I wandered about from one room to another. I had never before in my life seen dancing, and it seemed a little foolish. I had never seen cards played, and it horrified me. "Is it not awful?" I said to Walter, in a whisper.

"What? playing with that old pack of cards?—They are dreadfully dirty, but where's the harm? they are not gambling."

Mrs. Morrison noticed me standing in the door-way watching the card-players and quoted,

"All night long wi crabbed leuks
They pore ower Satan's picture-buiks."

"You are horrifying Miss Ray. See how solemnly she is watching you turning over the leaves of your father's prayer-book, good children of his that you are," she said to the players.

My mind was in a sore condition, and Mrs. Morrison exasperated me, so I wandered away from her to look at the dancers. My first look at dancing was disappointing. There was none of the supple movements, floating grace, fairy elegance I had read about. The broad-shouldered, heavy-footed young men danced as they worked, with a heavy heartiness that shook the house. The girls set to their partners with an earnest gravity that did not convey any

great sense of enjoyment to me. They reeled, they turned, they crossed, they cleekit as earnestly as if they were to gain their living by it; as if they were more intent on seeing who would keep the floor the longest than in finding pleasure. And there were some disappointments, and cross purposes too, as there are everywhere. Pretty flaxen-haired Erika McLennan, who would have liked to dance and flirt with Angus McTavish, saw him sitting in a corner in earnest talk with his cousin, Mary Morrison, and she did not like it a bit.

"What can he see in that cross-eyed thing?" she asked of me. Big John McLeod, who would have laid his big body under pretty Erika's feet, could not win one kind look from the sunny, blue eyes that every now and then looked slyly after Angus. In spite of Mrs. Morrison's endeavors, the fun seemed to drag a little, or else the thoughts of my mind prevented me from entering into the enjoyment. I grew tired of watching them, having no part in the merriment, so I turned away and wandered down the little walk under the hop-bower with "What doest thou here, Elijah?" ringing in my heart. I wanted to reason with myself as to why I felt cross and out of tune with the enjoyment within. I concluded I was unreasonable because I was at war with myself more than usual. I was leaning over the little gate all alone, when Erika McLennan danced along and caught my arm.

"Come here Miss Ray! come quick!". She hurried me to the door of the dancing-room to see Walter dancing a jig with Mrs. Morrison. It was too ridiculous. With all her weight and height she danced lightly and with more spirit and enjoyment than any girl there. When did Walter learn to dance? He had never seen dancing any more than myself at home, and there he was footing it as gaily as the best of them! "Aren't we a handsome young couple?" said Mrs. Morrison to me when she was cut out by little Erika. Mr. Morrison came to ask me to dance; he was a little drunk and a little too affectionate, but Mary interfered and I slipped away.

After all the rustic dances, eight reels, six nations, strathspeys, Irish jigs, and Scotch reels, had been danced, they arranged what they called a rabbit dance, which was a Canadian entertainment. Mrs. Morrison, whose blood was up, whirled me into it by strength of arms; it was no use to protest, or draw back, or plead inability. The dancers of the rabbit dance stood arranged in two lines. All sang together a French song, which they did not understand, that expressed the chase after the rabbit. The couple at the head of the line took hands and danced up and down the middle, then cast off, and the dance became a chase, the time quickening, as the hunt became exciting till the rabbit was caught. When every rabbit was caught in turn and the dance was ended, Mrs. Morrison pointed triumphantly to the clock. She had slyly stopped it more than an hour before. Watches were hauled up and examined; it was after twelve o'clock!

"This is what your new piety is worth," she said. "Not one of you would join in the dance with the ungodly till Sunday morning came. Miss Ray especially only began to dance when she could have the luxury of breaking the Sabbath also. Let this be a warning to you all, not to think yourselves so much better than other people. You see you must either bring down your theory, or bring up your practice alongside of it."

"Theory and practice have nothing to do with the matter," said Walter, laughing to cover a little vexation; "none of us had second sight to see you stopping the clock. Besides, you do not think that dancing is any harm."

"That's not the question," she an-

swered; "if you are the children of God, and we are the children of the devil, you have no business seeking your amusements among us. People don't look for the living among the dead, do they?"

The assembly broke up as if they had been to meeting after this attack. I think that was Walter's last dance, though he reasoned, "I don't see the harm of it in itself. But that terrible woman has made my duty clear, and I thank her."

CHAPTER XXII.

Whom seek ye?

Let Mrs. Morrison mock as she might, she thought of these things more seriously than she would have liked any one to know. It was not easy for any thinking person—and she was that—to avoid noticing and being influenced by the strong wave of religious feeling that was at this time sweeping over Glenshie.

The throng of harvest was over, and Mr. Morrison now sat every day at his loom; its cheery clakety-thump sounded through the house from early morning till late at night. His flowers in the little front garden were reduced to a few asters and marigolds that were determined to look cheerful as long as they could, and persistently smiled up at the sky.

I often wondered what Mr. Morrison thought of the subject that his wife dragged up so often in every ridiculous light. I had a belief that he thought earnestly of these things, not from anything he ever said to me, for he was a most silent man. Yet, oddly enough, there was a sense of companionship in his silence, which I felt, as I stood by his loom watching him weave, which I did for a little while almost every day after school. The old grandmother, who rarely spoke a word save Gaelic, had taken her staff, and in her grey plaid and snowy cap with its multiplied frills had gone to hear the young preacher shortly after he came, and never missed a sermon afterwards. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Morrison had ever gone to hear him. I thought they were afraid of the power that was behind the message which he carried. All the rest of the family went, as did the young people of all the country round. The scholars and I had one advantage above the rest, in the Bible lesson he gave to us when he came to the school, making every day on which he came a golden time. In one of his little lectures he spoke of Satan having kindled a fire in the hearts of our first parents which spread from heart to heart in every child of Adam—a fire that no human agency can put out.

"You think that when you swear, fight, tell lies or disobey, that that is sin, do you not?" he said to the children.

"Is that not sin?" asked my curly-haired Rory.

"No, my boy, the apple is not the apple tree, but its fruit. The flame is not the fire; it rises from the fire. Out of your heart, where evil burns, rise evil thoughts that flame out into actual transgression. You have seen a coal-pit burned?"

"Yes, yes," from many of the boys.

"Does it blaze?"

"No," answered several, "they do not want it to blaze."

"Do you see the fire?"

"No, but we know it is there covered up."

"You know it is there, and if accident or design uncover it the fire that smoulders within it will leap up in a visible blaze. The fire of sin smoulders in every heart and temptation only removes the covering and it blazes up,—iniquity made visible. It blazed up into murder in Cain, into theft in Achan, into treachery in Joab, into malice that would destroy a nation for

a withheld obeisance in Haman. This fire is in every heart—in yours, in mine. We do not know the moment it might flame out in a denial of our Lord like Peter, or in a betrayal of Him like Judas. There is only one way under Heaven to put it out, to bring it under the blood of sprinkling, the blood of Christ. Cry after Him, dear children, that His blood may fall on your hearts as the dew upon Israel."

I acknowledged now, as I had acknowledged for a long time, that I needed to be purified with this blood that cleanses and atones, but why could I not get it? Others all round me were rejoicing in the Lord.

Eric and Olaus McSweyn were changed men; Christian and Neil McDonald were changed; Alice Morrison, the dear lamb, was walking in the light of the Lord with His mark on her forehead, and many more. Why was I passed over and left out? I determined to go up to Squire McPherson's, and ask counsel of the young minister; he was staying there for a few days. When I went up to the Squire's after school, his wife met me with a face of concern. "The young preacher was ill,—too ill to see any one," she said. "It is well, however, that you have come, for the school-inspector has arrived suddenly (everything unpleasant comes suddenly) and you have to be examined."

"Now? Immediately?" I asked, in dismay.

"The sooner you get it over, the better," said kind Mrs. McPherson, encouragingly.

That inspector kept me on the floor under examination for two mortal hours. I got a little angry at the merciless fellow, who seemed so much more anxious to try to puzzle me, than to find out what I really knew or could teach, therefore I answered better than I did for the good minister at Blair Athol. Next day he examined the school, and gave us unmeasured praise for the progress we had made since he examined it before, shortly after the section was divided. He would, he said, report the school as ranking second as to progress in the three counties. This praise was a little comfort after the rigor of the examination. He felt in good humor with the school and with himself because some hints which he had dropped when he examined the school last had borne such good fruit. He was a little, pudgy fellow, as fat as Falstaff. At some time of his life he had attended dancing-school—it is to be hoped it was when he was leaner; he had there learned an elaborate bow, which he determined to bring out before our admiring eyes, and astonish us forever. He was drawing the class of boys who had been reading to him into a straight line with military precision, on the pretence of teaching them to accomplish this obeisance, when Mr. McAlpine came in. He had come for his book "The Heavenly Footman." There was one more spectator for Mr. Maulyer's accomplishment. Mr. McAlpine and he were acquainted. "I am going to teach these little fellows to make a bow properly," he explained to him.

I am quite sure it was all a pretence; he could not have taught them all the ins and outs, the crooks and turns of that bow in three months. He went over it himself in a jaunty manner, times innumerable. He had a neat little foot, considerably out of his own line of vision; he placed it in what he called first position, then described a graceful curve with the other, bringing it into second position; then came the bow, down, down, down, at the same time making an elegant sweep with the imaginary *chapeau* he held in his hand. His curved nose and his quick bright eye made him look like an absurd parrot. The boys tried hard to imitate him, failed dreadfully, and burst out laughing in his face. This elegant little man afterwards absconded with the money that was to pay the teachers of three counties. He was treasurer as

well as inspector. Mr. McAlpine, who brought me the news, said, "I do not wonder at it, for the man capable of inflicting that bow upon helpless children is capable of any amount of depravity."

One night, with a light heart because the dreaded examination was over, I joined Mary Morrison and her brother, Angus McTavish and Katie McGregor on their way to hear the young preacher. It seemed a long time since we went to hear the first sermon in early harvest time. As we walked down the green lane—not very green that damp, fall evening, our conversation was of religion, which had come to be a constant topic in our little circle. The frolics seemed to have lost their attraction. I think that religion had never before in Glenshie received the same serious attention, or been thought of in the same personal relation. We were joined at the road by a goodly number, all going in the same direction.

"I don't like this new religion," said a young McLennan, who came up with the rest.

"It is not a new religion," said Eric McSweyn; "it is as old as the Bible."

"His preaching don't hang together; he says, 'Come,' and that we cannot come; 'Look,' and that we are born blind, like kittens or puppies. It is all contradictions—you can—you can't; you should—you are not able. What are we to believe?" young McLennan went on bitterly.

"He preaches what he was sent to preach," said Olaus. "He is obeying his orders; whether we will hear or whether we will forbear, he will be clear."

"How can we hear with dead ears?" asked McLennan. "Besides, he never was sent—don't I know?—a mere boy, a student, he came out here on his own hook. How could such a one know about religion like a grand, learned man such as Minister McWhirter was? His preaching was preaching—he knew how. He soothed you in his sermons; and he spoke grandly of God's mercies, and one went home comforted."

"But were you any better?" asks grave Eric. "Was it soothing and comforting you needed? It is help and instruction sometimes, is it not, that we need most?"

"I worked for the minister over three years, and he never mentioned my soul to me any more than he did to my horses. He had no prayers in his own family either, except on Sunday night."

"Would it not be better," said serious Katie McGregor, "to let the absent be, and mind your own souls yourselves just now? If we don't, the loss is ours, let us lay the blame where we will."

"We will not do much, or know much out of the preaching we are getting now," retorted McLennan.

"I know that you seem to know a great deal, and can say a great deal, for one deaf, dumb and dead," spoke Olaus McSweyn. "There are a few things you don't know yet; have patience, you may be convinced of what you don't know, and find what you're not looking for before you are much older."

"I will not find it true what he said the last night he preached, before he was sick that little spell," said McLennan hotly. "He said that we need not go home as we came, but might take home with us a loving Saviour to dwell in us—might go home new creatures that very night if we would. Who, I would like to know, ever went to a meeting and came home changed? I don't care a button for what people have read or heard other's say; if such things happen, they ought to happen often enough for some one to be a living witness. Did you ever see one changed so?" turning round sharply to me.

The question came on me so suddenly that I waited to think a moment before I answered.

"No, Mr. McLennan, I never saw one on whom such a sudden change was so apparent that I could see it; I

could not look into the heart you know."

"Oh, if it was in the heart, it would shine through into the life pretty soon," he answered.

I looked back over my life, and was sure I never had seen any apparent sudden change. I thought of Paul struck down in a moment, and of Colonel Gardiner, a man changed instantly, the only instances I could think of that I had even read about; but I said no more, for just then Angus McTavish, who had been behind with another group, came up and spoke.

"Listen all, till I tell the news, Donald Monroe is going to meeting to-night!"

"To get converted?" said McLennan. "Well, he needs it."

"Be quiet, McLennan; there is going to be a good bit of sport. Donald is going to carry home his wife to her spinning by force. Donald and Duncan, and Rory Ferguson, with others of the same, are to help, and there is to be a grand spree at Donald's afterwards."

"It will be as dark as my grandmother's cloak, and it is going to rain besides," said Eric, looking up at the sky critically. "I would like to know how they will single her out among so many women in white caps, if they wait until she comes out of meeting; or do they intend to raise a row inside?"

"Hardly. I'll tell you the plan as I heard it from Rory Ferguson: Four of them are to wait outside till she comes out; one is to go in to watch where she sits, and contrive to come out just behind her. They will close in round her easy enough, for she will suspect nothing, and as soon as they are a little way from the house, lay hands on her and carry her off. They will have Ferguson's buggy waiting to carry off the bride. Won't she be raging! and won't Donald make a night of it if he succeeds, and I do not see anything to hinder him. It is funny, though, how much they are afraid of this young minister. Not one of them would go into meeting to watch where she sat, for all Donald's eloquence. He has to go himself; he is not afraid of anything or anyone. I would like to see the temper Donald's wife will be in when he gets her home."

"I don't see why he wants her home," I said; "if she is so very ill-tempered he ought to be glad to get rid of her. She is welcome at the Squire's, and can earn enough for her wants in peace. She seems a willing, hard-working woman."

"Donald thinks he has a right to his own wife, and he means to take his right," said Angus, laughing.

"Good plans often get spoiled in the doing," said Olaus. "Donald may miss the mark after all his pains."

"Perhaps," said I, "Donald may hear something to-night that will cause him to change his plans, and try kindness."

"You mean," said McLennan, "that he will get converted. Now, Miss Ray, there is no miracle in the Bible would be so great a miracle to me as if a wild, determined man like Donald would become changed."

"I don't know," said Eric, "if Donald can be any more than a sinner, as we all are; a change to a saint would be a great one for any of us."

"The greatest sinner will make the greatest saint, I suppose," said I.

"Do you think Donald the greatest sinner?" asked Angus.

"I do not know any more about his sins than his talents," I answered. "You say he is clever; I believe he is; you say he is wild and fierce, strong in his loves and hates; judging from his face and his actions, I rather think he is."

"I believe you;" said Angus, "he is built on the plan of Allan Dall, Glengary's piper, who said to his chieftain, 'Your health, Glengary; I love you better than my Maker.'"

"Indeed, they are not few," I answered, "who worship the creature

more than the Creator, but they are not audacious enough to own it like that man."

When we got to the school-house it was crowded. I had some difficulty in making my way to my accustomed corner. Still, more kept coming in, and by some wedging process got seated. I looked over the congregation, the most crowded one I ever saw; men in homespun, with hard hands, and set, concentrated faces, that had never been carefully fended from sun and wind; women in snowy, many-bordered caps, many of whom had never been heard to speak a word of English. I would have wondered to see them there to hear an English sermon, did I not know how much Gaelic I understood already, and yet was unable to speak it. My scholars, I could see, were packed in among the rest by twos and threes wherever they could find a place. I saw the merry faces of one or two rogues peeping out from under the desk, and that others were roosting on the top of it. They were all there, for they loved the young preacher with all the fervor of their Highland hearts—and for good and sufficient cause: He was the first man who had broken the Bread of Life before them so small that they could pick up the crumbs. Quiet as mice, but with love and expectancy shining out of their bright eyes, they hushed themselves and waited.

Every country place has its daft person, who wanders about harmlessly and aimlessly. Glenshie is not an exception; and the scarred and vacant, but eager, face of Callum mor is here among the rest. He has discovered that he has a soul that ought to be saved, and can be lost, and that God is rich in mercy towards the souls that He has made. The story of the Cross endured for us, of a Cross to be taken up to follow the great Cross-bearer, has in some dim way penetrated to his heart, and he thinks he would like to be among those who follow this dear Lord. He has tried to give up what he loves very dearly, strong whiskey, even putting his hands over his large ears when invited in to drink by Allan King, and shuffling off at a clumsy trot as fast as his dilapidated shoes would allow him. So there he sits, his tow-colored hair standing up like rumpled feathers all over his big head, and his eyes, which do not at all match, looking in different directions. There is a good deal of self-denial in Callum's keeping still; it is as great an effort in its line as running away from the whiskey, for Callum is a failure of an orator, and many disjointed thoughts are tumbling about in that big brain, longing for expression. Since the new ideas have been in his mind, he feels called upon to pray in public, and as his prayers are rather direct and personal, and for others more than for himself, in his excess of benevolence, it has been thought best to prevent, by harmless engineering, the public exercise of his gifts. He has been known to pray publicly for a minister, suspected of tippling, in these words: "Lord, be merciful to that big drunkard, Minister McCoshen," and for another, "Lord, convert that big liar, Angus Roy," and again, "Have mercy on that big blunderer, Dr. Starn, who called me a blockhead." In his last public performance, noticing a modest church officer who shrank from praying in public, he said, "Lord, forgive Donaldbeg, the son of Rory, the son of Ewen, for hiding behind the chimney." It was not in human nature to keep from smiling at Callum's petitions, and the mixture of the ridiculous with the solemn had to be guarded against, if possible.

I never saw before, I have never seen since, such a silent, solemn, eager expectant throng wedged together so closely, packed shoulder to shoulder, waiting with hushed reverence for a message from the Highest. There was a solemn, glad influence which came from them to me, and I blessed them in my heart in the name of the

Lord. The door is pushed open a little way—it will not open freely, on account of the crowd, and Donald Monroe enters, sure enough. He just gets in and stands up behind the door with his back to it. A determined purpose is in every line of his face. Not much of reverence is expressed in his keen dark eye, he takes in every corner of the room at one sweeping glance and settles for a moment on his wife, who, in her white cap and shepherd's plaid shawl, is seated quite near me. She seems to feel conscious of the look, though her back is towards him, for she gives a little shiver. Donald, satisfied of her whereabouts, withdraws his glance, and stands erect and quiet, waiting with the rest. I thought as I looked at him standing quietly there that the story I had heard could not be true.

The door is again pushed open a little way, and the kind, sagacious face of the Squire appears; he edges himself in somehow, and is followed by Mrs. McPherson and a bevy of rosy-cheeked boys and girls. Then comes the preacher wrapped in a grey maud; he makes his way through the wedged crowd, with difficulty to the teacher's desk. Somebody takes up a little one on his knee, somebody else sits up on the desk among the scholars, and is followed by others, and the last arrivals get all seated somehow, none standing but the stripling in the preachers desk, and the dark grey sentinel behind the door. The Squire notices him and elevates his eyebrows slightly,—he is surprised. Donald lifts his head a little higher and looks grandly unconscious. Just then we were convinced of the reality of the plot by hearing the watchers outside strike up the last song made on the Squire. We all hear it well enough, but no one takes any notice of it—something more important has to be attended to. The preacher has laid off his maud, and stands there looking slighter and more delicate than when we saw him first in Glenshie; his cheek is pale with a faint color coming and going on it, like a girl's. He says, "Let us worship God by singing to his praise the sixty-third Psalm. "It is not trained singing I assure you—there are discords; I can detect quite plainly the astonishing sounds made by Callum mor; I never did like the Scottish version of the Psalms,—thought the rhyme uncouth, almost barbarous; but now, as their waiting souls sing with the heart, and their united voices rise in the words:

"Lord, thee my God, I'll early seek,
My soul doth thirst for thee,
My flesh longs in a dry, parched land,
Wherein no waters be;

"That I thy power may behold,
And brightness of thy face,
As I have seen thee heretofore
Within thy holy place.

"Since better is thy love than life,
My lips thee praise shall give,
I in thy name will lift my hands
And bless thee while I live."

the notes peal up to the sky, while I—shall I say it? Yes—let the truth be spoken—I sat silent, and thought with Burns:

"Compared wi' this, how poor religious pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart.
The Power incensed, the pageant will desert
The pompous strain the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart; [soul,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor
enroll."

After the singing, came an earnest prayer, remarkable for nothing but being addressed to God for the people, without any under current of "What are they thinking of it?" or any breaks, in which a little preaching was inserted. Then came the text: "O Lord, truly I am thy servant and the son of thine handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds."

I must stop to say that this young man was not very eloquent; did not get excited or carried away with his subject. In a simple, boyish manner, but with the unconscious dignity of

one bearing a message, he talked to the people of his message, which he divided into two parts—to the bound and to the free. I wish I could write down his look and tone, the language of the soft dark eye that looked so lovingly on the little ones.

"All of you here before me to-night, young and old, rich and poor, whom Christ my Master has not made free, are bound, and to you is the first part of my message sent. You are bond slaves of Satan; you are doing his work; you are sure of his wages, inevitably sure. 'The wages of sin is death,' Oh, I pity you, bound and led captive of Satan at his will; driven ever nearer to the end—the end where the worm dieth not and the fires never shall be quenched. This is a hard thing for me to say, and for you to hear. Perhaps you dispute it in your minds, saying, We are sinners we know, but not so helpless as that, not bound or driven;—no, we are following the counsel of our own will, fulfilling the desires of our own flesh and mind, being free to do or not to do what we choose. And this is true, my friends, so long as your hearts are set in you to do evil continually; so long as your will is the same as your master's will; and in pleasing the lusts of your flesh, you do his work, and spend your strength in his service. If you fancy you are free, try for yourself. You who have long laid the reins on the neck of your lusts and let them carry you whither they would, try to stop—try to turn; then, and not till then, you will feel your chains. The pleasant vices which were light as gossamer, shining as burnished silver when you helped your great enemy to wind them round you first, you will find, to your sorrow, how hard they press, how heavy they have become. Who knows the bondage of drunkenness as well as the drunkard who has fondled his vice until it has become his master, until his bondage is greater than he can bear? He knows by his fruitless struggles to be free, what bondage means. Oh! friends, the bound and driven slave may not feel his bonds if, fresh and vigorous, he press on as his Master wills; but if weary or unwilling he try to stop—to turn—he will know then the meaning of being bound. There are some here whose iniquities draw them as with a cart-rope. Their bonds are seen of all; the voice of their sins, like Abel's blood, crieth out till God and man hear. There are some here whose bonds are soft and silken, invisible as the Indian web called woven air, which cannot be seen on the grass unless wet with dew, but it is there; those bound with these bonds are as surely captives as the others. They go the same road, serve the same master, travel to the same doom. Ah! these silken bonds cannot be broken; they will hold although they cut to the bone. David felt them when he cried, 'Deliver me from secret faults!' To those who are bound I am sent this night with a message from the Master,—to tell of One who with His own blood bought the right to loose your bonds, to break every yoke, to take the prey from the mighty, and deliver the lawful captive. I proclaim in your ears this night, if there are any here who are weary of their bonds, discontented with their work of laboring for that which satisfieth not, unwilling to accept their wages—unable to face the devouring fire—to dwell with everlasting burnings, let them draw near. The Son can set you free, and you shall be free indeed. This is He who hath the key of David, who openeth and no man shutteth; this is He whom God hath appointed to undo heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free; He will loose your bonds,—He will do more; when He takes you up out of the fearful pit and out of the miry clay, He will wash you from the filth of your slavery in the fountain He has opened for sin and uncleanness; clothe you in the blood-

bought and blood-washed robe of righteousness, fit for a guest at the wedding of the King's Son; make you beautiful through His beauty that He will put upon you. All this wonderful love, all these unspeakable gifts, I am commissioned to offer to you, without respect of persons, now—here—all unfit and unworthy as you are; to you is this salvation offered without money and without price. If you know that you are bound, if you feel your bonds, if you see yourself a captive, surely your eyes have been touched with His eye-salve, and to you is this word of salvation sent. Cry then unto Him, cry mightily! Take with you words—His words, and say unto Him, 'Take away all iniquity, loose my bonds.' When they are loosed, as they will be, for He has not said to the seed of Jacob, 'Seek ye my face,' in vain; when you know that you are free, because the Son has made you free,—then you will sing the song of praise, 'O Lord, truly I am Thy servant and the son of Thine handmaid; Thou hast loosed my bonds.'"

The face of the preacher, as he warmed with his subject, had gradually flushed rosy-red, and his eyes brightened and flashed as he urged his Master's message on his hearers; but all at once he turned pale, faltered, sat down and fainted. There was a pause, some woman's hand passed a glass of water, another pause and the Squire became convinced that "secondly" was not destined to be spoken to us that evening. The preacher's earnestness was far beyond his strength. Callum mor, every hair on his head in a wilder condition than before, commences to fidget; he sees a possible opportunity and he longs to avail himself of it. The Squire sees it too and makes a move to prevent it; looking across the house he sees the grey head of a douce, God-fearing elder, and asks him to pray. The audience rose, but it was not the elder's voice that appealed to God in the Gaelic tongue, with the solemn words, "Lord, God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner."

My eyes flew open, and I looked over to the door, behind which stood Donald Monroe, and it could be said of him, for the first time, "Behold, he prayeth!" Low-voiced and strong, he poured forth his cry after God with all the eloquence of his poetic nature. He confessed his sin, acknowledged his bondage, asked for his bonds to be loosed with a cry that, coming from the deep heart of the stern, strong, self-possessed man, went to the hearts of the listeners. There was a thrill of sympathy; many melted into silent tears; many hearts as needy as Donald's sent up along with him their heart's cry for the freedom wherewith Christ makes free. Among such an undemonstrative people, where so many hearts were stirred by an irresistible power, it was like the fountains of the great deep being broken up. When the meeting was over and the people began to disperse, I saw Donald turn to the elder, who had been called on to pray, with the enquiry of the jailer of Philippi on his lips, and they passed out together. I think that he forgot all about his plans and the waiting satellites who were lurking on each side of the door, waiting his sign to seize and bear home his wife. The night was dark, and it was raining, a small, steady, wetting rain. As I stepped out of the lighted house into the darkness, I noticed one of the watchers by the door, and a wet, miserable-looking sentinel he was. Mrs. Monroe went home to the Squire's unmolested, and the boys of the harum-scarum squad, who had calculated on a jolly lark, were wofully disappointed. As I walked along in the drizzling rain, glad with a great gladness that my eyes had seen this great thing, the power of the Lord of Hosts in subduing, and sad also because these people could feel when His goodness and power passed before them, while I was a spectator with dry eyes and a cold heart. I was inly

bemoaning myself as I walked along, when a hand was laid on my shoulder and I looked up to see young McLennan's eager face.

"I have found Him this night, Miss Ray; I believe He has loosed my bonds. Are you glad?"—and he had passed on into the darkness before I could reply. When we had turned into our own lane, Mary Morrison, the undemonstrative Mary, put her arm round my neck and kissed my cheek. "I am so happy," she said, "that I must tell you. I believe that Christ has made me free. Help me to praise Him."

So I went home with the knowledge that more than one or two were thanking God for His unspeakable gift, and I could say, "We have seen strange things to-day."

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Poor bodies scant o' cash,
How they maun thole official snash,
And they maun stand wi' aspect humble,
An' hear it a' an' fear an' tremble."
—BURNS.

The fall was closing in,—days sharp and frosty, days wet and sleety, alternated for a while. I felt my black mantilla thinner than was pleasant some days when the wind was keen. I had had a warmer cloak, but it was a little shabby, and in fact, I had cut it up to make some needful articles of clothing for a dear, little lad, one of my scholars. He was an orphan like myself, and I felt drawn to him. But wind and rain searched me out behind my mantilla; I required a new umbrella, and, worse than all, my shoes were showing symptoms of wear that did not suit with the spongy roads. I had no money, not a cent. I had not much when I came to the country, and what little I had, had been spent in things I considered indispensably necessary for the school. I was not sorry therefore, the day after the meeting, to receive word from the local superintendent to get an order from my three trustees, and repair to the local treasurer, the Hon. Mr. Twisdon who lived at Mount Pleasant, to receive the Government grant. It was Friday, and that evening after school I set out to get the signatures of the three trustees to the order on Mr. Twisdon, that I might be ready to go to Mount Pleasant early in the morning. Each trustee in turn complimented me on the progress which the children had made, which was very pleasant to me. Amid talk of the school and talk of the meeting the night before, and the wonderful occurrence of Donald Monroe praying, I got my order signed and returned to my home. I hoped that the Morrisons would offer to send one of the boys to take me to Mount Pleasant in the light French cart; there were plenty of idle boys and idle horses about the place. I am sure they did not think of it or they would have done so; but seeing they had forgotten it, I could not remind them, but set off on foot. The distance was twelve miles, but I started early in the expectation that perhaps a waggon might overtake me going the same way and give me a lift. It was a misty morning, and wet and spongy under foot, but by keeping on the grassy margin of the road it was not muddy walking. I did hope it would not rain, for besides the discomfort, it would make my having no umbrella more noticeable. My shoes were worn enough to let in water, and soon my feet were wet through. I comforted myself with the reflection that I should remedy all this when I got my money. As I walked along I built castles in the air of a golden future for Walter and myself, and so beguiled some weary miles. By-and-by my thoughts dropped down to the earth, and I began to wonder why it was that I missed common things so much that I had prized but little when they lay around me. Walking alone through the woods of solemn pine and hemlock that lay between Glenshie and Mount Pleasant, I began

to think of the pleasant hedge rows, the moon-faced primroses, the little bright-eyed daisies, children of the sun, that starred every piece of green grass in the Ireland of my remembrance, till thoughts of them made summer in my heart. We had some rare and beautiful flowers in aunt's garden at Enbridge, which she had got from the gardens at Himmel-en-Erde. They had long, unmanageable Latin names tacked to them like a court lady's train. I used to like to know and repeat the long names for the sake of the learned feeling it produced. I admired those flowers very much then, especially some fine roses, for their beauty and rarity. I had not one regretful thought after them now, but I did long after my trembling favorites, the little bluebells, swinging on their delicate stalks. That thought brought to my mind the recollection of nearly drowning baby Nellie when I went to gather them first. My heart delighted itself thinking of aunt's children, and wishing that I had them among my scholars. My pleasant thoughts began to fade as the mist dissolved into fine rain, and I became conscious that my mantilla was wet through. If it rained heavily I would present a forlorn appearance to the Hon. Mr. Twisdon. I grew so weary that my heart beat time to the lines,

> "Where wilds immeasurably spread,
> Seem lengthening as I go."

The last miles were long, long miles. At length I left the pine and tamarack woods behind me, and climbing a long hill saw, through the shade of mighty butternut trees, my first glimpse of the village of Mount Pleasant. I found, by enquiry, the residence of the Hon. Mr. Twisdon, a tall brick house, with a bay window projecting on the street. I waited a long time in the hall before he made his appearance. I expected to see a very fine gentleman in this honorable ex-member of the Legislature. I was as much disappointed as when I saw my first live lord, when he called on Aunt Henderson at election time. The gentleman was a very tall man, and he impressed me with the belief that he could be as tall as he liked, for he seemed to have the power of stretching himself out to any length. He had lank black hair, high cheek-bones, and a sallow face, with light eyes of undecided blue. There was a scar across his face that took a sudden turn and extended in a white seam down the middle of his nose, giving it the appearance of having been split open and put together again.

He opened a door into a very little office, with a desk, a couple of chairs, a small book-case and a large waste-paper basket forming all its furniture. He seemed to consider school-teachers as his natural enemies—a consideration which relieved him from the necessity of being polite or even civil. He set me a chair, and said briskly, "Now, then, what is your business?"

I did not sit down, but for answer to his question handed him the order. He almost snatched it out of my hand, merely glanced at it, and said, "This order is not correct,—it is informal. You must get another before I can pay you any money." When I came to myself I was outside the residence of the Hon. Didymus Twisdon, and the door was shut behind me. I found some consolation in reflecting that he had the same name, and was likely to be the lineal descendant of the wicked judge that persecuted John Bunyan. Whatever consolation these thoughts gave me, I needed. I had walked twelve miles; I was hungry; I was damp; I had not a penny in my purse; I did not know a single person in the village,—so there was nothing for it but to go seven miles farther to Blair Athol to ask Minister McGillivray's advice, which I set out to do in no laughing mood. I did not think much of primroses or bluebells as I left Mount Pleasant behind me and took the Blair Athol road. I had not gone very far when a buggy

driven very fast came rattling along behind me, drew up alongside, and Mr. McAlpine's voice said, "Why, Miss Ray, where are you going? Do get in."

In a moment I found my weary feet on a dry rug, a heavy plaid that was on the back of the buggy wrapped round me. I leaned back contented, and watched the houses, fences and trees flying past in rapid style. Pleasant thoughts would have been possible again, but I had to rouse myself and account to Mr. McAlpine for my being there at all. I told him of my difficulty, and that I was going over to Minister McGillivray's for advice.

"It is fortunate," he said, "that I happened to be going down to Jessop's mill to-day to make a contract for oats; I can leave you at the minister's as well as not." He looked at the order, and, while laughing at the signatures, said he thought it was all right. "It is right as far as my knowledge of school law goes," he said. "I know Twisdon to be a great scoundrel in every sense of the word. He is one of those fellows who grasp greedily with one hand, and spend lavishly with the other. He would cheat fifty poor persons to be able to send to New York for a fashionable outfit for his wife and daughter, that they might be able to queen it over Mount Pleasant society. When I see them come rustling into church stiff and shiny with new grandeur I always wonder what unfortunate simpleton Twisdon has been skinning lately."

"If this is his character and reputation I wonder his family are not sent to Coventry. Their finery would seem to me to be the price of blood," I said.

"If you knew of the bar where he sells adulterated whiskey, of the drunkards he has made, of the farms that have passed from their hands to his, you might talk of the price of blood. But the money enables the family to dress, to entertain in style and luxury, and the crowd partake, asking no inconvenient questions. It is something to have the shadow of their grandeur fall upon people. I have heard lately that he keeps the teachers' money as long as he can, and gives it a turn or two to his own benefit if possible before he pays it over."

We were soon at Minister McGillivray's, and found his wife as kind and sweet-voiced as ever. She sees everything at a glance and understands the situation at once. I wish I had this gift,—I am so slow to apprehend, and it takes me a long time to think out the smallest thing. Before I had time to say a word of explanation, my feet were in warm, dry stockings and slippers, and I was comfortably seated at the minister's study fire, telling him my grievance.

"Aye! aye! poor child!" was all he said, sitting with his brows drawn down. He looked at my order. "It is quite correct. We must move to have that office taken from Twisdon; he is not a fit person for it," he said at length. "I will write a note to him that may cause him to think."

Dinner was got up expressly for me, and when the good minister brought me out to it I found Mr. McAlpine still there, oblivious of that contract for oats. And he enjoyed his dinner, and the conversation of the good minister; and well he might enjoy the latter, for Minister McGillivray had a fatherly interest in every human being with whom he came in contact, and had always a word of information or advice worth listening to. When I was ready to return to Mount Pleasant, Mr. McAlpine said he would drive me back. I reminded him of the contract for oats.

Mr. McGillivray said, "Never mind, Miss Ray, lumbermen have business everywhere. Jessop's mill will be there to-morrow, and I expect he will find business to transact at Mount Pleasant." Then he turned to Mr. McAlpine, "This order of Miss Ray's is quite correct; I will give her a note to that effect

to Mr. Twisdon. I am afraid that honorable gentleman is not honorable in his dealings."

I was glad to be driven back instead of walking, but I was afraid that Mr. McAlpine drove me back from pity; indeed what else could it be? I did not like pity from him, I would have liked him for a friend.

"Is not Mr. McGillivray very kind and fatherly?" I said to Mr. McAlpine as we drove along.

"He is a good man, and very anxious about the souls of every one who comes near him. Also anxious," he said, with a little smile, "to lead them into the water."

"He must teach what he believes to be true," I answered, "and in these days of free Gospel every man may search for himself if these things are so. Conscience now is like the drink at Ahasuerus' feast, none may compel."

"Did you hear that Richard Jessop was baptized last week?" he enquired, still smiling.

"No, I did not," I replied.

"Every drop of Mrs. Jessop's County Down blood is stirred about it. Mr. and Mrs. Jessop, who are distant cousins, you know, claim descent from men who died for the faith in Scotland long ago. Their branch of the Jessops went over to County Down under the banner of the blue, and stood true to the Presbyterian form of doctrine through dark days in Kilinchy, the days of the bloody rebellion. She believes so firmly in the faith as held by these men that she thinks soul liberty is the liberty to think as she does. Robert tells her to rejoice that Richard is a believer in Christ, but she moans over him leaving the faith of his fathers. I cannot understand this. Salvation seems so great to me that if one I loved found it and kept it I would bid him Godspeed. Though I do not think I will ever come to see eye to eye with Minister McGillivray."

Arrived at Mount Pleasant I presented Mr. McGillivray's note to Mr. Twisdon, and he grew very angry.

"I do not," he said, "need to be taught the requirements of the school law by any low, ignorant country preacher. Your order, I have told you already, is informal; you must get another properly drawn up, dated and signed, before I pay you one red cent of the Government Grant."

I turned away and met Mr. McAlpine at the door, where he was waiting for me. I told him I was again unsuccessful. His face flushed; he took the order from my hand and went in without the formality of knocking, telling me to follow him. His first words were:

"I say, Twisdon, what do you mean? This order is correct."

"Are you coming here to teach me my business? I did not think, upstart though you are, you were such a jackass."

"Please to keep to the point. My being an upstart or a jackass has nothing to do with it. This order is quite correct, and I advise you as a friend to cash it at once," said Mr. McAlpine calmly.

Very high words passed between the gentlemen. Mr. Twisdon was very abusive. Scoundrel, jackanapes, ignoramus, were titles he applied to Mr. McAlpine very freely. Mr. McAlpine was cool and excessively polite, for he grew polite in proportion as the other gentleman became abusive, but I never before knew how angry a blue eye could look. I was afraid he would lay violent hands on the honorable gentleman.

Finally Mr. Twisdon simmered down and paid the money, and took my receipt, saying, by way of getting out of the unpleasant position he felt himself to be in, "Mr. McAlpine has undertaken to hold me free from loss."

I was not long in making my purchases, as Mr. McAlpine declared his intention of taking me home. When I demurred he assured me that his

business took him all over, and he was at home any where. He would stay at the tavern at the Corners all night, and go to hear the young preacher on the morrow, and go back with the Jessops.

"I am only too glad to get the ride home," I said, "but I dislike being troublesome."

"You are not troublesome. My black horse is strong and enjoys a run. Besides, when I was a little lad after my father died, I walked over this very road both tired and hungry. I vowed a vow to God then that if ever I owned a horse and a conveyance of any kind I would never pass a wayfarer, if it was in my power to give him a lift."

"You will not hear the young minister," I said, "for all your kindness, for he is too ill to preach. He was taken ill in meeting last night and there will be no preaching for him for some time yet; but there is to be service at the Corners to-morrow; a stranger is to preach."

After we had driven some time in silence he asked me if I had got any more light on the subject we talked about on the veranda at Jessop's at sacrament time.

"I have been brought to acknowledge my own sinfulness in a greater degree; I know that all are alike sinners before God, but I have got no nearer to Him. Walter has gone into the kingdom without any perceptible struggle, and I stay in the same place seeking and not finding," I said.

"Richard Jessop like Walter seems to have stepped into the liberty of the Gospel at one stride, I do not understand how these things can be?" said Mr. McAlpine. "And it is a reality with them both. They have something which I have not."

"There is still the promise, 'Seek and ye shall find,' that must be true for ever," I said, out of my own despondency of heart.

"I will remember and seek more earnestly, seek till I do find," he said, as with a warm shake hands he left me at Morrison's gate.

I felt glad to get back to my school again. In school I was a queen reigning by right divine of love and care, but getting money from Mr. Twisdon made me feel a poor discrowned monarch asking from charity a pittance of what was mine by right. I heard of another teacher in the lower end of Gledbury where it joins the Badenoch settlement, who had walked all of fourteen miles through heavy roads to Mount Pleasant three times before Mr. Twisdon could be got to pay her the money she had earned. How much better it had been with me. How dreadfully such men can act when they are dressed in a little brief authority! I took up my duties again thankful that I was back to my little empire where I felt at home.

When I went up to Squire McPherson's to enquire for the young minister they told me that the strange news of Donald Monroe having prayed in meeting had flashed from house to house round the three settlements.

When the squire went home he gave solemn thanks that his adversary was coming to his right mind. I enquired how Donald's wife received the news? She did not believe it, they told me, but shook her frilled head and said, "Its one of his clever schemes to get me home, Och, he's the cunning one!"

The young preacher lay at the Squire's very ill, waited on by the Squire's lady, who believed herself honored by having the privilege of ministering to him.

The children, who loved him so dearly, carried up to the Squire's house offerings of chickens, of maple syrup, of ripe apples from their choicest trees, of every thing they had which they thought he might like in such profusion as would have sufficed for a dozen men.

A Bible class was begun by the

Squire, and all who cared for the truths which had been so plainly brought before them came to search the Scriptures together.

I heard often of Donald Monroe being in great trouble of mind and getting no relief. I understood well enough that he was in the Slough of Despond and could get no relief until help came and lifted him out. His wife persisted in declaring that it was all a trick to get her home, but when some weeks had melted away into the the past her secret curiosity led her home to see for herself. Two or three weeks passed and still she did not return so a reconciliation was inferred.

Meanwhile, the young minister was recovering slowly and the Bible class went on and increased; I was one of those who attended regularly. The rejoicing of those who had found peace woke again my determination to go up and ask counsel from the young minister. I wanted to know why I was passed over and left out. Why did he not hear and answer my prayers? I felt my heart hardening which was worst of all. I sat dry eyed while others were weeping around me; I was silent while others praised him, yet surely I was as deserving of mercy as they were. I who had never defiled my tongue with an oath, I who had kept his law, not perfectly, no one could do that,—but better than those who found him so easily.

I shrank from speaking of my inmost feelings to this strange young minister, but I was driven to do it. I could not endure my thoughts any longer.

I found him alone in the sitting room, in an easy chair. He looked pale and weak. He was reading his Hebrew Psalter. After saluting him and asking after his health I was silent, and so was he. He never dreamed that I had come on purpose to speak to him. I knew that some of the family would come in soon, and that then I would lose the opportunity that God had given me, for I could not speak to him before anyone. I rose and moved round till I got to the back of his chair, and then standing close by him I said, abruptly:

"Why does God pass me by, when he is blessing others? Is it election?"

He wheeled round quickly, and lifted his dark eyes to mine—eyes that seemed to have the faculty of looking through me. Blessed be his memory! and blessed be his Lord! he never tried to put me off, or soothe me into self-complacency, but spoke direct to the point.

"No, it is not election. These others have less to lay down. You want Christ's righteousness to cover or piece out your own. You will never get it. This righteousness, wrought out when it pleased the Lord to bruise him, is too precious to be added to any web of your own spinning. You must throw away all you have and take it as a free gift, or you will not get it at all. You are a sinner and you must be saved in the way He saves sinners. You will not get salvation and the world. Salvation and your own goodness will not mingle. Let go of every thing else, and lay hold of Jesus, and Jesus only. He will give to you eternal life, and add to that all you really need. He adds to the salvation he gives, *all things*."

I slipped away without another word. I walked up the lane, thinking,—thinking,—seeing nothing clearly. And I sat down on the frozen bank under the elm tree to consider what I had that I could give up that was keeping me back from God. I was willing to give up my sins and my sorrows that He might forgive the one and heal the other, but my goodness was so much a part of myself that I never thought of it as of something I could part with. It was I myself, my better self I would have said. I wanted my fellow mortals

to take me at my best; I wanted my Lord to do the same. I did not think this clearly or consciously, it lay deep down in my soul underlying my conscious thoughts. Consciously I thought, what had I that was standing between me and God?

I owned nothing of my very own in the world but a few books. Harmless enough I thought them, and they were my only companions in lonely hours. Most of them were gifts. Miss Porter's Novels, a gift from dear harumscarum Marion Lindsay. Allen Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd, Scott's Epic, bound separately in roan and gilt, and Moore's Lalla Rookh. These were all the bewitching books I had, the rest were instruction. I was very fond of them; they were my only treasures. Was I called upon to give them up? Did I love them better than Christ? Certainly, I was better acquainted with them.

I thought of Abraham who did not withold his only son Isaac, and I determined to sacrifice them, and see if I could find peace. I got up and went home briskly, went to my trunk and took out my treasure. What was to be done must be done quickly, or I would not have the courage to do it.

I looked tenderly at Marmion,—my favorite among them all,—remembered with a thrill of guilty pleasure that I could repeat it, introductions and all, from beginning to end, and that there were passages through them all that would cling to me forever.

I hastened, because the kitchen was empty, and with averted eyes thrust them into the cookstove. The cookstove went off with a roar; the flames surged up the pipe and made it red hot almost immediately. I was frightened, for the stove quivered and panted and struggled, as if it intended to lift its iron paws and rush out doors. Mrs. Morrison ran in, her turban on end with excitement. What in the world are you about? Do you mean to burn us out? The chimney is on fire. Energetic Mrs. Morrison soon put out the blaze, and afterwards said to me, "Who would have thought you could or would make such a fire? You came near making a burnt offering of us all. She did not know how near to the truth was her random remark. I had made a burnt offering, but I heard no voice, neither was there any that regarded.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"'Tis He, the Lamb, to Him we fly
While the dread tempest passes by;
God sees His well beloved's face,
And spares us in our hiding-place."
H. K. WHITE.

My burnt-offering brought me no peace, only a sense of failure. I listened eagerly for any word from Donald Monroe, for he and I seemed to belong to those to whom the Lord had forgotten to be gracious. His wife came down to the Squire's and acknowledged that the tale was true. Donald was really another man. The grim taunt, the contemptuous neglect that had so irritated her, had passed entirely away.

"He is as kind as husband can be," she said; "as tender of me as in the short wooing time, but in sore trouble. He rises in the night to pray; he settles to no work, but wanders about seeking rest and finding none."

She could not understand his anguish: he had broken off from all open sin; he would not be provoked,—she confessed to having tried just a little. His goodness and unrest alarmed her; the quantity and quality of religion which she had, ought to be enough for Donald; that it was not, made her fear for his reason. His companions, who feared, admired and loved him, found the relish gone out of their roistering, rollicking life. Donald's fiddle, his songs, so readily produced to commemorate every laughable incident, his wit, that cut and flashed like a Highland broadsword, his manliness and

sense of honor, all these qualities made him so much the more missed from among them. He left such a blank that they felt some effort must be made to get him back.

So Donald, who was the son of Donald, who was the son of another Donald, bethought himself of some neglected work as an excuse for a bee and a spree, to which Donald and his fiddle must be brought. "One good spree," said they, "will put the nonsense out of him." The keg was filled, a sheep slaughtered, numerous fowls lost their lives, pies and cakes were made on a grand scale, for this was to be the bee of the season, and all the harum-scarum, rattling squad were to be invited.

Donald was sitting by the fire, trying to think out the awfully solemn problem, "How can mortal man be just before God?" His wife spun beside him, thinking of him, fearing for him. She would have been glad even of a quarrel to rouse him from his gloomy musings, but he was too much absorbed to be ready to take or give offence. His fiddle in its case hung idly on the wall. The clock ticking, the birr of the wheel were the only sounds that broke the stillness. The neighboring Donald came in with a kindly good-evening, to give warning of the bee.

He had met Evander outside,—he was coming. He did not directly ask Donald to go for fear of a direct refusal; he took it for granted that he and his fiddle would be there, spoke of other bees of which Donald had been the life, spoke of the high estimation in which he was held by all Glenshie in general, and by his neighbor, this very Donald in particular. Without Mrs. Monroe's help it would have been exceedingly difficult to have carried on the conversation. Just as he left, when the door was held ready to be shut, so that an answer would have been difficult, he said, "See that you come early, Donald," and was gone.

To-morrow came, a crisp October day, radiant with sunlight; in the forest the last ripe leaves were fluttering down. But none of the gladness of the bright Indian summer had power to reach Donald, sitting in the shadow of his own thoughts. His wife gently reminded him of the bee as the morning wore away, and he showed no sign of going. He gave her a swift look out of his bright, dark eyes, started up and began to pace up and down the kitchen floor, but answered her nothing. His wife would have urged him to go, arguing to herself that anything was good that would rouse him from his gloom, but she dared not.

When evening drew on and the guests at the bee saw that he did not come, Ronald Colquhoun, the best loved companion of the by-gone days of folly, came to fetch him, determined not to return without him. He pleaded and coaxed, seeming to have no idea of failure, and Donald's wife, her fears for her husband's reason, and her love of approbation, both being excited, joined her entreaties to his.

"Donald," she said, "do not refuse a neighbor. Go among your friends and pleasure them and enjoy yourself. You were always a good neighbor, and well liked, and Ronald has been a good neighbor to you; do not refuse him."

She lifted down the fiddle and laid it in its green baize case across his knee. "Here," she said, "you'll be late."

Donald stripped the fiddle of its case and laid his hand on it with a caressing movement. "Mary," he said, "I made that fiddle in Glenelg, across the sea, when my heart was glad and my foot light on the heather; she has been companion and friend to me for many a year. Have you not?" he said, addressing the fiddle. "You told my story for me when I courted the mother of my boys; you sung the praises of Mary when she was the fairest brown-haired girl on the Scottish hills; you sounded the lament when I

left the graves of my people for the new country; you have been my companion through long years of folly and sin. How often have I said that you were dearer than any wife or sweetheart to me! But, *mo runsa*, I have set my foot on a road where there is no turning back. I thought to take you with me and teach you a new song, even to sound the praises of Everlasting Love, but you will not be the means of turning me back to the husks I have left. I could give up dearer than you are for Him who loved me." He took the fiddle, broke it across his knee, and put it in the fire. As it blazed, he turned to his friend. "Ronald Colquhoun," he said solemnly, "I love you better now than I ever did through all the years when we enjoyed the pleasures of sin together. I will be true until death to my Captain, who has called me to follow Him. You have to face death and judgment as well as I have, let your own soul be precious in your sight, and come with me instead of trying to turn me back."

This was Donald's first effort to say, "Come." The fiddle was in ashes, and Ronald Colquhoun, convinced that his mission was a failure, left silently, with new thoughts stirring in his soul. Donald turned to his wife. "Mary," he said, tenderly, "a few weeks ago you lay at my feet; it was God's mercy that saved me from blood-guiltiness that day. Do not try to turn me back to what I was when you had to fly for your life from your husband's hearth."

He rose without another word, went into the room and shut the door. When he came out again, his face shone; a new light was in his eye,—he had found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth. I heard of this, and it dawned upon me that there was a difference between Donald's burnt offering and mine. I had given up my books, that I loved dearly, to purchase favor, I am afraid. Donald burned his fiddle lest it might become a snare to him. There came to me a sense of my own belief in my goodness, and a desire to take my own place honestly before God as a sinner, vile and unworthy in His sight. I went to the next meeting with a feeling of despair, saying, I am a sinner, lost! lost! My pride of godly descent, my pride of education in the Word, my pride of my prayers, of my endeavors after God, came up before me as abominable things that God hated. My goodness and myself had come to open war.

I listened to the sermon without hearing it, for I was lost, shut out with my own self-righteousness as my portion forever. I do not know what the text was, but in the course of the sermon I was arrested by a truth I had heard often, oh so often before:

"Let go your own goodness,—it is but filthy rags in His sight. Lay hold of Christ by His promises. Cast yourself on Him. You are sinful. He is a mighty Saviour. He speaks in Righteousness, and says He is mighty to save. You are unworthy; worthy is the Lamb. I entreat you by the mercies of God to lay hold on Him as the culprit did on the horns of the altar. The altar sanctifieth the gift."

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth." I do not know how it was, but I did see how my unworthiness might be covered by the skirt of His garment who is worthy; how the altar sanctified the gift. I got up and went home dumb with gladness. I was afraid of being overtaken by my companions. I could not speak to them just then lest the joy of my soul should find wings in words and flee away from me. I did not feel the frosty air as I walked rapidly over the three miles that lay between the place of meeting that night and my home at Morrison's. I stopped a little while beneath the great elm tree in the lane,

stopped there to try to realize what had come to me. Was it really true that I could now say "Whereas, I was blind now I see"? The great elm seemed like a friend to me, I had so often sat under its shadow when my thoughts troubled me. I had stayed there again and again to feel after Him for whom my soul hungered. Under its branches Walter told me of his new-found peace. I saw the whole world filled with glory. A new light that was not of the sun, nor of the moon, illuminated everything. I looked up through the elm branches to the Heaven above me that seemed so near, and said aloud "My Lord and my God!—My Beloved, mine—mine!" I was an orphan no longer, nor lonely, nor desolate. I had a place in the universe, the place His hand assigned. I was akin to every one that He loved, that loved Him. I did not need to tell my secret,—everything on earth knew it and rejoiced with me. The moon and stars were the brighter of it; the big elm clapped his hands. The glory of the Lord was about me,—even me, and all the world was filled with breathless thanksgiving. That spot in Glenshie draws me back to it after all these years, because there did my Lord crown me with loving-kindness and tender mercies, in the day when He gave me gladness of heart. I had found a new life. School always pleasant, now became delightful. The Bible lessons were glorified, because we found Christ in every page. The friends I had parted from came nearer to me. Annie had written to me of Miss Borg's death; but death was no longer separation. She seemed nearer to me in Heaven than in Himmel-en-Erde. I grew loving in my mind to Aunt Henderson, and willing to acknowledge that my waywardness had been a great trial to her.

Time passed pleasantly till Christmas, when we had a public examination. The scholars and I made an attempt at ornamenting the school-room. With my remembrance of the Himmel-en-Erde church, in its garlands of laurel and box, holly and ivy, what could be done with spruce and balsam seemed a failure; but the children were proud of it. I got praise enough to make me vain, and a re-engagement at much higher wages.

I was over at Mr. Jessop's for New Year's day, so was Walter. Since Mr. Jessop had succeeded in establishing a relationship between us, however shadowy, the whole family claimed a right to us, which was pleasant for Walter and me.

Walter was to be, during next year, farther away from me. He was to teach near Deerfield, and study Greek and Latin after hours with the grammar school teacher there. It was best for him, but it was a hard trial for me. Walter is so independent, and he is also so popular, has such a talent for adapting himself to others, that he is at home wherever he is, and does not feel the useless regrets and longings that I do. He felt already adopted into the country, and Ireland is a name to him and no more. He teased me about my adhesiveness to the old sod, as he irreverently called it.

"If more came out of the crowded little island there would be less to feed, and famine would not be possible," said Richard Jessop one evening.

"You might have a famine in Canada; it is not impossible, if God so willed it," I said.

"Of course famine would be impossible in Canada;" said Mr. McAlpine, who was present.

"I do not like to hear you say that. It is like defying your Maker," I said.

"Not so," said Mr. McAlpine. "There are always natural causes for these great calamities. We produce too much in proportion to our population to be in any danger of famine."

"In the old country," said Richard

Jessop," the rich are so rich, and the poor are so poor, that very little scarcity makes the poor starve. We have no poor here."

"No poor!" said I, laughing,—"that is a little too good. What do you call the people over the river in that little shanty whom I saw the first day I came here? Are not they poor?"

"Not poor in the sense in which old country people are poor?"

"She is speaking of Jack Somers, mother," said Richard, turning to Mrs. Jessop,—"you would not call him poor."

"Certainly not," said Mrs. Jessop; "not poor in the sense in which old country people are poor."

"You see, Miss Ray," said Robert, "he is paying for his place. To accomplish that he works hard and lives roughly; but his shanty is his own,—no man can put him out for the rent. When he has his place paid for, it, and what he raises on it, will be his own for ever, to be used for his own comfort. By and by he will have a new house, and will count as necessaries of life, luxuries about which an old country laborer dare not dream."

"That's true," said Walter. "There was John Fe. is that managed uncle's fields, he was in steady work and better off than most. It seemed to take all he could make to pay his rent. He always kept a pig; when it was fat it was sold for the rent. Happy were his family if they could keep any of the worst bits of it for themselves. The butter from his cow, the eggs from the poultry—all were sold to help to make up that dreadful rent."

"That rent was a terror," said old Mr. Jessop; "it swallowed up everything. When we came here first we had hardships, but there was hope to enable us to endure it. See that big maple tree beyond the verandah. We set up a tent under it when we came here first. We slept on a bed of balsam boughs till I put up my first shanty. Mother and I knew what hardship meant in those days. I had to saw with the whip-saw all the lumber for our first house. It was a week's journey to take a grist to mill. You may think what a blessing our mills were to the settlers that came in after us. We had hard struggles with circumstances, but when we hewed out prosperity, it was our own, not a landlord's."

"And do you never wish to return to the old country?" I asked, for I was often home-sick secretly.

"No, not much. The old country is a pleasant remembrance to us. We have an obligation on us to live worthy of the land we came from, and the people who have gone before us, that is all."

"It is pleasant and strengthening," said Mrs. Jessop, "to remember that we are by both sides descended from men valiant for the truth, who stood for Kirk and Covenant, Our forefathers two hundred years ago, as McComb sings, planted the banner of the cross in County Down, and suffered for the faith when godly Mr. Livingstone ministered in Kilinchy; but Richard has forsaken all that now."

Mr. McAlpine looked with a sly smile at me. "I have not forsaken, I have imitated these great men, mother. They followed, at all hazards, what they thought right; I have, in a smaller way, done the same," said Richard solemnly.

I noticed during this visit to Mr. Jessop's that Mr. McAlpine was much taken up with Amelia Marston, and no wonder, for she is a good, sweet girl, and very, very pretty.

I felt parting with Walter very much. He had to go away to his new place, for some reason, before the schools took up again. Deerfield was eighteen miles away, so it was not likely I would see him often. I was ashamed of the trouble I had given to the Jessops, and I slipped away when Richard was at

Mount Pleasant, and walked back to Morrison's by myself. I was getting to be a good walker. I returned to my school with a determination to live for my scholars more devotedly than I had done. I was not satisfied with the education which most young farmers possessed after spending years at school. I determined to lay down a plan for myself over and above the routine we were accustomed to follow. They were learning to read understandingly,—I hoped they would always take pleasure in good books. In addition to this, I wished to make sure that every one of them should be able to express their thoughts with some readiness on paper so as to be able to write a decent letter, fold and seal it properly —envelopes had not penetrated to the backwoods at this time; to drill them in mental arithmetic so that they could make up small accounts readily in their minds, to have them write accounts out neatly, and to know the geography of their own country, including routes of travel, as correctly as possible. Humble enough acquirements, yet many left school without them, who could follow the hat of plums through a summer's day of tossing and scrambling, and divide the seventeen camels successfully without any cutting up.

To carry out my little plans a long time was necessary, and I made up my mind to stay in Glenshie, Providence permitting, long enough to see the result of my labor. Pleasure mingled with labor, and one of my greatest pleasures was to see Donald Monroe at prayer-meeting, and to hear his voice in prayer and praise. It was a great pleasure and joy also that the young minister, in recovered health, labored in the Highland settlements for many months yet, with what result will be better known another day. Those who had professed religion that winter formed a band of brethren and sisters, meeting often to speak of Him, the Saviour, who had had mercy on them. The time came when the young preacher went away, called to carry the message to the distant heathen. As he was loved with no common love, so he was mourned with no common sorrow. I am afraid that his grey maud was none the better for the night of parting, for I noticed that my scholars —I had eighty-five on the roll now— had each a twist of the fringe laid in their Bibles as a keepsake. I had wondered at the last meeting what my dark-eyed Katie and my blue-eyed Annie were about, whispering and fingering at something by the desk where the maud was thrown; I know now that they were demolishing the fringe. I wonder if he ever noticed it, or noticing it ever suspected the cause, or did mice get the blame? He left Canada behind forever, and we heard that he had sailed as a missionary to distant China. I felt as if something had gone out of my life, I missed him so much, and yet I did not feel separated from him. It was only a lengthening of the cords that bound us together. There is pain in this, but when every cord is anchored in the same place within the vail, there is no real separation. Personally I was not much acquainted with him. I never had any conversation with him but that once up at Squire McPherson's; nevertheless, I was akin to him, and loved him dearly because he could say, "The seal of my apostleship are you in the Lord." If he lives he is no stripling now; grey mingles with his locks. Does he ever think of Glenshie, or the work God gave him to do there, and the blessing that rested on his labors?

I saw Walter only two or three times all that summer. It was almost as dreary as if the Atlantic Ocean lay between us. Walter thought me a little unreasonable and exacting in my love for him, and perhaps I was; but I did crave to see him oftener, and longed for a home where we should be together, as had been planned in our

castle-building many and many a time. Somehow this castle of ours seemed more airy as the time went on, and less likely to drop from cloudland down to earth.

The second summer in Canada had ripened into autumn, the maples were flaming in crimson, and every color and tint of yellow was lit up by sunlight into glory in the autumn woods. This lovely time, so peculiar to this clear-skyed Canada, seems to me like the sabbath of the year,—it is so still, so restful, and so glorious.

One evening when I came home from school there was an ominous stillness about the house. I was a little later than usual, for as I was leaving school, a young girl came to have me cut the waist of a dress for her. Mr. Morrison had gone to a spree with his fiddle, as a substitute for Donald Monroe; the rest were out engaged in some harvest work; only Fergus, the youngest curly-head, was in the house. He was a born carpenter, and was always tinkering at something in that line. Neil, the eldest boy, complained that he spoiled the tools. It was altogether likely that he had avoided helping in the harvest work to be able to finish something on which his heart was set. He had, when he found himself alone, climbed up to where the draw-knife hung, which he was specially forbidden to touch, and took it down. He was hurrying to get what he purposed to do done before some one came. He held the piece of wood against himself as he sat on the floor; drawing the knife towards him, the edge met some slight obstruction, he put out more strength to overcome it, the wood slipped aside—and Fergus himself received the edge of the knife. Some presentiment caused me to hurry in, not waiting to speak to Mr. McAlpine, who was riding across the little bridge. I found Fergus on the floor, the bloody draw-knife beside him. He had imitated a Japanese custom too successfully. I was thankful for Mr. McAlpine's shadow crossing the threshold. We lifted him up and laid him on the bed; I ran to call his mother, while Mr. McAlpine was on his horse in a flash, and galloped off for the doctor. It was an anxious time till the doctor came, and then only Mrs. Morrison had nerve enough to hold the candle while the wound was examined and dressed.

"Will he live?" I said waylaying the doctor, when he came out after a time that seemed hours to our anxiety.

"Of course he will live," said the old doctor. "We will not let the little hero die if we can help it." The child had never uttered a groan all the time.

Mr. McAlpine sat up all night with Fergus to carry out the doctor's directions, who went to take some hours sleep because he had been up the night before. There was no sleep for any of us that night, we were in such a state of tumultuous thanksgiving for the danger having passed.

I devoted a good deal of my time out of school to amusing the little sufferer. He was a very patient little fellow, and amused himself, when he began to recover, with his lesson book. Whenever I came from school he would say "Read to me, Miss Ray, about Harry's cake stuffed full of plums and sweetmeats, orange and citron. What is an orange like?" The child had never seen an orange.

It was quite natural for Mr. McAlpine to come to see him when he was passing, and to bring him little niceties to tempt his appetite. I was glad when he came one evening and brought some fine oranges; a box had come to Mount Pleasant, and he had secured some. It was delightful to see how Fergus enjoyed them. It is wonderful how some children almost leap back into health. It was not a great while till Fergus was back to school again, a trifle paler and thinner, a trifle more easily managed, and a great deal fonder

of me. There was one thing about his illness that annoyed me greatly. The people would not attribute Mr. McAlpine's visits to Fergus's accident, but began to couple his name with mine in a way that troubled me. I was afraid that he might hear and resent this idle talk. Perhaps he did, for his calls ceased altogether a short time after Fergus recovered.

I did not seem to enjoy life as I had done. The school was very large,—the average attendance was over seventy. Sometimes I thought I was very weary, and came home with dragging step. I scolded myself for being ungrateful; reminded myself of the privilege of being independent, of being at liberty to plan my own work, of the measure of success which God had given me, and the changed relation in which I stood to Him. I found it difficult work to keep my eyes on my mercies as much as I should have done. It was at this time that my dear brother and distant relative, Robert Jessop, died peacefully, and I missed his face and his voice very much when I went over to Jessop's mill.

The day's work began to be very heavy, and I was troubled for fear I was going to be ill.

CHAPTER XXV.

Here we go a galloping, galloping.
OLD SONG.

It was a little before this time that the Superintendent or Inspector (the little man who had attempted to teach the boys that wonderful bow) absconded with the teachers' money, and of course we could not get our wages without as much trouble as if we were the guilty parties.

I had to travel all the way to the county-town, fifty miles away, to prove that I was myself, and to sign any amount of documents. The question was how to get there, for I had no money; I had not the faculty of keeping it, and if I had any money there was no stage. Mrs. Morrison advised me to take a horse and ride to Mr. McAlpine's, which was more than half way, ride into the county-town next day, sign the papers and return to McAlpine's the same day, and come home the next; that would be three days' journey. I would have much preferred going in some conveyance with a boy to drive, but Morrison's light cart was broken, and the only other one-horse conveyance in Glenshie had gone with its owner to the front.

"You have learned to ride well," said Mrs. Morrison; "suppose you borrow Colin McDermid's saddle-horse and ride there? I will lend you my saddle, so that you will be as comfortable in it as if you were sitting in a rocking-chair."

I was in high favor when I was offered the side-saddle. She had refused the loan of it the week before to Ronald McPhee when he went to bring home his bride, telling him that the regulation backwoods saddle, a piece of home-made blanket, was good enough for any bride he would bring home.

I had to accept this offer or lose my money, which I could not afford to do, especially as I feared that my health was giving way. I had been learning to ride on horseback since I came to Glenshie. Mrs. Morrison had during the first summer kindly dedicated to my use a colt of thirty years, a great trotter in his day. I would not like to tell of the distances he had travelled from sunrise to sunset, for fear of seeming to exaggerate; but age had done for him what it could not do for the Douglasses, cooled his blood, so that he was not likely to run away with the *bhean sgoilear*. Many a ride had I taken with him through the gay, green wood, along bush-bordered roads. He sometimes threw me off, but always waited politely till I picked myself up, and allowed me to mount and try again. I got so well

acquainted with this elderly colt in the course of time that I knew very well what he would be likely to do under any circumstances. I would have felt quite safe to travel in easy stages to the county-town mounted on him, but he had mired in the back-clearing in the spring, and not having strength to get out, had ended his long and useful life there. On the appointed day I started on my long ride with a horse that was a stranger to me. He was a pretty cream-colored animal, in good condition, and not so badly groomed considering everything. Indeed, Colin McDermid had the name of taking more care of his horses than of his wife. It was a pleasant day overhead, but the roads were muddy from recent rains. I got along pretty well at first, although I wondered at Mrs. Morrison giving him the character of a good saddle-horse, for he was not, but lifted his knees to his mouth and went almost as awkwardly as an ox. I rode through a long stretch of hardwood bush, then through a cedar-swamp, and came to a tavern at a cross road. Here my horse stopped and no persuasion of mine could take him past. He tossed his head and snorted in reply to urgent hints, given by jerking the bridle, and when I struck him with the whip he lifted his feet pretending to rear, but always subsided into the same place with a determination to stay there. The tavern-keeper came to my help. "This is Colin McDermid's beast," he said; "he is accustomed to stop here, and is not willing to pass. You are the school-mistress, I suppose? Where are you going?"

"To the town, if my horse will let me," I answered.

"Not all in one day, surely?"

"Oh, no; I will stop with a friend by the way."

I had become accustomed to free questioning since I came to live in the country; I did not resent it. I knew it was not rudeness but interest that dictated the questions, and I had really nothing to conceal.

"Colin should have given you the other horse, the one his own girls ride, instead of that ill-willy brute."

He took the horse by the bridle and led him past the stopping-place, and most unwilling to move he was; then, with good wishes for my safety to my journey's end, he left me. I suppose I had journeyed ten miles when I came to a village by a river where there were large mills. This I knew by description to be the village of Glendalough. The moment I crossed the little bridge at the entrance of the village, my horse began to act strangely. He put his nose down to the ground, as if he had lost a needle and was looking for it. He humped up his shoulders as I have seen naughty, self-willed children do, and in this funny way, never heeding the bridle any more than if it had been a rein of worsted, he darted down a by-way and came to a dead stop before a most disreputable-looking tavern. From within came the sounds of revelry on the edge of a quarrel. My wilful steed stopped close to the doorway as if wanting me to alight. It was no use for me to try to coax or compel him to stir; there he stood as firm as the rock of Cashel. In a little while a man, whose appearance matched the house, came to the door, and before he looked who was there enquired with an oath what I meant by stopping up the way.

"Nay, friend," I said, "you must ask the horse, which has brought me here much against my will."

The man actually took off his battered hat. "I beg your pardon, Miss, I did not look. It is Colin McDermid's beast, and he is used to stopping here," he said. Then raising his voice he called inside, "Here Colin! Come out here, you rascal!" "It is an everlasting shame, Miss, to lend you an obstinate brute like that," he said to me.

Colin, with red eyes and inflamed face, appeared at the door.

"I think, Mr. McDermid," I said, "that it will be as well for me to turn home again, for I cannot manage this horse of yours."

"Oh! don't turn back, Miss Ray, when you've come so far. I'll send the boy to lead him past the village, and then he will be on a strange road and go first-rate," said Colin. "Let him out into a gallop and you will find he goes well. He's a hard trotter, but in a canter or gallop he goes as easy, bless you, as a rocking-chair. I'm glad I happened to be here on a little business about oats when you came up."

I was provoked into saying, "Oats, Mr. McDermid? See that it's not barley bree."

"Ian! Ian!" he called, willing to change the subject. When Ian appeared he gave his orders to him in Gaelic, which I was beginning slightly to understand. Ian was to lead the horse quite through the village and up the long hill to where the road turned, and then leave me to go on by myself. Ian, who was encumbered with a pair of boots belonging to a bigger brother, and a pair of trousers of the same, made to fit him by the simple process of cutting off the superfluous length, and an old straw hat with half a rim, took the bridle obedient to orders, but the horse refused to stir. His master gave him a sharp cut with a switch, when he threw up his heels and started slowly, the boy dragging at the bridle with all his might. I did not look to the right hand or to the left, but I felt as if every pair of eyes in the village were looking after me. Ian shuffled along, holding up his nether habiliments with one hand and the bridle with the other; the horse with his head down, pulling backwards like an unwilling mule, and I sitting on the saddle as if I were doing penance.

In this way we got through the village and up the hill to the turn of the road, where Ian gladly gave me the bridle and left me. The horse stood still, looking after him down the long descent. I gathered up the bridle in a manner that I intended should show him that he might as well behave, for I was going to be mistress. I gave him the whip, determined to push him into a gallop and perhaps he would not have leisure for any more tricks. The moment he felt the whip he wheeled round with the bit in his teeth and galloped down the long slope and through the village of Glendalough and back by the way we came, along the bush road—on,—on. He did gallop easily, if he had been galloping in the right direction. We swept along, my long skirt streaming in the wind, all my attention taken up with keeping my seat. As we passed the tavern where we had halted in the morning, I thought he would stop and give me time to breathe, but he shot past like an arrow, and soon after I heard the clatter of hoofs behind me. At this my horse laid himself down to his work and galloped as if we carried despatches. The horse behind was determined to overtake us, and he came on at a long, swinging gallop. The sound of his hoofs made my horse redouble his efforts; but in spite of him the other horse overhauled us, and we galloped neck and neck, as if we were racing for a wager, I holding on breathlessly. After a while both horses slackened speed, and I began to breathe freely. I saw my companion was the old doctor from Mount Pleasant, mounted on a strong black horse.

"You are a daring rider, Miss Ray. Few women could ride at that pace for so long."

"'I came because my horse would come,'" I quoted, and then told him of my adventures.

"Bless my heart! You do not say so?" and he laughed loud and long.

"I have as little wish to be ridiculous as any one, Doctor, but when we cannot master a situation, we must give in.

That dishonest treasurer has a good deal to answer for."

"Yes. He should be whipped to death by the teachers of the three counties."

When he had his laugh out, he said: "It was what you would call a providence that we met to day. I have to go to town anyway this week. I will go to-morrow. I can drive through in a day, and I will take you with me. It will be less fatiguing for you than riding on horseback, though you do ride as well as Paul Dempsey."

I did not know who Paul Dempsey was, but I did know that I was thankful for the opportunity of getting my journey made in the company of the old doctor.

Mrs. Morrison's surprise when I appeared back again may be imagined, and I pity Colin McDermid, for he did get a dressing the first time she saw him.

I had a pleasant journey in the doctor's buggy to the town, got my business done and returned home again, to wait for my money till a great many round-about performances had been gone through. I do think still, as I thought then, that it was a little hard, all the inconvenience we were made to suffer for Mr. Maulyer's fault. One thing surprised me greatly, when I saw the teachers of three counties assembled, to see among them men wearing the unmistakable traces of dissipation. I wondered that parents would trust their children, their dearest treasures, into the care of men who had fallen below self-respect. And yet people do, or did in those bygone days, trust their children to the care of men with whom they would hesitate to trust their horses.

On my way to and from town the old doctor advised me to give up teaching for a while. He said I was overworking, and would break down entirely if I did not take care. I told him I was perfectly well, only a little tired, and could not afford to rest, and my trip to town was both rest and recreation. But when the summer was over and the cold weather closed in, my daily work grew heavy to me. The stove heat made my head ache; the close atmosphere of the school-house, so many children in such a small room, was oppressive. I wilted down and became paler and thinner every day. I felt more depressed than I had done since I knew that Jesus was mine and I was His.

One day I was going to school in the beginning of winter. The wind was cold and stinging; the snow was drifting like smoke, and the walking was very heavy. I felt cold to my very heart. As I came to the end of our lane, a fine sleigh drawn by a splendid team of black horses in silver-mounted harness swept past. I knew by the pine tree on the back of the sleigh, even if I had not known the poise of his head above it, that it was Mr. McAlpine. He had three ladies in the sleigh with him. He noticed me and stopped the sleigh till I came up, and invited me to take a seat with them. I told him that I preferred walking, and that his sleigh was already fairly loaded, but he insisted so earnestly, seconded by the ladies, that it would have been ungracious to refuse, and I took a seat among the ladies. There were his sister Donalda, Miss Eiver Cameron, and Miss Twisdon. I had met with Donalda McAlpine before, but not with the others. They were returning from a merry-making beyond Glendalough. The ball had been kept up till morning, and Mr. McAlpine was taking the ladies to their respective homes. They came into the school-house to warm themselves, they said, and Mr. McAlpine left them with me, while he went to a house near by on some business. There was a good fire in the school, for one of the boys always came early to have the house warm for me. I got a good many

compliments from the ladies about my school, my talents, my independence.

"I wish it were possible for me to change places with you," said Miss Eiver Cameron, with a pretty little shrug of her shoulders: "I am such a very helpless person, so inefficient." She said this as if helplessness and inefficiency were a mark of distinction, like her seal jacket, or the jewellery which she wore in such barbaric profusion.

"How do you manage, my dear Miss Ray, to please every one, and have them praise you so? It must be a delightful life," she went on.

Her words were smooth and complimentary, but there was a triumphant insolence in her manner that was a little trying.

"You cannot judge how delightful my life as a school-teacher is until you try it for yourself. You might be a great success as a teacher and find the life quite desirable," I said.

"Mercy no! What a failure I would be! I have not your talents or strength of mind. All my energies go in the direction of spending money,—I have a talent in that line."

"So have I," said Miss Twisdon; "I believe I would be equal to spending a million."

They then began to talk among themselves of the last night's gaieties, of the admirers who were ever so nice, of others who were perfect idiots, of the young ladies who were ill-dressed, over-dressed, odious, and frights. Donalda McAlpine ran on about a magnificent ball she was to attend in Montreal. "It is the Highland Society ball, Miss Ray," she said to me, politely wishing to draw me into the conversation. "Miss Cameron and I are to appear in velvet dresses of the clan tartan. Ronald has bought mine; it cost an immensity. He gave me a set of cairngorm jewellery to match. The shoulder-clasp for my plaid is something exquisite, and cost oh! ever so much. Is it not lovely, Eiver?"

"Yes, it is simply gorgeous, as much so as cairngorms can be. Ronald may well give you things. He is getting to be immensely wealthy. He made a fortune out of that last timber of his," replied Miss Cameron. I had thought he was doing well; the sleigh and robes and everything about the whole turn-out spoke of recent and lavish expenditure.

He soon came back and took the ladies away; I wondered as I saw the tender courtesy he bestowed on Miss Twisdon, if he remembered his wholesale denunciation of the family to me on the way home from Mount Pleasant. Well, he could not help being polite to a young lady under his care. Angus McErracher, the only scholar yet arrived, told me that Mr. McAlpine and Miss Cameron were to be married soon; "she is counted a great beauty," he said. She did not strike me as a great beauty. She was stylish-looking, with fine eyes, which she spoiled by trying to make them so very effective. She was just a rather brilliant-looking brunette. Miss Twisdon was handsomer; a tall, well-featured blonde with a mass of flossy golden hair puffed and frizzled above her forehead. She certainly did not inherit her clear skin and golden hair from her father. Neither of them was to be compared for a moment in beauty to Amelia Marston, who was as lovely in delicate bloom as a wild rose.

"He used to go to see Miss Marston at Jessop's mills," said my communicative Angus, "but he has given her up since he made such a pile on his timber. Miss Cameron's more of a swell."

I wondered if he had also given up all desire to be a Heavenly footman, I wished him a great deal of happiness with his choice, and turned to my work again. I had a painful yearning after my brother. I thought sadly how I had crossed the sea to be near him and was

so divided from him. I am ashamed to say that I had jealous thoughts of Donald McAlpine and Eiver Cameron; and yet, oh my foolish inconsistency! I would not by any means have exchanged my life for theirs, my labor for their leisure, but I thought, as many a lonely heart has thought, "Am I to be always alone, always unsheltered, always uncared for."

Dr. Raper, the old doctor from Mount Pleasant, had some business at Morrison's, and he made a point of speaking seriously to me about giving up the school.

"I must speak frankly to you," he said, "You are breaking down very fast. And that airless hutch you sleep in is very unhealthy. You will be under my hands soon, if you go on as you are doing."

"I am heartily obliged to you, doctor, for your interest in me. I am not really ill, only a little tired. It would break my heart to part with my children," I said, resolutely.

The old doctor shook his head, and left me to my own self-will and what it would bring, he said. It would have been too hard to give up my school just then. Walter was so far away, and, having decided to give himself to the work of the ministry, between studying and teaching, his time was so fully occupied that my long letters, written frequently, because my heart ached after him, were answered by a note at long intervals. I heard incidentally that our dear young preacher had arrived in China, and had begun his labors there. I sometimes longed for the sound of his voice in counsel or reproof. Robert Jessop had gone home, my feet were weary because of the way, but it would have taken more resolution than I possessed to enable me to separate myself from the fresh young hearts of my scholars, and the company of those who came to Bible-class. What a comfort was Donald Monroe's voice in prayer-meeting. It had the trumpet tone of worshipping exultation that is in the Psalms. I felt sorry for Mr. McAlpine, the fair-faced, fair-haired, kindly young man who had been a seeker for the Kingdom, whose lumbering operations were bringing him speedy riches, but who had gone back from his aspirations after running a heavenly race for a crown of glory, and was contenting himself with a brilliant share of this world's success and the glory attending on it. He had married Eiver Cameron, and I heard of their gay doings as items of news from the high life of the backwoods.

CHAPTER XXVI.

I wished it had been God's will that I, too,
then could have died;
I began to be tired a little.

TENNYSON.

My mercies were as precious to me at this time as ever, my hope as bright, my Lord as near; but I held all these things with a nerveless grasp. Walter came to see me about this time. I had not seen him for so long, so very long, that I was wild with joy to see him. I had now been for all of three years teacher in Glenshie. During the last year I had only seen Walter twice. He came to tell me that he was going to college far away in the United States. We had to part again, perhaps for years, and perhaps forever. This was not the worst. He was changed, very much changed. When he used to come to see me he had always something to tell of leading and deliverance, of the goodness of the Master he served. I missed this now. My love for Walter was "exacting," he thought,—I suppose it was; I wanted something back, I wanted love to be paid with love; but I saw that my darling brother was slipping away from me. I was born without any catches to my fingers, and could not hold the treasure I prized most on earth, do what I would. I was jealously afraid of this; but still if he kept close to

the Master the love of Christ would constrain him to love me a little. I could not tell where the change was,—it pervaded everything. The more I felt this change the closer I kept to his side, as if my presence and nearness would dispel it. I had made some little presents for him, a pair of slippers, a purse, such other little trifles as would come useful in college, and I was delighted to see how much he appreciated them. I begged of him to write oftener to me to cheer up my solitariness, and, half-playfully, complained to him of his short notes in answer to my long, frequent letters.

"Why, Elizabeth!" he said a little testily, "do you know anything of how busy I have been? I taught a large advanced school in a village—and village children are proverbially hard to manage; it took hard study to prepare for my classes I tell you, and then I had to travel five miles after school for my Greek and Latin lessons, and sit up at night to prepare them. I had little time, I can tell you, to waste upon writing to you."

He did not mean what my exacting heart took out of his words. "I know you must have been very busy; I should have thought that it would have been a rest for you to write to me, and I should have rejoiced so much to have known how well you were getting along. But I daresay I am unreasonable," I said sadly.

"Of course you are unreasonable. It's your nature and you cannot help it, I suppose. Living here in the backwoods, away from everything, you have no idea how things rush in the world, and how one must strive to keep up, or be jostled aside and run over. You cannot see it; you are behind the age out here."

"O Walter! oh, my brother! not behind the age in loving you, in being true to you!" My heart almost cried out in its painful desire to tell him this; but I crushed it down and said calmly enough, "I daresay this is a little off the thoroughfare. Tell me about yourself and your plans."

Then Walter confided to me all his arrangements for college. He had, he said, studied so hard that he hoped to stand pretty high on entering. "I do not mean to be content with an ordinary course; I mean as a scholar to stand as high as my father did, or higher," he said resolutely. "Mr. Lane, with whom I boarded, would not hear of my paying for my board. Friends in Durfield have loaded me with presents of necessary things, so that I have almost all my salary to help me along. Uncle Tom has sent me out a box of such of my father's books as I need now, and a present of money besides. Uncle Tom's a brick, and Annie sent me a pair of worked slippers—a real fancy pair, in the box with the books. Was not that nice of her?"

"Was there any news from home in your box?" I asked.

"I had almost forgotten to tell you I had a letter from Tom; he is going to college—going to be a doctor, and Annie is going to be married at Christmas time to a minister. Won't Miss Priminie, as we used to call her, make a perfectly correct minister's wife? I am glad to hear of all sorts of success and welfare happening to them," he said heartily.

"So am I," I echoed. "They gave us a home for quite a long time, and I suppose they are all the kindred we have and they meant nothing but our good."

I waited to see if my darling brother would notice any change in me, or express any regret over the long separation that was coming between us. I could not make allowance for all he had to take up his thoughts. He was evidently very much preoccupied.

"I am going to tell you a secret," he said, blushing like a rose. He put his hand into his pocket and took out

a daguerrotype case with a shy delight. "This," he said, opening the case, "is a likeness of the daughter of one of my greatest friends. Is she not beautiful?"

I looked; it was Miss Twisdon? I recognized at once the fair face and locks of pale gold.

"Is she a Christian, Walter?" I asked, while my heart lamented over this new misfortune.

"She has made no profession yet," he answered, gazing fondly at the likeness; "but that will come all right in time. Her father is an influential friend. He has given me excellent advice. It is something for my inexperience to have found so wise and powerful a friend as the Hon Didymus Twisdon."

"Do not let earthly considerations sway your love, Walter, my brother. If you become an ambassador for Christ, think of the clog a worldly, fashionable wife will be to your usefulness; and oh, Walter! be careful, if you involve your honor, you will have to keep to your word, may be to your ruin. If you take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these are, the daughters of high life in this land, what good will my life do me?"

"It is too late for you to advise or warn, Elizabeth? I am committed to her,—I love her?"

"O Walter! oh, my brother!"

I rose from my seat, went over and pressed my lips to his forehead. I could not speak all my sympathy and all my sorrow.

"Do not give way to tragedy airs and heroics," said Walter, pulling me down beside him. "Be sensible and confess. Is she not lovely?"

"Lovely in your eyes she must be, Walter, when you have chosen her."

"Lovely in any eyes she is! Look at her clear complexion, and her hair, and her eyes. You will not see such a girl every day. And her mother is a perfect lady. I think I am very happy to be preferred by such a girl."

"I should have thought she would have selected some rich lumberman instead of one who will at best be but a poor preacher," I said.

"That is what I wonder at; but I am determined to become such a one as she will be proud of. I will bring her name and fame, if she will bring me money."

I could not tell him any of my adventures with the Hon. Mr. Twisdon. He would not listen, and what end would it serve? I sat quiet with my hand on his shoulder, making a mighty effort to keep back the tears that would anger him, I knew.

"By the way, Elma—is not that a pretty name?—told me she met with you coming up from Glendalough with the McAlpines last winter. She praised you highly. It will not be long till I get through college, and then when I have a home you will come and live with us.

"And that McAlpine is married to Eiver Cameron the belle and the beauty? Richard Jessop thought he had a fancy for you," said Walter enquiringly.

"Richard Jessop was mistaken, Walter," I said quietly.

When he stooped to kiss me good-bye—the good-bye that was to be so long—I had not, I could not say what my love of him and my fears for him made me think. I clung to him and whispered amid my tears, "O Walter, keep close to the Master. Hold Him; do not let Him go."

"No danger! There's no danger, little sister," he said, and kissed me hastily and was gone. I thought he was glad to go, glad to have the parting over, glad to enter on the brilliant career he had mapped out before him. I could not rest that night; I was warring with my love and the pain it brought. A separation, I felt, had come between my brother and me, worse than distance, worse than death—the separation of thought and purpose. I could not sleep; all my thoughts of

him and for him surged up and down in my mind till they partly shaped themselves in words, which I called

SEPARATION.

He has come, and he has gone;
  Meeting, parting both are o'er;
And I feel the same dull pain,
Aching heart and throbbing brain,
  Coming o'er me once again,
That I often felt before.

For he is my father's son,
  And in childhood's loving time,
He and I so lone, so young,
No twin blossoms ever sprung,
  No twin cherries ever clung
Closer than his heart and mine.

He is changed, ah me! ah me!
  Have we then a different aim?
Shall earth's glory or its gold
Make his heart to mine grow cold?
  Or can new love kill the old?
Leaving me for love and fame.

Oh, my brother, fair to see!
  Idol of my lonely heart,
Parting is a time of test.
Father, give him what is best,
  Father, keep him from the rest, —
Bless him though we fall apart.

Well I know love will not die,
  It will cause us bliss or pain;
We may part for many years,
But my loving prayers and tears,
  Rising up to Him who hears,
Will yet draw him back again.

From the fount of tenderness,
  All the past comes brimming up;
When his brow is touched with care,
When no grief of his I share,
When we're separated far,
It will be a bitter cup;
Bless him from before Thy throne.
  Thus my heart to Thee makes moan,
Keep him, Lord, where he is gone.

The lines were a relief to me, and a comfort too, under a sorrow that certainly was the greatest I could know. He was everything to me, and I could only be a part to him, and loneliness and illness exaggerated my feelings and the change in him perhaps—no, that I could not exaggerate; it was too real, too apparent. Even Mrs. Morrison had remarked to me, "Your brother is forgetting you. He is getting high-falutin. I guess he has taken cabin passage for heaven."

Next morning on attempting to rise my head swam round and I fainted. Mrs. Morrison found me insensible, and I was quite unprepared for the love and tenderness she lavished on me. My scholars also bewildered me with tokens of their love. The doctor came and reminded me that he had warned me of this. "She is worn out," he said to Mrs. Morrison, "and she must have rest."

It was the rest of the grave I wanted. I resolutely turned my face to the wall. Walter was away, very busy, with a long career of usefulness and honor before him. I was not needed on earth by any one except my scholars, and there were teachers in plenty for them. Over where all my friends were was the most desirable place for me. But I got better without any wish of my own, and the birds sang and the flowers bloomed for me again. I grew very fond of Mrs. Morrison, she was so tender with me, so motherly to me. I was sorry I had ever underrated her heart. I did not know very well what to do as my strength came back to me. I felt unequal to the work of the school. There were, as I said before, I believe, eighty-five names on the roll. I felt that I could not go back to do the work inefficiently. I must give it up; I could not honestly do otherwise. The old doctor came to me with an offer. A friend of his, a lady who resided on the upper Ottawa, wanted a governess for her own family and had written to him to engage a suitable person for her. The salary, he said, was larger than I was receiving, and the change of air, and the motherly kindness of his friend, Mrs. Forsythe, would set me up again. "The duties are so light," he urged, "compared to your work here that your teaching will be comparative rest."

I looked at the matter and took counsel, and I saw that I had no choice: I must accept the situation as a providential opening. I consented to go as soon as I was at all able to travel. The first time I was able to be out on

horseback I rode a piece up the road, Neil Morrison accompanying me. I had some thought of calling on Donald Monroe. We rode slowly over the hills, past the white house of the Squire —past the saw-mill; and at length at a turn of the road we came in sight of the bard's dwelling. Mrs. Monroe, looking many years younger, with a soft flush on her cheek, stood at the door; she was looking in another direction and did not see us. She called Donald, and he came to the door, and laid his arm round her shoulders, as he listened to what she was saying. In both their faces shone restored love and confidence, proving that the verdure of a late spring-time had come to her withered life, and that

"Above the little grave
They had kissed again with tears."

"Will you go in?" said Neil. I could not bear to break up the picture, and felt more willing to turn home; so it happened that this was the last time I ever saw the bard and his wife, so the picture lives in my memory. I have to travel further, a wanderer through the wilderness. I may sometimes meet bands of doubters belonging to the great army of Diabolus; I shall be glad in passing them to sing,

"My eyes have seen the glory of the presence of the Lord."

I said to Neil, as we rode slowly home, "Whatever comes to us in the future we can never forget that we have seen the power of the Gospel in subduing and saving."

"We cannot forget," said Neil, earnestly, "if we are living witnesses, as I trust we are this day."

I took another day to ride over to Jessops to bid farewell to those who had so kindly claimed kindred with a stranger. They could not be strangers to me any more forever; and our parting was the parting of near and dear friends. It was hard parting from Glenshie; parting pain must be good for us, it occurs so often here below. Every memory of my life in Glenshie is sweet, for truly it was a blessed place to me. I was still weak after my illness, and tears mingled freely with my farewells—to the school-house, where I went to add the last lines to my manuscript record of what it had been my lot to see, and think and feel in pleasant Glenshie —to my darling children, my black-eyed Katie, my blue-eyed Annie, and my sweet dove, little Alice, and my boys, all my dear lads with their bothering ways, it was hard parting with them all. My good-bye to dear Mrs. Morrison was so tender that I wondered if it was true that I ever felt afraid of her. My last farewell was to the kind old grannie who in a trembling blessing committed me to the Lamb of God, and so ended my life in Glenshie.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Through many an hour of summer suns,
By many pleasant ways,
Against its fountain upward runs
The current of my days.

TENNYSON.

"You are not going to end it that way?" says my familiar spirit—a home critic.

"Why not? It purports only to be Life in Glenshie, and I have left Glenshie behind and have scarcely an excuse to write any more."

"Never mind that; add one more chapter to finish off your school life."

"But it is not finished off yet."

"Well it is—at least there is an interregnum before you take up a new scholar, 'who will task all your energies.' I am so used to obedience during my whole life long that I do as I am told instinctively."

* * * * * * * *

My worldly goods were not sufficient to embarrass me with a great amount of baggage. Doctor Raper kindly drove me all the long miles to the station, where for the first time in my life I set my foot on a railway car.

I looked out of the window at the moving landscape of bush and clearing farm and village, mount and stream. It was a surpassingly beautiful panorama and exhibited free. The engine panted along swiftly, like something flying for dear life, that occasionally came to a gasping stop and squatted down to take breath. They said they were taking in wood, or laying off, or taking on freight. I saw nothing of all this, so stopping to breathe was a thought as good as any to me. At last with a rush and a scream we dashed into Ottawa. I had been directed by my kind friend the doctor to stop at Matthews' Hotel, which he characterized as "clean, comfortable and homelike," and to my satisfaction I found the description true. I was treated with as much attention as if I did not travel alone. In Ottawa I remained till the next morning. During the evening I wandered out a little to see the town, but felt too lonely and weak to hunt up points of interest, and I returned to the hotel. Early next morning I and my belongings were transferred to a crowded, top-heavy stage and driven a good many miles over a rather smooth road to a village where the boat lay that was to bear us upward on the mighty Ottawa. This drive took us across the new and wonderful suspension bridge that spans the river at the rapids of the Chaudiere. I got a hasty look at the falls as we drove past and felt the air laden with "the fragrance of the enriching pine," for there are many saw-mills here and immense piles of lumber. The stage passed under an arch made entirely of sawn lumber that was erected in honor of the visit of the young Prince of Wales. It was worthy of admiration indeed. When we got on board the boat I went down to the ladies' cabin at once and lay down. I was still weak, and the motion of the boat made me feel sick. I was not able to go to breakfast, which was announced shortly after the boat started by means of a bell, loud enough to startle nervous people. The long drive might have given me an appetite, but it had failed to do so. One of the maids on the boat brought me a cup of tea, and I was refreshed. She advised me to go up to the upper deck and sit in the air and I would feel better. "We have a great many on the boat to-day," said the communicative maid. "There is a party of officers from Quebec going to see the Upper Ottawa, and shoals of lumbermen."

I made my way to the upper deck and sat down on one of the white benches, securely iron-fastened in their places, which ran round the stern. On the bow the group of officers were seated, surrounded by a good many gentlemen-passengers, who were making themselves agreeable to the military. There were a good many ladies and children on board, but every lady was in care of some one. I only was by myself a bird alone. I turned my back resolutely to this thought and looked at the prospect. Very fair it was, and romantic enough to be the setting for any tale of love or adventure, or for any poem that the poet of the future may write. After long sailing we came to an enchanting prospect. I never in my life before saw a more delightful scene. The mighty river rushed in innumerable cascades over the rocks, among woody islets; swept round points where the great trees crowded rank on rank to the water edge, here twisting between little islands in streams beaten into foam, there falling in smooth sheets over the rocks into the seething, tumbling, boiling channel below. Every variety of cascade, waterfall, rapid, torrent, was roaring, leaping and gambolling here. Every movement of the boat brought us opposite a new phase of this beauty, where the green of the woods and the gleam of the waters met, mingled, receded; the sound of many waterfalls, the whisper-

ings of the pines blending in Nature's wild rejoicings. Nature is a constant friend, and never disowns or forgets kindredship. She made me as welcome to her beauties as if I had come a queen attended by any number of maids of honor.

When our boat somewhat suddenly stopped at a wharf, all the passengers hurried ashore and up a lofty wooden staircase, leading up like Jack's beanstalk to higher regions. I found that the falls I was admiring so much made it necessary to invent some way of passing them. I was about the last to ascend the stairs.

When I arrived at the top new wonders awaited me. I found the passengers seating themselves hastily in cars to be drawn by horses over a sort of wooden railroad. It looked a little insecure; and it made me slightly dizzy to look down in places where the track swung high from peak to peak and the trees and shrubs were far below. The officers were in the foremost car, and were, as I saw by their gestures, enjoying the scenery and pointing out noticeable things to one another. The cars came to a stand-still at another wharf, up to which a boat was making her way, bowing and courtseying across the swells, and leaving a wide, spreading wake behind her. I felt a nearness to something, I knew not what, make my heart beat irregularly. As the passengers crowded from the horse-cars to the boat, I thought one of them in the turn of the shoulder and carriage of the head bore a strong resemblance to Arthur. I went into the ladies' cabin as soon as I got on board, feeling quite excited. After a while I ventured to the upper deck, desirous to satisfy my curiosity and be sure if it was any more than a resemblance that I saw. They were at the bow as before, and I soon singled out the figure I sought, and watched him from a distance till he turned his face, and sure enough it was Arthur. Arthur changed, oh! so much for the better, but still Arthur. There was the old imperative ring in his voice and the keen, bright glance of fun and command in his dark eye; but he was graver and more manly-looking, as beseemed his years. I did not know whether to be glad or sorry that I had met with Arthur; glad I was, certainly, to see the great change for the better in him. But as I was weak and alone I dreaded his old teasing humor if he recognized me. I went down and shut myself up in the depths of the ladies' cabin. A recollection of old times led me into the triangular closet called by courtesy a dressing-room, to take a good look at myself in private, and see if it was likely he would recognize me. I had changed a good deal,—my late illness had left me very thin and white. The marks of three years' absolute rule over my darling scholars in Glenshie, had given me an older and more worn look than my years warranted. I think I have set down that I was not handsome; I was not. It had prevented me from thinking anything of Richard Jessop's flowery compliments, or believing him much in earnest when he professed to feel a tenderness for me. My large black eyes, that used to remind Aunt Henderson so unpleasantly of my mother, looked larger and blacker in contrast with the whiteness of my face. My hair, also like my mother's, was very long, and black, and silky. I had always worn it in curls. I am afraid I was a little vain of my hair, regarding it as my solitary beauty. I got some hairpins from my satchel and coiled it away, concluding that if I kept my eyes cast down, I was so altered that he was not likely to recognize in the grave, sickly-looking woman the child he had loved to torment.

"I wonder if he is as great a tease as he used to be!" I said to myself.

Dinner was rather late on the boat and I was hungry, my strange discovery having banished sickness. When I took my place at table I found myself

right opposite to Arthur. I kept my eyes persistently on my plate, and avoided looking up even to answer the waiters who were supplying our wants assiduously.

Arthur was engaged in an animated conversation with the officer beside him on some point of comparison between the scenery of the Ottawa and that of some other river, I did not catch the name, where they had been together.

Their playful discussion kept his eyes from wandering across the table, and I could now and then look up to see how little he was altered. In fact I thought the only change was that he had lost the traces of dissipation that he had when I last saw him. "He cannot be a drunkard now," I said to myself, gladly. At this moment, as we rose from the table, he turned quickly, and our eyes met. He knew me at once, and sprang to meet me, saying,

"Elizabeth! Is it possible that you are here?"

"I did not think you would remember me, Arthur."

"Remember you! Do you think I would not remember your eyes if I met them alone? There never were any other eyes like yours."

He introduced me to the officer with whom he had been disputing, a Lieutenant Halliday, and then we went to the stern of the boat and sat down to talk of the strange chances that led to our meeting on the Ottawa.

"Where is Walter?" was his first question.

"He has been teaching and studying, both. He has gone to a college in the States lately. He is determined to be a minister," I said.

"Yes, that is his manifest destiny. He ought to be a minister. But—" he paused, and then said, earnestly, "Do you think Walter's determination is because he is called of God to the work, or because his father was one?"

"Walter is a Christian, Arthur," I said, "and he is very popular and energetic. I know he believes he is called, and I hope and trust he will be a power for good."

I looked at Arthur, hoping—yet afraid to ask the question that trembled on my lips. He looked at me and smiled his old teasing smile. "What are you thinking about? Do you think One who came not to call the righteous but sinners, would not call me?"

I did not answer; I just looked at him.

"I did not seek Him, Elizabeth; He sought me, and found me," he added, reverently.

I was so glad I could say nothing, only look my gladness. I told Arthur of the Enbridge news which I had heard lately from Walter, of my life in Glenshie, my school, and of the young minister who had done the work of an apostle in the place.

"And where are you going now?" he enquired.

"To teach in a family at a place far up the river."

"You do not look fit for teaching. You do not look like one well enough to go round alone. You need some one to take care of you."

"When Walter gets through and is a placed minister somewhere, I will keep house for him. I look forward to our living together," I replied,

"Do you not think your handsome brother will take to himself a wife by that time?" asked Arthur.

"It may be, but that will not hinder." While I was saying this I thought with a shudder that if ever he married Miss Twisdon his home would not be a home for me. Then Arthur told me how he had fared since he came that deplorable Sunday into the large kitchen at Enbridge to see me.

"I thought I should have died of shame when I became sober," he said. "I have never touched liquor since. That was a turning-point with me. I

worked steadily, dressed well, reformed outwardly like the Pharisees of old. One day I met, by accident, an old friend of my father's. He took hold of me, and managed aunt somehow, so that I got an ensign's commission. I have worked my way up. I am a captain now."

"How did you become a Christian, Arthur?"

"It is a long story to tell; I will tell you all about it some day. There were good men who followed us to the Crimea. We were in need of the Gospel message, when death was hourly so near. I believed and was saved."

We were interrupted by Lieutenant Halliday coming to ask us to go forward to see the boat steaming up a rapid. We did so and watched with great interest the battle between the little boat and the current. She worked her way up, hung on the verge for a moment, as if uncertain whether to slide back or go forward, then with a tremble and shiver steamed on into the calmer waters above the rapid. We were over. When this boat stopped we were transferred to waggons and driven across a long rocky portage. These changes are necessary to pass the rapids that prevent the navigation of the river where they occur. Across this portage was a long, weary drive, but I had Arthur now to take a brother's care of me. I found it very pleasant to be cared for. It was quite dark before we came to the end of the portage, and again we took passage on a little boat—a boat that looked much too small to hold so many. She swallowed us all up, however, and piles and stacks of freight besides, and worked away with us, puffing and snorting in a patient and contented manner, breathing out a shower of sparks that streamed in a fiery veil behind her. We had a most comfortable supper served in the little crowded cabin, and the attendance was so cordial and homelike that it was very enjoyable. When we landed we found stages waiting for us. They carried lanterns, which seemed necessary, the night was so dark and the roads were so bad. It was now after eleven o'clock, and we journeyed along at a slow walk. The road was dreadful. Every little while the horses floundered into deep holes, in which they threatened to go out of sight altogether. The stage before us held a mother with a large family of children, going up the river to rejoin her husband. After every plunge into a gulf, and jolty scramble out of it, the stage driver stopped his horses and solemnly counted over the children for fear that any had been jerked off in the struggle. About one in the morning we came to a fine town, in one street, like Jack's long-backed mare. The houses were all lofty and pretentious, ready when the town became a city, to become part and parcel of its splendor. We stopped at an immense galleried hotel, where princes of the blood royal had put up we were informed. I am sure none of them were more glad than I was to lay down a tired head and snatch a few hours sleep. Early in the morning we were roused and driven to another landing to take another boat. I asked Arthur how far he intended to go.

"When we started," he said, "I intended to go with my companions up on one of the tributaries of the Ottawa to hunt. I do not know but I have altered my intentions."

This day's journey was through scenery more wildly romantic than any I had yet seen. The mountains in some places were bare of the least vegetation, lifting brown, rocky shoulders to the sky. In other places the hills, rising one beyond the other, their backs covered with spiky pines, looked like some immense water monsters that had crawled up to sun themselves, and been changed into mountains by enchantment as they lay. In one place the river widened out and was dotted with

many islands, again it narrowed into a deep channel. Where the river was wide and islands lay out from the shore in profusion there was a wharf and a couple of houses. To one side, where a clearing swept round a little bay below a wooded ridge, a small steepled church and a school-house stood like sentries, alone and lonely-looking. When the boat stopped here the captain told me I had come to my journey's end.

"And here is Mr. Forsythe waiting for you," he added.

Mr. Forsythe came on board when the boat stopped, and was introduced to me by the captain. My trunks were pushed ashore and I found myself on the wharf, and the boat steamed on and left me; I turned, Arthur was beside me, asking for an introduction to Mr. Forsythe.

"Are you leaving your company?" I asked in astonishment.

"I will get enough of them," he said. "It is a long time since we parted, little sister, and I have not yet been satisfied with your company."

A few words of explanation and Mr. Forsythe extended a hearty invitation to Arthur. "A visit from an officer of Her Majesty is an honor we do not often enjoy away up here," he said.

We left the wharf and struck into a natural avenue of trees, along which we walked for a little way and came out on a clear space in sight of the river and its islands. Here stood a large, rambling, wooden house, and at the door stood Mrs. Forsythe waiting to receive us—a very stout, portly woman. When I came near enough to speak to her, imagine my surprise to find that it was Jane Geddes! I knew her at once, and she knew me. How she did kiss and cry over me till Arthur put in a claim to be noticed.

"Have you forgotten me, Jane?" he asked. She looked at him.

"You will not let yourself be forgotten if you are the same Arthur you used to be," she said, laughing. We laughed and cried, Jane and I, and were beside ourselves with joy.

"To think it was my darling that was coming to me, and me expecting a stranger!" said Jane.

"To think that I was coming to you, Jane, when I needed a rest so much!" I said, clinging to her like a child. "God was leading me to you and I knew it not," I whispered.

"I am left out in the cold altogether," said Mr. Forsythe in good-humored complaint. "It seems I am the only stranger here."

"You are just as much rejoiced as I am," said his wife, "and if you and Miss Elizabeth—yes, and Mr. Arthur, are strangers it is not because you have not heard about them often enough."

How we did rejoice over one another, Jane and I! What delight she took in showing me her children!—she had five, and there was both a Walter and an Elizabeth among them. What talks we had of Grey Abbey and Enbridge days, of her old adversary Jane Drennan!

I knew how tired I had been when I felt free to rest, and I did rest, and Jane said I got to look more like my old self every day.

Although Arthur had let the hunting expedition go on without him, Mr. Forsythe took pains to show him what sport could be got where he was.

With a very little teaching, a great deal of rest, and delightful companionship with Jane and her family, and with Arthur, the days flew by. Every day I learned more and more to glorify the transforming power of the Gospel as exemplified in Arthur. He was a thoroughly Christian man. He was one who would be a leader of men, but his wilfulness was changed into firmness. "He had," he said, "got a Captain worth following, worth obeying." He had so learned Christ that he would not—could not hide his influence. When his leave of absence expired, he

returned to his regiment, deeply regretted by Jane's boys, whom he used to drill on the sands by the river to their great delight. He said to me in his masterful way, "I shall take care of you always, Elizabeth. We will never part any more. I will come for you one of these days, and you will be ready. We need one another."

I will not put down the nonsense he talked, which he had learned in the army. He insisted we were engaged in Enbridge, when we touched thumbs. It was in vain I reminded him that he then thought me too ugly for anything but to pray for him. And he answered, "It is the fairest and truest that goes in unto the King for us. We belong to one another. I am to come back for you," he said. And being so very self-willed I suppose he will have his way.

Sorrows never come singly, they say: I know that joys have come to me—gladness upon gladness, till my prayers are all thanksgiving.

Only think! Walter has come, really come, come back to me! Miss Twisdon has made a suitable match, and forsaken him. The Lord has opened his eyes to see the escape he has had from mating with one who would not be a help, but a hindrance to him. He has found that the friendship of this world worketh no happiness to those who are Christ's friends. The cup is bitter now; it will be joyful by and by.

Arthur is here for the last time. Walter and he are talking together in the long room while I write these last words. To-morrow is Christmas day. Arthur says it is to be his marriage day, and, as I said before, being wilful, he will have his way.

THE END.

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