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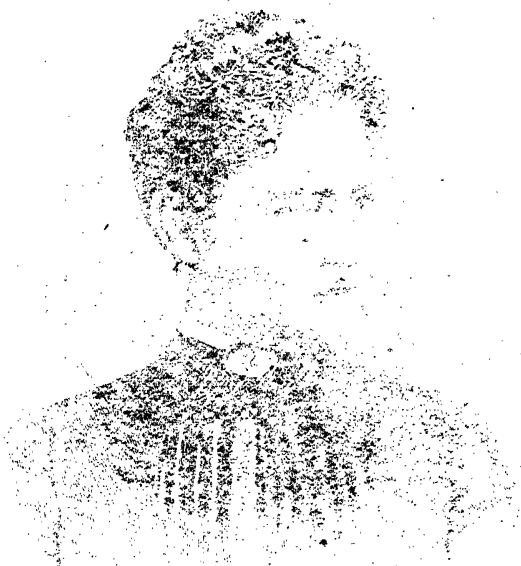
JESSIE E. ROBERTSON.



A TEACHER'S LIFE:

JESSIE E. ROBERTSON

WITH EXTRACTS FROM DIARIES, ESSAYS AND LETTERS.

BY

HER SISTERS AND FRIENDS.

"The trivial round, the common task,
Should furnish all we ought to ask.
Room to deny ourselves—a road
Which leads us daily nearer God.
Meek souls there are who little dream
Their daily life an angel's theme,
Nor think the cross they take so calm
Is viewed in Heaven a martyr's palm."

HAMILTON:
PRINTED BY GRIFFIN & KIDNER, 58 KING WILLIAM ST.
1890.

DEDICATION.

To the Valens Bible Class, whose interests she shared, and to her well-beloved pupils, wherever taught, but especially to those at Valens, for whom her last work in school was done and amongst whom her influence was powerfully felt for good, and who cherish most tenderly her name and memory, this memorial of their friend and teacher,

Jessie Ewart Robertson,

is affectionately inscribed. That it may go into the world as Christ's messenger, even as she was, to imprint and deepen the lessons which otherwise might be effaced, and that it may bring nearer to Christ all who read it, is the earnest wish and prayer of the authors.

PREFACE.

In complying with the request to write a Memorial Sketch of a beloved friend, who, after a lingering illness, fell asleep in Jesus at a time when her life-work seemed but to be beginning, I enter upon a work to which affectionate regard for the departed prompts me, and from which I shrink at the same time under a sense of inability to discharge the trust in such a manner as to satisfy myself and do justice to the memory of the deceased. Let me say at the outset that it is not my object to eulogize the dead, but to let the record as far as possible speak for itself. And by so doing the hope is cherished that it may prove useful to others, and that by giving it this permanent form it may deepen the impression made during her life time and help to keep her life-work and influence in grateful and loving remembrance. To do justice to the memory of one so deserved and universally esteemed, it is necessary to know her intimately, to be acquainted with the motives that governed her life, her hopes and aspirations, the aim and object of her efforts. It was my privilege thus to know her during the last twelve years of her life, while she was a fellow-member of the profession to which we both belonged. When I first met her she was but a girl in her teens, in the second term of her teaching life. Up to that time she was an entire stranger to me. At the close of the public examination held in that school, in which she was then assistant teacher, the writer uttered a few kindly, encouraging and well-deserved words in behalf of her efforts, as evinced in the manner in which her pupils acquitted themselves. To this was due the foundation of a friendship that deepened as years went by, and that during the closing years of her life was of the most intimate kind; a friendship across whose sky no cloud ever passed, and on which no shadow ever lowered for a moment.

A friendship such as this is one of the most cherished of earthly treasures; and now that death has severed those ties, one consolation is, that now it never can be either marred or broken; it remains forever. The materials for the work have been prepared to my hands by others, to the time when I met her first, and during the intervening years till she came to take charge of the school at Valens. It was during these years that we were most closely associated, both in our daily school work and the work of the Sabbath school. We were meeting often, comparing notes, and often corresponding by writing. It was during these years that she ripened rapidly, and often spoke of her work there as that which had taken the firmest hold of her heart, had drawn forth her deepest sympathies, and called forth all her powers of mind. Her whole heart was in her work. She often spoke of it as being the most gladsome of all her life, and when she left that sphere of labor, with the prospect of a long and happy life before her in her own home, it was with mingled feelings of grief and gladness; and ever afterwards as her heart turned toward that spot it was with the deepest feeling and the tenderest sympathy, her heart lingered around that never-to-be-forgotten scene of her last years of teaching.

ROBERT MCQUEEN.

Kirkwall, May 29, 1890.

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CHAPTER I.

Morning Hours.

TO trace the unfolding of the petals of the life now passed away is mine; those early years on which the after life depends. To lead by a few incidents from the opening bud to the flower of womanhood, through the first pulsing throbs in the life struggle for self-conquest and aspirations heavenward, through the "longings, yearnings, strivings" to the ideal ever in view.

JESSIE EWART ROBERTSON was born in Strabane, Wentworth Co., Ont., March 25, 1859. A description of her early home may be found in her own words in another chapter. Here she lived, Nature's own child. Bright, romantic, observant, she saw and loved the beautiful. The woods, the leaves, the flowers, the morning dews, the sparkling waters, the waving grain, the restless poplars and the soughing pines were friends who in her ears murmured praises to their Creator and taught their child to do the same. The little brook which, murmuring over its pebbly bed, left the woods and passed before the house, told to her ears many tales; whether paddling it with bare feet in summer, or like a winding thread in winter it wound its silvery way to its parent stream; whether sparkling in summer sunshine or seen by the moonlight which she ever loved so well. What the woman was, the child foretold. "Like an April day," sunshine, gay and bright, then clouds of thought, of the deep things of time and Eternity, passed over the changing surface as shadows pass over the ripening grain-fields. True and pure, an extremely sensitive and impulsive, perhaps wayward, child. Her plastic mind retained or expelled soon the impress taken; if retained, to deepen with the years. No wrong impress long found quarter there. She was ever open and candid, guileless and free.

One of my earliest recollections is of a Sabbath morning long ago, when the rest were at church, our mother took Jessie and others of us, and pled with God in prayer for us, her children. On *her* susceptible nature the influence of this and other similar scenes was never lost. For example, in a letter from Welland in 1888, she writes: "What do you think I found me saying over to myself the other day? The old hymn—our 'cradle hymn,' I think. I remember lying in the little bedroom in the old home, before it was quite dark, listening to the whip-poor-will in 'Sutton's bush,' and moreover saying it as we were taught:

'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child,
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to thee.'"

When about five years of age she started to school. Her first day there was not all sunshine, for the teacher, a good old man, pulled her hair, and she ran home. Better days followed soon and her mind developed rapidly. At eight she was with seniors in age. It was about this time she composed her first essay. "Life is Short" was the subject (see another page), and the freedom which characterized her writing in later years was even then apparent. She quotes liberally from Scripture, and shows in it the necessity of being ready for death and improving the short time given in life. Do coming events cast their shadows before?

Her introduction to church and Sunday-school was before her day school experiences. Writing from Toronto in February, 1888, she thus gives her remembrances of these, after being much impressed with the communion service in old St. Andrew's there: "All the years of the long ago passed before me. I remembered the old church, the reverent face of him whose dying words were, 'My people,' and the sweetness of the music to my childish ears as the green branches of a tree behind the old church swayed in the summer wind," and which, she adds some months later, "used to preach to me in language I could far better understand than that of the preacher."

I well remember one summer night, when a little child, that dark leaden clouds obscured the sky, while lightnings flashed and

thunders rolled. Spectral and weird it seemed, the earth sympathizing with and reflecting the angry glow of a setting sun. With that power which she wielded, and which grew with years, of imparting to her listeners—in these days often myself only—what she herself felt, she spoke of the end of the world, and quoted from Scripture, from the prophecies and Revelation, and conveyed to me through her words a feeling of being awe-stricken and wretched. Somewhat similar were the emotions stirred when in childish tones full of pathos she repeated poetry. Two pieces, especially, come to mind, "The Graves of a Household" and "Oft in the Stilly Night." The former, beginning,

> "They grew in beauty, side by side,
> They filled one home with glee;
> Their graves are severed far and wide,
> By mount and stream and sea."

she repeated with strange fervour, as if regretting even the anticipation of coming partings. Then in the darkness and quiet would come the words:

> "Sad memory brings the light
> Of other days around me."

When about eight years old, she undertook to read Milton's "Paradise Lost," and sitting out in the open field at the end of some potato drills, read it and understood much of its difficult passages. Quotations from it learned then were never forgotten. About the same time "Dred," a production of Mrs. Stowe's, was read and re-read until she had imbibed the spirit of the heroine, "Nina Gordon," and which, from the impression then made and after references to it, gave, we believe, a coloring to her whole life. The heroine was her girlish ideal. The fanciful picture of the young girl suited well her own sentimental nature, and the sunny life begun in brightness; growing so womanly under the discipline of clouds, till the almost bride, in the light of the flowery summer time, with music on her lip, had passed from earth away, she ever deemed a conception of inimitable beauty. Books of adventure were enjoyed and read with almost boyish zest, and whole pages of daring bravery or heroic valor were committed to memory

without effort, and, at will, could be produced with effect and beauty. A teacher to whom she attributed much of her training was the Rev. D. C. Johnson, now of Beaverton, Ont., then a young man, but of whom she wrote years afterwards, "whose teaching influences me still." Copies of *Good Words*, a magazine edited by Dr. Norman McLeod, did much, too, to mould the forming literary taste, and the good healthy tone of that and other reading, both poetry and prose, aroused an appetite for good literature ever afterwards. Artemus Ward's sketches were thoroughly enjoyed, suiting well her humorous vein, as shown in later productions of pen and pencil.

After retiring, she used to ask Tina, our eldest sister, to lay aside her work and read. A poem entitled, "Let Us Pray," was often the one asked for. One couplet—

> "We heard it in the village school,
> Stilling the din of talk and play,"

carried its effect through all her teaching. Years afterward, when her pupils were swayed by her look, her "Let Us Pray" gained absolute silence, and in form at least, and often we believe in heart, all were praying. Thus standing on life's threshold, peering into the unknown and untried future, were marked the impresses which deepened with the years. Revelling in imagination, through whose mystic gauze everything was viewed, it gave a higher glow and conception and loftier ideal to the commonest things of life. "It is strange," she would say at times, "that I have these deep feelings which no one gives me credit for. Because I laugh and seem all merriment, only that side of me is seen;" and true it was, even intimate acquaintances knew not this deeper flow of soul. On the last day of the year 1870 a young cousin read aloud Tennyson's "May Queen," the touching beauty of which she heartily appreciated; but when the June roses were in bloom, and that cousin passed from us forever, when we "saw him carried out from the threshold of the door," then did the full import of its meaning enter her heart and life. When the first of May came round a "Queen" was crowned with a wreath made by her of everlasting flowers, and which custom was for some years observed

by the now scattered class, some of whom she refers to in her "Farewell to Strabane School," in a succeeding chapter. Ever afterward on New Year's Eve, when all had met again at home, this selection was read aloud. Then sitting at mother's knee, with that mother's hand fondling her hair, she was her own true self. Not, however, as she was known, but displaying that deeper vein of character which her teachers seldom, if ever, understood; ever sinning, ever repenting; ever on the side of the weak and fighting for the right, an individuality hard to duplicate, whose organization was so fine, she felt what she couldn't see.

About this time, or perhaps later, in a year of absence from school, she began that practice of letter-writing of which she afterward did so much—writing to the school-girls. Varied descriptions of school and home life they were, minglings of prose and poetry which breathed the after-life of the writers and gave expression to the almost unformed thought in words. These letters were carefully kept, and finding a convenient hiding-place in a stump of a tree up on the hillside in the "east" field, there they were placed, where in her rambles she could look them over. This was peculiar to her. If outside would do, inside was not needed. Loving Nature as she did, she found her happiness in its woods and fields and sunlight. Going for the cows was ever preferable to washing dishes, gathering flowers to fancy work, picking berries to sewing, and everything in Nature was a source of pleasure.

On her twelfth birthday mother repeated to her those words of Christ at that age, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Henceforth, that she had a work all her own and by herself to do, took possession of her. Years afterward, in recounting her birthdays, that one was marked by those words which were never effaced. Her childhood's treasures were kept and the memories connected with them fondly cherished, and once in a while, often tearfully, looked over. Past events were lived again as their anniversaries came round. The passing away of time, as the old clock slowly and musically tolled away the twilight hour, brought sad thoughts, yet from whose depths there sprang new determinations for the future, as the stream of time engulfed the hours beyond recall. In such a mood she wrote, "All the better feelings

of one's nature are called forth," and when she said it, you felt it. A copy of Tennyson's poems, a prize when she passed her examination for entrance to High School in 1875, was read with keen relish. Her mind craved such food. Poetry and Romance were the realm for which she then lived and which she enjoyed, loving alike the beauty and the sadness. In the same year she wrote for and obtained her certificate as a public school teacher, but remained at school a year longer, taking up the higher branches of study before entering on her life work. Teaching and training was a part of herself, inborn, not acquired, and since I remember loved the little ones and never wearied of going over and over again the lessons she wished to instil. Her love for them and her sympathy with them ever won *their* love, and thus the influencing power was easy to exercise.

We leave her now, in the words of her own loved poet, Longfellow :

> " Standing with reluctant feet
> Where the brook and river meet
> Womanhood and childhood fleet."

CHAPTER II.

Leaving * Home.

CAMPBELLVILLE SCHOOL, 1876.

THE pain of saying farewell to school and school-days at Strabane is expressed in her own words as follows :

JULY.—"Yesterday I went into the school-house to take the last look of it as I left it in my school-girl days. It is a sad thought, to think that I have bidden farewell to bright, happy school days, with all their sunny scenes and hallowed memories! But, sooner or later, we have to go forth into life's battle. The school-house, as I went out the door and yet came back for one more last, long, lingering look, will come vividly to mind in after years. Never had I noticed the words, 'God Bless Our School,' so much, as if they invoked a blessing upon us. I can hardly realize that I have heard for the last time 'yon tinkling bell, that calls to mind our cares;' that I shall never more hear it as a scholar. It seemed as if the last look severed the one remaining cord that bound me to childhood. Farewell! farewell! Dear, sweet scene of childhood's happy hours! But it is useless thus repining. We have our work to do, and there must be no dreaming of the past or of the future, but we must waken up to the stern present."

JULY.—"Went to church twice to-day. The scene of the villagers peacefully walking to church brought a dim recollection of an old story, and the words of Gray's immortal 'Elegy' came to mind. Felt that I had now taken leave of my school-days forever. Never more shall I be a regular attendant there. Ah! It is a bitter thought to think of the opportunities I have let pass me, both in temporal and religious knowledge."

The following are extracts from her diary during the few months she taught in Campbellville. They reveal her intense longing for sympathy and for some one in whom to confide entirely and whom she could trust implicitly. They reveal her deep sense of her need of God's help in her daily work, a conscious sense of the need of His blessing in order to make her work successful. They bring out her sense of deep responsibility for the welfare, mentally and morally, of those committed to her trust; her aspirations after something far higher than her present attainments in the profession, and the high ideal which she set before her as the standard to which she sought to attain. They reveal, too, the yearnings of a soul seeking rest and yet not finding it; seeking for that rest and satisfaction which are found in Christ alone:

AUGUST 17.—"My first day's teaching is over. I am the scholar, pupil and child no longer, and although much against my will, I have to convince myself that I have now gone forth into the world to mar or make my future prosperity. What it will be, under the hand of a mightier one than my own, I cannot tell." (18th.) "Dear, dear Strabane school-house! I will never forget thee. How many of us were there last year! Now we are all scattered, never more to meet again together on this earth. God grant that we may meet in a better world. The children of Strabane I can see. See, there is Susie and Annie over there; Vinnie and Mary somewhere else. When I was coming from school yesterday, I fairly thought I heard Susie calling me. But that is a dream of the past. I feel that I am filling a woman's place, and may the good God help me to do my best, both for myself and others!"

"Another day's teaching is past. It seems like a month since I came. O, I can never live here. * * * My scholars are good yet, but I cannot keep them busy, and if they are not, they *will* talk." * * *

21st.—"Ah! the years that are to come if I live!"

22nd.—"One week ago to-day since I saw my mother. I'll never forget it. I never was a week before from home. I dreamed last night that I was at school as a scholar. Alas! to think it is a dream of the past! What a charge a person has who has children

under her! How easy it is to form their infant minds, to lead them in the paths of vice or virtue!"

23rd.—"Had forty-three scholars to-day. One week ago my girlhood or rather childhood fled, leaving me to fight the stern battle of life. I have not sense to know what to do and I cannot bear to ask. The past seems like a white doe disappearing over a mountain never to return. In one sense it was peaceful and unsullied as a white doe; but the one who said that our childhood was not what it now appears was a true philosopher. When I look back to my happy school days, it seems as if there was nothing then to mar the peaceful stream of life."

24th.—"I am afraid I am not doing my best. O that I may have faith to look to a mightier hand than my own for guidance! I am troubled about a boy. I know I should not be. To-morrow night, all well, I'll be at home."

28th.—"I am down-hearted and discouraged; the children nearly drove me crazy. I cannot keep them busy, and they are commencing to talk. * * * God of mercy, have pity and take me to Thee, and guide my steps aright. * * * On Saturday I went into our own school at home. The branches have faded and are almost gone. I fear they are too much like my own hopes when trials come. * * * I am troubled. I cannot study. Envy has taken possession of my heart. I envy the scholars over home. I am miserable. I cannot pray. I am condemning myself when I try. If I were using my talents aright, perhaps I could get that boy to quit telling lies for ever. O God of Heaven! Look down upon me in mercy. * * * I feel anxious, sad and downhearted. I know I am not anxious enough about my scholars. * * * It has been a lovely day; the leaves are just turning on the trees, and everything seems to have such a sad look. It reminds one of death. Took a walk to-day and found some specimens of Indian handiwork. The poor redman! This is a beautiful place. Wherever I may go, this schoolhouse will ever hold a tender spot in my heart. It is the place where I first started my career in life. The thought has just struck me that I was earning money for myself. How nice it is to be independent! The evening is coming on, the day is waning, the

shadows are deepening, and I must go. How soon will I have to say that of my life, and God grant that it may *not be a wasted one!*"

SEPT. 21.—"Feel very sad, and don't know how I'll live until New Year's. I must take *more anxiety* and care over my scholars. It is a fearful thing to live a long life, and still worse to die unprepared. What was my only comfort I have broken up through my foolishness. The autumn winds are whistling loudly, and at home perhaps some of my young companions are cold in death. God of mercy, lead me back to Thee." * * *

OCT. 13.—"Nearly three weeks have elapsed and I am not mentally or morally improved. * * * Every one seems happy but myself. Why is it, I ask. There must be some reason that I do not enjoy myself as others do. I am miserable. * * I am afraid I am not doing my duty to my scholars. I am getting careless and do not ask divine aid. Why cannot people be friendly to a stranger? But it is my own fault. They are kind and I do not accept their kindness. I feel bitter towards the whole world. I almost wish I had never been born. But I have to use my talents or give an account of them. If I had only one friend in the world with whom I could communicate or to know some one really loved me." * * *

15th.—"Another Sabbath past, spent uselessly as usual. Heard a splendid sermon, but alas! it fell upon stony ground. Do not feel so dull, but only ashamed and diffident. I know I am on my way to ruin, and I can't stop. O that I were a Christian! To me death is a fearful thought. I feel a void in my heart which I know can never be filled until I am a believer. Lord of mercy, look down on me in pity." * * * (27th) "Why is it that I am different from other people and doomed to disappointment? My favorite scholar has disappointed me. My feelings are entirely changed."

NOV. 16.—"Three long weeks since I last wrote here. Some of my scholars are doing well, and some are not. Feeling downhearted and envious. Why is it that I am doomed to be lonely, and having nobody to care whither I go or what I do? Only five weeks more here! How very long and how very short! The scholars seem cold and careless. Oh! if I only had one friend to

whom I could pour out the feelings of my heart, knowing at the same time that they would not be lightly spoken of. I feel very bitter. O Lord, help me to do better, both for myself and my scholars." * * *

DEC. 20, 1876.—"My last night's teaching here is over. I am leaving and no person will miss me. I seemed the gayest of the gay, but alas! how different the reality. Ten years ago I was an innocent, careless child, and how many have gone to their long homes since then. To-day I am no longer innocent. I feel that I have learned much since I came here. I'll never be the same girl again. With what feelings did I come the first morning; with what feeling shall I leave it? I know the scholars like me. What influence have I had on them? No one seems to realize that I am going, never to return. * * * I dread to-morrow and the future. How few persons would imagine that I ever had such thoughts. They take me for one who has no thought at all. And after all, what is life? In eternity, what does our few sorrows and joys amount to? Nothing! nothing! If that is all we look for, we shall be weighed in the balances and found wanting."

These extracts from her recorded experience need no comment. They speak for themselves. They are the expression of her inmost feelings as she saw herself in relation to her daily duties, to her scholars, to those around her and with whom she came into personal contact, and as she saw herself in the presence of God and in the light of the eternity whither she was hastening, and on entering which all the life, its talents and their use or abuse, would be weighed in an impartial balance. In all she is never lenient toward herself, nor severe in her judgment of others.

This journal contains one other entry, which she added at a later period. It is given here because it is the outcome of her reflections on reading over the journal from which the preceding extracts have been taken. It runs thus:

Nov. 27, 1877.—"On reading over these past reminiscences, they produce *one passing* thought of regret, and that is all. They seem as words which have *now* no meaning. I have no wish to live my life over again. All that I now hope and pray for is that

I may spend and be spent in the service of my beloved Redeemer. 'He spake, and behold, all was light.' The peace which passeth all understanding, that which the world can neither give nor take away, I feel. I look forward to the most glorious future, when I shall meet my friends, our faces betraying the kindling emotions of our hearts, as we shake hands in the new Jerusalem. How can I ever thank and praise the Lord for the peace which in His goodness He spoke to my soul. May He ever keep and guide me."

One more brief entry is added, or rather interlined between. It is dated Nov. 27, 1880, and reads: "*I thank God.*"

CHAPTER III.

Early Teaching.

WESTOVER SCHOOL, 1877.

THE junior division of this school was the next scene of her labors. It was there that the writer made her acquaintance for the first time. The manner in which her pupils acquitted themselves at the examination held at the end of the winter term made so favorable an impression that in a few remarks, which he, along with others, was called to make at the close, he took occasion to refer to her work in terms of kindly commendation, which he considered as justly deserved. Her early teaching days gave promise of the future, which promise was more than fulfilled, as all her subsequent teaching abundantly testifies. That meeting laid the foundation of a friendship that deepened and widened as the years went by. In connexion with her work in Westover the following extracts from letters to her sister may prove interesting and instructive. The first bears date March 7, 1877, and has reference to the death and burial of the pastor of her early years at Strabane :

" Much has happened since I wrote last. Mr. McLean's death and burial, which I never realized until I entered the church and saw before me his vacant pulpit, draped ominously in black ; saw a stranger ascend the very steps which he so often trod ; heard the church proclaimed ' vacant,' and his flock likened to sheep without a shepherd. Then, indeed, I realized I would see him no more upon earth. I never before saw a case of death in which our mission is so clearly revealed as his. Just when he grew unable for the work he was called away. The fact that his last whis-

pered words on earth, just before he entered with the blessed throng, and his voice mingled with the hallelujahs of the upper sanctuary, were "*My people*,' showed how near their highest welfare lay to his heart. Friends, acquaintances and strangers gathered to pay their last tribute of respect to their late friend and pastor. The text was from Rev. xiv. 13, a well-chosen subject, for assuredly he did 'die in the Lord.'"

March 17, 1877.—"Your letter gave me a feeling you could not call sorrow, yet it was solemn. A feeling which I cherish. It seems to carry me back to childhood again, and leave the less engaging thoughts of the stern present far behind, and makes me think of all I was, can, or might be. I love childhood, girlhood, and school-days, with a feeling that seems sacred. I feel happier now than for many years. Since Mr. McLean died my mind often reverts to the many counsels he gave us and the many prayers he offered on our behalf. His death will be regretted by many, and no doubt some things will be changed; and the very fact that it will be so, seems to sever one of the few remaining links that bind us to childhood. I just think I see his face among the blessed throng, and often wonder, until I seem to lose myself in the depth, whether he can know now of those he left on earth."

July 15, 1877.—"* * * * I had a strange dream the other morning. I dreamt that I was lamenting over lost opportunities of the two years now past, when three times the words, 'Improve the present time,' broke on my ears; so slow and measured they came, it seemed like a warning."

September 10, 1877.—"The summer has passed so quickly, the leaves are already changing color. The hills here give an extended view, and I enjoy walking very much. Few understand the flight imagination or romance takes in my mind. Just a year ago I took a walk, and remember finding some specimens of Indian handiwork. The wind was blowing with such a dreary sound through the trees, and everything in nature seemed to be blended together on purpose to make the heart stir up all the sadness within; the many-colored leaves corresponded to dark and bright thoughts of the long ago. The dark to the bitter thoughts of past opportunities and misspent days, which have turned out 'noth-

ing but leaves.' But we are prone to look back with vain regret to the past, and with bright hopes to the future; the present time passes unheeded until it mingles in the waters of the past.

"But why do I write these saddening things? There is a bright side to every picture, and why not look at it? I am not one who should write in such a style, for I never feel dissatisfied now, only when some duty is left undone, or when I commit some wilful sin or enter into some pleasure I know to be wrong.

"It may be error on my part, but may all that is good forbid it. I feel a peace which passeth understanding, but I am fully conscious that when a person tells to the world that such is her experience, then every action is watched, and it has a right to be; and I shudder to think of the great harm of making a profession and not living up to it.

"I do not feel the same ardor I once did, but the determination is stronger than ever. Fanny E—— told me that such would be the case; that the new-born soul, like the lame man who was healed, leaps and walks with the joy of being healed; but that through time it changes to the firm tread, when it has to battle with the world. Then is the moment of peril. When at Campbellville I used to keep a record of my thoughts and feelings, and it is by comparing them with my thoughts, aspirations and desires now that I realize I am entirely changed. I send you one or two extracts, word for word, as I recorded them then:

"'The evening is coming on, the day is waning, the shadows are deepening, and I must go. How soon will I have to say that of my life? I am troubled; I cannot study, I cannot pray. I am condemning myself when I try.' (Oct. 13) 'Nearly three weeks have passed since I last wrote, and I am neither mentally nor morally improved. Every one seems happy but myself. Why is it, I ask. But I have to use my talents or give an account of them.' (Oct. 15) 'Do not feel so dull, only diffident. I know I am on my way to ruin. O that I were a Christian! To me death is a fearful thought. I feel a void in my heart that I know never can be filled till I am a believer.' There; you see enough to know what a state I was in. *Now*, each evening as it closes brings to me the thought, 'One day nearer to our home beyond the sky.'

Sad thoughts I have yet, but not so bitter when I think of meeting the loved ones gone before, seeing the Saviour who redeemed us, and of dwelling forever in perfect peace in eternal day, where no pain or trouble ever comes or crosses the mind. My very soul chides itself for its coldness and carelessness, for I know the world sees no change in me. That is what makes me doubt. It seems to me I yield just as often to temptation as I used to do. My thoughts seem as wicked. Yet I have such peace within. With pleasure I look forward to our new minister's coming. He will want me to unite with the Church. I shrink from it. Yet it was our Saviour's dying request, His last wish. 'Do this in remem brance of Me.' There is another thing that troubles me, 'Fore-ordination.' I know nothing about it, but I like the Presbyterian Church, because I always went to it, and because my blood warms to that church which was fought and bled for by our forefathers, who gave their life-blood for 'kirk and covenant.' My Scottish veins would chide me were I to turn to another."

Sept. 17th, 1877.—"Girlhood comes next, with its bright longings and hopings for the mystic future, which still cling closely to me. There is such an attraction to me in the mantle of feeling and thought which shrouds a worthy young girl just entering on womanhood, if she has any love for the beautiful, any higher aim than to eat, drink and be merry. I know, even young as I am, I have had hopes that will never be realized, longings to peer into forbidden chambers of the unknown, and aspirations for that which I shall never reach. I used to wish I had died while young, so that I might have avoided the responsibility of living; but the thought cheers me, that if there is a cross, there is a crown to follow. Angels will never know the exquisite bliss of overcoming the world and helping others, as it is possible for us poor mortals to do; having the same trials and temptations as our blessed Master had and the joy of triumphing over them. Our minister says, if there is a dark side to a minister's life it is when zeal flags and faith gives way. He might truly apply it to all Christians."

These extracts, bearing less directly on her daily work than those from her Campbellville Journal, are yet of deep interest, inasmuch as they clearly reveal the fact that in the interval she has

passed from death unto life, had come out of darkness into God's marvellous light, had found rest for her soul, had come to a settled peace through faith in Christ; that the restless longings of her soul had found satisfaction in Christ, that the fear of death had been taken away, that she had obtained the victory over that fear and was rejoicing in the hope of eternal glory, in the conscious sense that each passing day was bringing her nearer to her eternal home; that though the ardor and zeal of the new-born soul had cooled, yet the tread of fixed determination was firmer and less faltering. Her reflections on making a public profession of faith, with all its responsibilities, her shrinking from it for fear of dishonoring it, overweighted by her loyalty to her Saviour's dying command; her view of the dignity of the Christian calling, the privilege of being a co-worker with God, in helping humanity, in succouring those in distress; the joy of overcoming through Christ the enemies of our own souls, and of helping others to overcome, were blessings and privileges which she realized had come to her through Christ. At the same time there was the acknowledged sense of her own weakness, the liability to temptation, and her readiness to fall before it. The evil of her own heart as it manifested itself in its thoughts and imaginations reveals the fact that religion with her was not a matter of outward form. The admission, too, that her failure in making a public profession of her faith in Christ and love to him was a source of weakness to her, unworthy in itself, and a wrong to the world—the world that little dreamed of all that was going on within her heart.

CHAPTER IV.

Later Teaching.

ABINGDON SCHOOL, 1879-82.

AFTER leaving Westover she attended the Hamilton Collegiate Institute. Here her literary taste, as yet almost unopened, blossomed into flower under Mr. T. C. L. Armstrong, then Master of Literature there. Each line of Scott's "Lady of the Lake" and Goldsmith's "Deserted Village" revealed to her a depth of meaning heretofore unknown and awakened in her soul a passionate fondness for metaphorical language and beauty of expression, which ever afterward left its impress on her teaching and characterized her writing. Often she referred to Mr. Armstrong's teaching, and said, "I have much to thank him for." In after years when she read his closing address on leaving that institution, she said, "Listen! it is like a bouquet of flowers." She read till she came to the words, "Preserve the ideals of your youth." A new thought seemed to take possession of her, and in fancy the vanished ideals of more youthful days flitted before her. The words had touched a tender vein, and with a new determination she returned to her school to engrave on the impressionable soil there the sacred duty of cherishing the pure ideals and fancies of early years.

At the close of her term at Hamilton she obtained a higher certificate, and after summer vacation attended the Normal School at Ottawa, and at the beginning of the year took charge of the school in Abingdon.

The following extracts, taken from the pen of the Rev. Mr. S. G. Harris, give an account of her work:

"The situation in Abingdon was not altogether pleasant for

one who, like her, felt the responsibility resting upon her, and which she realized more and more as days and months went by. The ardent desire to benefit her scholars morally and spiritually grew stronger as she learned to know them better, and led by the Spirit of God she rose to the true conception of the high dignity of the teacher's calling, and the deep responsibilities under which it laid her.

"Bravely determining to face every difficulty, and deeming her duty her mission, she set out with high expectations, but soon realized more fully than ever that in her own strength she was utterly inadequate to the task. Thus she was led first to see what her real work was, then to measure her resources and afterwards to earnestly seek, as all successful workers must, for daily guidance, preparation and strength from Him who has promised to guide us by His counsel and afterwards receive us to Himself in glory.

"Like David who chose the smooth stones of the brook, she, in her modes of working, brought all her faculties into exercise, and in visiting her school I was surprised to see the originality and ingenuity manifested in conducting and controlling it. Her kind, loving and yet firm bearing toward her scholars gained their respect for her as their teacher. She also inspired in their hearts a respect for themselves. She strove daily by word and act to awaken within their hearts a deep and lasting love and reverence for the Lord Jesus Christ. She ever kept these grounds of action before her, and to them may be attributed the secret of her great success in the Abingdon school. Would that all our teachers might imitate her in these respects; they would then become a mighty power for good in our land. In the fullest sense of the word, Miss Robertson was an *educator*. Without cramming she strove to awaken in her scholars a desire for useful knowledge, and then gladly assisted them to gratify that desire; day by day developing and expanding the intellectual powers to their utmost capacity. In a teacher this is a high aim, and in it she succeeded so well that during the four years she taught in the Abingdon school it rose from a very inferior position to a place among the first schools in the County of Lincoln. But it was not

her highest aim, for above and beyond this ever stood the moral elevation and spiritual welfare of those entrusted to her charge.

"I remember on one occasion while holding a series of meetings in the Baptist Church, she came to me at the close of one of them, and, as she clasped my hand, she said, while the tears ran down her cheeks, 'Some of my scholars are here. I have been praying for them. Will you please speak to them? I want to see them become followers of Jesus.' An earnest praying teacher like her must succeed in the highest sense of the word. And she did succeed. All of these pupils, as near as I can gather, are at this present humble, earnest Christians; and many of the children who attended that school during the four years she was its teacher, now grown up and settled in the world, are trying to walk in the footsteps of their blessed Saviour; and many of them attribute their conversion under God to the influence of those years during which they were her scholars. Some have said to me, "Miss Robertson spoke privately to me several times about my soul and awakened desires in my heart that were never satisfied until I found rest in Jesus.' Truly the memory of those who live and die in the Lord are blessed.

"A very successful public examination closed her labors in Abingdon school. Each child seemed determined to do his or her best that day for the teacher's sake, whom they loved so well, yet in moments of leisure the thought would come that they were about to part and that that day was their last together, and many a tear dropped silently on the desk before them. At the close of the examination her scholars presented her with Matthew Henry's Commentary, in nine volumes, as a farewell memento from the school. She asked me to reply, and she sat down sobbing like a child. I did so, and then over teacher and children, bathed in tears, invoked the Divine blessing, and so terminated that last day of her fourth year's teaching, during which the children received instruction to benefit them temporally throughout life, and which to many was for their eternal welfare, and the teacher retired from her scene of labor with the feeling that, while her work was mixed with much imperfection and many failures, yet 'she had done what she could.'"

The following is the address which was read when the presentation above referred to was made :

" MISS ROBERTSON :

" DEAR TEACHER,—In behalf of every household in this community we now present you with a commentary on the Holy Scriptures by Matthew Henry, as a very slight token of our appreciation of your unwearied labors for our welfare, during your four years' sojourn in our midst. We do so with mingled feelings of satisfaction and regret—satisfaction that the gift is so completely deserved and regret that it is not more worthy of the recipient. You will please not regard it simply for its intrinsic worth, but as a reminder that your memory and the remembrance of your self-denying labors for our intellectual and spiritual development are carefully enshrined in our most grateful recollections.

" As your pupils, we desire to express our sorrow for the pain that oftentimes our thoughtlessness has caused you, trusting that you may be pleased to seal our penitence with your forgiveness. From our inmost being we thank you for your unremitting exertions on our behalf, not only by your patiently leading us in the, to us, unexplored regions of the intellectual world, but most of all, for the prayers you taught us and daily offered for us in our midst.

" As parents, we desire to express our gratitude not only for your toilsome labors in the school-room in behalf of those we hold most dear to us, and for the wholesome moral influence your example has had upon them, but also for that moral oversight you have constantly exercised over them, both in the school and out of it.

" As representatives of the different churches, we feel we are very largely your debtors. Your labors in our Sabbath schools, so freely given, have been highly appreciated, and will assuredly not go unrewarded.

" We are satisfied that we echo the universal sentiment of this school section when we express our deep regret that you are now about to leave us. It comforts us to know, however, that what is loss to us will be gain to others. We follow you with our best wishes. May the sunlight of heaven ever shine around your pathway, and its abundant blessings ever rest upon your labors. If ever it please Providence that you revisit us again, with one voice we bid you welcome as a partaker of our kindest hospitalities. We desire to close with the heartfelt prayer that you may long be spared to labor for the good of others, and that your way may be directed and blessed in those labors. That when you shall have taken your sojourn to that land that lies beyond the west, numbers shall arise and call you blessed.

" There may we meet you at the end of days in that great school-room not circumscribed by wall, to learn divinest lessons through all coming ages in presence of the Prince of Teachers.

" Caistor, 20th December, 1882."

Before leaving Abingdon she was presented with the following address from the congregation and Sabbath school:

"DEAR MISS ROBERTSON:

"As you are now about to leave us, it is only fitting before this step is taken, that we express to you our gratitude for your generous labors in our Sabbath school during the recent years, and also for the countenance and material support you have at the same time given our congregation.

"Your departure is to us a matter of deep regret, but we are comforted in knowing that the light you have made to shine in our midst shall henceforth lighten other fellow-pilgrims on the way that leads to heaven, and that the instruction you have so freely imparted shall do much to help many of us to clamber up the stepping stones that lead to that "fair city." We follow you with our prayers in the earnest hope that as the years roll on your abundant labors may increase, and that if not in this life we shall greet you welcome on the eternal shore in presence of a joyful company, whom you shall have assisted on their toilsome journey to that peaceful land.

"Abingdon, 27th December, 1882."

These addresses speak for themselves, and with all the more power when we remember that she went into the midst of these people an entire stranger, and only nineteen years of age; as she often expressed, "comparatively a child," and as stated by Mr. Harris, all the circumstances were unfavorable as far as the condition and standing of the school, of which she took charge, was concerned, both intellectually and morally. Yet she overcame all these difficulties, made her way in a mixed community, with young and old alike, and long before the close of her four years' service in their midst had come to be a recognized "moral power" in the community at large. She achieved this highest of all success not by reason of superior mental endowments, although she was more than commonly endowed, but from a deep sense of the nobility of her calling, a tender love to and sympathy for those committed to her trust, seeing them in the light of days to come, and in the light of the eternity beyond, and under an ever-present consciousness that all needed strength for duty, and all true success, must come from God alone.

The following is an extract from a letter to her sister from Glasgow, during her visit to Scotland. It bears date August 16th, 1886, and reads:

"Your 'Abingdon Notes' brought very tenderly and forcibly to mind the years spent there—not in vain for me, at least. I learnt there some of the best lessons of my life. I am sure when the eternal shore shall be reached one of the pleasures of heaven will be the recording of life's pilgrimage, the various waymarks, the hills of difficulty and the gate beautiful."

However far she might be removed from the scene of her labors, whether by time or space, her heart and thoughts turned lovingly to the past and longingly to those who were still the objects of her trust, as well as of her tenderest sympathy. They lived in her heart day by day and always.

CHAPTER V.

Extracts from Diary.

HER custom of keeping a diary was continued in Abingdon, and an entry here and there is extracted. They are the expression of her heart, intended for her eyes alone. They serve so well to show the difficulties of the Christian teacher's work and her own growth heavenward, that the belief they will prove helpful to others prompts to their insertion here :

1880.

Jan. 1.—"First day passed of 1880. Another decade gone. Where shall I be ten years hence?"

13th.—"My old enemy indigestion has returned, consequently its unfortunate victim will be looking through 'blue spectacles.'"

16th.—"How many things a person says and does only to be racked with remorse for such saying and doing!"

Feb. 20.—"Have come home this evening better satisfied with my school than ever I was in my life."

22nd.—"I have found that 'Resist the devil and he will flee from you,' is a truthful saying. So much for the blessing of Christian parents."

27th.—"Another week passed away; a rather successful one in school, too, but it would be well if I did not speak so sharply. 'Never threaten! never scold!' I must guard my tongue in more ways than one."

March 9.—That girl is a living reproach to me. She says that all her salary goes to pay doctor's bills, drugs and board, and that she has just the worst class of boys. Yet she says, 'I have often compared my blessings with my afflictions, and always found

the former to far exceed the latter.' Knowing all this, I *dare* to be discontented."

April 20.—"Can I use my talents to better advantage?"

23rd.—

"Waste not thy being, back to him
Who freely gave it, freely give;
Else is this being but a dream,
'Tis but to *be* and not to live."

May 16.—"An inexpressibly beautiful night—one of those in which all the better feelings of one's nature are called forth and we yearn earnestly for something indefinable, but as yet unknown. Our whole spirit craves for something nobler and loftier. The wind is gently waving the branches, and a perfect shower of sweet rose-leaves comes down upon me. Milton truly calls such a scene, 'a pilgrimage of sweets.' It makes one

'Wish for wings to flee away
And mix with the Eternal ray.'"

May 31.—"I have lost a day."

June 20.—"I feel in good spirits and also an inward source of comfort. For this I thank my Heavenly Father. I hope by His grace to crucify *self*. It is another of those nights which calls forth the holiest emotions of our natures."

August 22.—"Another beautiful Sabbath day has passed. In its holy, quiet calm, it seems a foretaste of the joys of Heaven."

29th.—"I feel that I have been assisted by the Spirit."

31st.—"Feel better satisfied because I have not wasted time. Must give more attention to school work."

Sept. 16.—"Have been looking over some extracts written when I first started teaching. I was very lonely then, but find I took a greater interest in my school than I do now, and that must not be. God knows where I shall be in the years to come. I only pray that it may be in some place doing His will. I was seventeen then, with as much romance in my nature as can usually be found in maidens of that age."

18th.—"I *must* resist the tendency to gossip, both because it is wrong in itself and causes a waste of time."

19th.—"Another Sabbath day has come and passed away,

cheering those who spent it properly on their way. I wonder how I can be so ungrateful as to forget God—yes, even to long after the very things I know to be in opposition to His will. But I must remember that Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt."

21st.—"I fear it is one of the days in which 'my graces dimly shine.'"

25th.—"Felt very wicked because I did not do what I should have done."

Oct. 1.—"Was a little too severe with some of my pupils to-day, and feel sad over it. Must start a course of reading."

2nd.—"How few we can really trust!"

3rd.—"Have resolved from now henceforth not to touch cider or any other spirituous liquor, and have asked my pupils to do the same."

4th.—"My pupils getting better. Am commencing to feel a renewed interest in my work."

8th.—"I have found a precious promise or rather entreaty in Psalm lxi.: 'When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.' A most beautiful Sabbath day. Truly, 'the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork.' The dying leaf is an emblem of life, but I view these things differently to what I once did. To-day I know I have done wrong, but I feel that my Father in His mercy has let me learn just a little of the luxury of doing good. May it only be a foretaste of the great joys which are laid up for us."

Nov. 5.—"There is that scattereth and yet increaseth."

6th.—"I must remember my mother's advice, 'Keep your tongue and you will keep your friends.'"

7th.—"Another Sabbath day gone. I have done many wrong things, yet I feel that God has been with me and strengthened me. As a duty I took a Sabbath School class, and He has made it a great pleasure. May He make me the humble instrument of filling the water pots with water, that He may turn it to wine. Surely 'the lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places.'"

9th.—"A letter from my friend tells me she is employed in the most worthy work on earth—that of saving souls."

12th.—"This is one of the nights when teaching is a pleasure.

The children seem pleased and happy, and I feel that God has enabled me to do my duty, though as He knows, imperfectly. I find that if we only examine closely, we find that faults lie in ourselves, not in others."

13th.—"Another week gone with its joys and sorrows, and soon another will dawn to be spent either to our glorification or our condemnation. Which shall it be?"

14th.—"I have spent part of the day frivolously, yet I know God has been with me and has enabled me to examine myself. I know I am wicked, yet the feeling 'I'm just as good as others' costs me many a struggle."

19th.—"Went to see H— R—; also went to church and for the first time publicly acknowledged Christ as my Saviour."

23rd.—"Feel down-hearted. I do not know the cause. If I could by faith take God's promises I should not feel thus."

27th.—"Three years ago to-night I wrote a memorandum in which my heart seemed to be overflowing with God's goodness. I feel that He has ever been with me since, but also know I am but a weak follower. Feel rather despondent to think how little progress I am making in the Christian life. I feel pharisaical, discontented and despondent—three grevious sins in His sight, who hath said 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' May His grace be all-sufficient."

Dec. 12.—"I feel so sad to think how little I have done when so much might have been done, but the blessed promise, 'Come unto Me all ye who are weary and heavy laden,' comforted me."

17th.—"Endeavored to imprint on the minds of my scholars the necessity of forming good habits. I do earnestly pray that I may be of some use to glorify my Father."

19th.—"As usual, dissatisfied with self. Trifling thoughts, words and actions marred the good I might have done, and destroyed the peace a Christian feels after spending a holy Sabbath day. Heard a sermon from the words, 'Fight the good fight of faith.' We have to fight against enemies, (1) of our own wicked hearts; (2) worldly influence, and then have on the full Christian armor."

26th.—"Somewhat better aspirations awakened."

31st.—"The old year, 1880, has just been tolled out and the new year tolled in. May the sweet, yet sad echo of the bells be:

'Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring out the false, ring in the true.'

The old year has gone with its hopes and fears, its joys and sorrows, its trials and its triumphs. On reflecting over it I cannot but have a deep feeling of gratitude for mercies given, but there is also a sad feeling when I view opportunities now past and gone forever and unimproved."

1881.

Jan. 1.—"Again we enter on another year. Last year I wrote 'Where shall I be ten years hence?' and now only nine remain. We are all at home together once more. I can only hope with the old year we may leave old faults, and in the new one press forward to gain the 'prize of the high calling.'"

5th.—"I must remember 'enthusiasm lightens labor,' and 'He that warreth entangleth not himself.'"

8th.—"Feel better again. How thankful I shall be when this attack of indigestion passes away!"

9th.—"If we could have one hour without a wandering thought we might have a foretaste of heaven."

11th.—"All through the day I have found comfort in to-day's text, 'He giveth strength to the faint.'"

12th.—"My indigestion has gone and my room is warm and it makes a wonderful change 'come o'er the spirit of my dream.'"

14th.—"I do not know that this has been a sinfully spent evening, and yet I have come to the conclusion that 'quilting-bees' are not particularly edifying."

15th.—"Another week with its cares passed away, another Sabbath is about to dawn, and to the manner of its spending we may look for the issues of the coming week."

19th.—"Must I write here another day lost? Tried to do better at school, but have been chiding myself most strongly for my levity. Nothing very wrong, but am dissatisfied with self."

22nd.—"Another week with its cares has come to an end. I had again forgotten that 'He that warreth entangleth not himself.'"

23rd.—"Must go to bed earlier Saturday evening and rise earlier Sunday morning."

25th.—"Time is passing so quickly. Felt more energy in school work to-day. Oh, if I would only be willing to hear, 'It is I, be not afraid!'"

28th.—"Another school week over. Feel more energy and interest. Must attend to school duty more. Have felt much comfort from the words, 'There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.'"

29th.—"I have just read:

'Forget the steps already trod,
And onward run thy way.'

and not having a very easy conscience about some things I've done, I shall try to follow it."

30th.—"I have done so many wicked things that I wonder not if Christ should say, 'Lovest *thou* me?' Yet he has strengthened me."

31st.—"January has passed away. Yet even in this short space of time in 1881 many opportunities have been neglected. I can only pray that we may learn a lesson from the past."

Feb. 5.—"A most beautiful day. Have been visiting and feel what a great help it must be to live where Christ is daily worshipped."

9th.—"Felt much encouragement from the words, 'God will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear.'"

11th.—"Four o'clock. 'The playful children just let loose from school.' I have felt so weary and disappointed this week, but I thank my Heavenly Father for giving me strength to perform my duty, and at its close have the satisfaction of having performed it. Sometimes I wish I was one of those terrible people called 'strong-minded females.'"

12th.—"Another week with its cares come to an end. What have I done for the Master? I know he has strengthened and sustained me when earthly friends have failed. I must remember about *asking*, *seeking* and *knocking* Christians."

17th.—"Does amusement pay? might be a proper question for discussion. Not if it sends one to bed prayerless or with carelessly uttered prayers."

19th.—"Am not satisfied with myself. I spent this afternoon in a way that has left me unprepared for to-morrow's duties. We lay the closed week to rest till its deeds are brought to light on the judgment day."

20th.—"I retire to-night better satisfied with my conduct than for many a Sabbath. I have had wicked thoughts, but God has strengthened, sustained and comforted me. The minister used a nice expression to-day when he said, 'the water of life, which gushes from the Rock of Ages.'"

21st.—"I feel better in body than I have since Christmas. I did my duty to-night, and conscience approves though my friends may scorn."

22nd.—"I need a humble spirit before I can offer a pleasing sacrifice to my God."

23rd.—"I feel very grateful to God for restored health and for having enabled me to obey conscience. Truly, "If God be for us, who can be against us?'"

25th.—"School is just dismissed, and with a sigh of relief I let my children go. It is with a grateful heart I review the past school week—everything pleasant and smooth, and health restored. Surely I of all persons should love the Giver."

March 2.—"I feel and know that God has answered prayer, and yet I *dare* to doubt Him."

6th.—"I feel that God's grace has been with me although I have sinned in thought and word."

11th.—"Have just dismissed school and feel quite well pleased. The children did well and sang nicely. On the whole, 'It is pleasant teaching public school.'"

31st.—"It does not seem to me I am doing good; at least, I cannot see it."

April 3.—"Felt strengthened during the day by reading and prayer."

14th.—"Have closed school for another week and have been saying farewell to one of the best boys that ever blessed a school-room with his presence. Such feelings make us tender and serve to show the love which God has placed in our hearts. I feel thankful that God ever gave me the faculty to get along so well with my dear scholars. They are all good and kind."

15th.—"I wonder why it is I do not think that 'every idle word' must have an account rendered, and yet God implanted merriment in our natures."

21st.—"Have thought more of school, and through the day God often came to me in thought, for which I am thankful. Must battle against indolence."

March 24.—"I do not wonder Scott

> 'Deemed each hour of musing
> A step upon the road to heaven.'"

25th.—"This is my birthday, and I am twenty-two. Girlhood days are ever held in loving remembrance, but I would not wish to live them over. I only pray that with the responsibilities of mature life I may have grace to assist in discharging my duty.'"

27th.—"If I could but remember 'Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you.' Visions of what I might do have come to me, and I must remember, 'to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, it is sin.' I pray earnestly to be more devoted to my Heavenly Father."

April 27.—"Truly,

> 'Even friends might weep
> Whenever we fall to thinking
> Of all we are and all we might have been.'"

May 1.—"It is a privilege to pray to God for comfort and hope."

5th.—"I forget at times, 'In the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand.'"

7th.—"To eat, sleep, teach, visit and write takes most of my time. Spent a truly pleasant evening—more than pleasant—a heart-encouraging, soul-strengthening one."

8th.—"A day which should make us better, nobler, and stronger for work, physical and mental. Have taken classes in two Sunday-schools, and truly find 'the yoke easy and the burden light.'"

27th.—"I pray I may in fuller measure realize, 'They that trust in the Lord shall not want any good thing.'"

June 5.—"Ten years ago to-day cousin John died. I was but a happy, light-hearted child, but can remember even then

praying earnestly to God. Why, then, should I despair of the children now under my charge? And yet I do."

8th.—"Two pictures—six years ago a merry group of pupils homeward bound. To-day one is married, four have been or are teachers, one a minister, two still at home, and I, the writer, here. However,

'Would you be young again?
So would not I."

22nd.—"Spent the evening and stayed all night at a place where I again felt the power of the Spirit in family worship, when *I personally was prayed for.*"

July 3.—"I am leaving my Sunday-school pupils with a deep feeling of anxiety for their welfare, during summer vacation. I read a goodly portion of the prophecies of Jeremiah; have also had communion with God and illustrations of answered prayer. I feel weak, earthly, pharisaical and guilty."

6th.—"Have said good-bye to all. Called at my *Bethel* and felt the solemnity, as usual. Truly I have found that God directs those who trust Him, and makes even their enemies to be at peace."

11th.—"I never remember of spending time more pleasantly than I have here (Decew Falls). I believe religion is the secret of all their happiness. Every one whom I meet is a Christian."

30th.—

"Count that day lost whose low-descending sun
Views from thy hand no noble action done."

Lost! Lost! Lost!"

Sept. 11.—"I thank God that I feel a love for Him, and a stronger desire to do good than I ever did before. I am also thankful for having been taught to keep holy the Sabbath-day, though I often fall short."

16th.—"The commonplace of common things."

18th.—"Have read the Book of Genesis. Taught Bible class. Thought too much of my friends' besetting sins when perhaps I had better look at my own. Yet God has been near me. Am more thankful than ever for a Christian mother."

23rd.—"Enjoyed a walk this morning. Beautiful blue sky;

a fresh breeze blowing; leaves just coloring. Involuntarily drew forth praise to the Creator."

27th.—"Was told of my influence on a scholar, which has much encouraged me."

Oct. 1.—"Feel a weight of responsibility for to-morrow's duty, to impress by precept and example the beauty of *giving*."

2nd.—"Have read Leviticus and Hebrews—'the Holy Ghost's commentary on the tabernacle.' I am just beginning to see the wonderful construction of the Bible."

8th.—"I am not showing to those near and dear to me the Christian Spirit I should."

9th.—"Felt much encouraged in Sunday-school to day when the children brought their little gifts. Sometimes I feel down-hearted, but Christ's own disciples once forsook Him and fled."

11th.—"Am collecting for Bible Society, and learn—if nothing more—human nature."

18th.—"Have need to remember 'Even Christ pleased not Himself.'"

Nov. 1.—"Was very much pleased to find one of my scholars thinking seriously of her future welfare."

2nd.—"It fills my heart with gratitude to Almighty God that He has kept me by a mother's prayers."

Dec. 5.—"Have not spiritually enjoyed this holy Sabbath as much as I might. Heard a Presbyterian minister preach. He is the only man I ever heard in the pulpit pray for school-teachers."

7th.—"I knelt to-night with two scholars and asked God's blessing upon them. If I have faith I know God will bless the effort."

9th.—"I have a thankful heart. By God's grace I tried to sow the good seed."

18th.— "A peace was on the earth abroad,
It was the holy peace of God."

1882.

Jan. 1.—"The last day of the old year has passed away and the New Year is ushered in. What a heart-encouraging, soul-stirring sermon we heard to-day from Rev. J. L. Robertson, from James iv. 14–15, 'If the Lord will.' Were the actions of our life tested by that, there would be fewer missteps; but on taking the

'retrospective look,' many thoughts, sad and glad, arise. In all the past we can trace God's Providence. If we could only go forward in the discharge of duty, relying on God's promises, we would not have so much to regret. *High motives strengthened.*"

12th.—"Tried to teach my pupils to 'act—*act* in the living present.'"

30th.—"Am I a brave coral builder?"

Feb. 5.—"I write here with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow. Joy—because I have received evidence that the seed sown is growing. Sorrow—because sloth prevented me from doing more."

10th.—"I did not 'radiate God's sunshine' as much in my school as I might have done."

March 9.—"What shall I do? Fight with that 'calm, patient enduring, of which women alone are capable.'"

13th.—"Am trying to manage my school by using only kind words. May God give me sufficient strength to do it."

15th.—"The Inspector said I had the best order in the county. If mine is the best, I pity the worst. My scholars do not all work from love of it, but a few work earnestly."

21st.—"I find just as I pray, so I succeed."

May 5.—"An eventful day for me. I have by public profession acknowledged Jesus to be my Saviour. May I ever be faithful uuto death."

22nd.—"So sick with indigestion, and yet I should remember 'affliction is but a whisper from the world to come.'"

26th.—"School passed more pleasantly than I deserve. Dear little children! I should remember that a moment's work on clay tells more than an hour's work on brick."

June 6.—"Oh, how I waste moments! forgetting that the hours, days and years are made of them."

9th.— "'The trivial round, the common task
Should furnish all we ought to ask.'

But does it?"

10th.—"One may see 'heavenly visions' on a sick bed that hours of health would have prevented, and when health is restored be led to say like Paul, 'I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.'"

Aug. 31.—"This *only life* is passing away and I waste the moments."

Sept. 18.—"Truly 'Godliness is profitable both for the life that now is and the life that is to come.'"

Oct. 23.—"My pupils have done well for the Bible Society. Over twenty names have been given me, and their little cramped printing is prettier to me than a picture; but oh! how I dread asking the older people! However, I must try and remember to give my services as well as my money, 'not grudgingly or of necessity.'"

Nov. 8.—"The time seems to be passing away unimproved. Every morning when I say 'imprint upon our minds the good instructions we may this day receive,' I feel I am not earnest enough."

Dec. 3.—"I feel sad to-night, knowing 'she hath *not* done what she could.'"

These need no comment. They are their own interpreter.

It may be interesting to know that among her correspondence, her letters marked "Abingdon pupils" attest that her labor was not in vain, and in handwriting like her own are found thoughts also similar to her own. These letters breathe the fullest confidence and sympathy even after months and years of separation, and they express so often and in many ways that her teaching lived on, in her scholars. In some the love of poetry lives, in others the kindness to them in hours of trouble was never forgotten; the world of beauty was opened up by the moss, ferns and flowers on the teacher's desk, so tastefully arranged long ago and often recalled. Beautiful expressions in reading continue to be noted, and other scholars returning from school recall the pleasant Friday evening lessons with their deeper meanings, which she ever sought to instil.

After leaving Abingdon she spent some months in Hamilton, which gave her an impetus in literary work, as attested by her letters and essays.

Then after a few months at home and after two years' absence from it, she again resumed her work as a teacher.

CHAPTER VI.

Last Teaching.

VALENS SCHOOL, 1885-87.

THESE were the closing years of her life-work. They were the years of her ripened experience, the years in which she brought to bear all the gathered wisdom of her past life; the years of her deepest desire and her most entire devotion to the work and the most whole-hearted consecration to her life-purpose of living for the good of others, the years during which she realized most fully the high privilege and the deep responsibility of the teacher, the years above all others in which she enjoyed the work of her calling, and counted it a joy to labor for the welfare of those entrusted to her charge, during which she seemed to work under the deep and often expressed conviction that her time was short. It was with a thrill of pleasure that the writer heard the announcement that she had accepted the charge of the Valens School, under the deep conviction that the best interests of all concerned would receive her most hearty sympathy and earnest efforts, that her coming would be fraught with blessing to the neighborhood, and the highest expectations were more than realized. Owing to her kind and conciliatory manner and her good common sense, divisions that had been, began to heal, and long before she left they had entirely disappeared. She gained the good will of her pupils, and through them obtained access to the homes from whence they came, and to obtain access to them was to make them her friends, and soon she became an acknowledged power in the community, and even outside of her section, no one was more welcome to any home than Jessie Robertson.

Her cheerful face, kindly manner, and winning ways made her a favorite wherever she went.

THE SECRET OF HER SUCCESS.

The deep conviction that if she had a mission on earth, that mission was "to teach," and that conviction found expression day by day in her patient and persistent efforts on behalf of those entrusted to her. It helped at the same time to sustain her under all the difficulties and discouragements incident to the daily routine of school life, and nerved her to effort even when no immediate results were apparent, in the firmest confidence that sooner or later the fruit of her labor would appear. Her sanguine temperament led her to cherish high expectations, and often these from the very nature of the case frequently led to discouragement—a very natural result, yet one she felt deeply. But her deep sense of responsibility led her not only to patient and persistent effort, but to fervent, earnest prayer on behalf of those in whom she was so deeply interested. In conversation with the writer she stated that even when not yet a Christian herself, yet so impressed was she with the need of God's help for herself and of His blessing on her work, that when alone, never did she leave the school-room without kneeling down and asking God's blessing on the work of the day that had gone by, and an earnest cry to God for guidance and help, that she might be enabled to live and work as God would have her do.

The following extract from a letter to the writer brings out clearly her deep sense of the need of Divine help and blessing. It is dated :

"'Burnside,' Valens, May 18, 1886.

"Ever since I first taught school, even when a sentimental, impulsive, emotional child, for I was only that when I began to teach, I have always knelt in the quiet school-room asking God to bless the day's labors, and to fit us for the coming ones. Any success I may have had, I attribute in a great measure to that."

Realizing, even when apparently a light-hearted girl, that the trust committed to her in the charge and care of her pupils was one that unerring wisdom and Divine help alone could make her rightfully and successfully discharge; and after becoming a

Christian, she brought the same sense of deep responsibility and hallowed trust, the same earnest purpose, but all from a higher vantage ground, with greater power and a deeper joy in all her work. Animated by these motives, she threw her whole heart and energy into her work, and her success, in its highest sense, was in keeping with her motives and aims. Do not mistake me. I am now speaking of her in the ideal she set before her, and our ideal is after all our truest selves.

Referring to this period—her work in the Valens school—in the last letter which it was the sorrowful privilege of the writer to receive from her, and written not long before her death, and after her health had begun to fail, she added:

"Emotions well up, as I remember the many, many times I knelt alone at the places where they sat in school, as the twilight shadows gathered deeply about me, asking that their young feet might be led into the right way, and that their young lives might be early consecrated to Him who gave them. I had not heard of W—'s success before, but wrote immediately, letting him know of the pleasure it gave me. Surely that teacher who knows not of the bliss it brings when one and another of his or her boys and girls are thus drawn into the fold, loses what is to me a foretaste of the joy of heaven."

It was dated, Welland, Aug. 30th, 1888, and in it she referred by name to one and another of her pupils of her first year of labor there.

Thus occupied the time flew swiftly by. The close of the second year in the Valens school had come. She had made her way into the affections of the young and gained the respect and entire confidence of the old. She was a felt power in the section. On the closing day of her second year she was presented with a valuable writing desk and gold pen, and the following address:

"DEAR AND RESPECTED TEACHER:

"At the close of your second year's labors in our midst, we desire to approach you and ask your acceptance of this Writing Desk as a tribute to your worth, as a mark of our appreciation of your earnest and unwearying efforts on behalf of our present and eternal welfare, as a memento of your kindly words, loving acts, and the hallowed associations that cluster round the memories of the past. We do not present it in any shape as a reward. Your reward is of a far higher and more enduring nature. It is found in the conscious sincerity of purpose, however imperfect in execution, to bring all your influence to bear on the side of what is pure and true, and in the *sense* that your influence thus exercised is enduring and your work eternal. Its true measure will only be

ascertained and its full recompense received on that day, when He, whose loving heart and kindly eye follows with tender sympathy every word spoken and every effort put forth on his behalf, shall sit upon the great white throne and reveal before an assembled world the full fruition of all your labors, and utter His 'well done,' and 'ye did it unto me.'

"We rejoice that you are to remain with us another year, and express the hope that under the blending of a sense of high privilege, holy trust, precious opportunity and deep responsibility on your part, and a cordial response on ours, it may be fraught with happy memories and crowned with abundant blessing, and when the parting time comes, as come it must, and the currents of our lives separate as streams that part to meet again in the broad ocean, so as the tide of time bears us onward toward the sunset of life, that among all the green spots and glad remembrances of that voyage, the recollection of the hours spent in the Valens school-house will ever retain their fragrance, and their very memory be a benediction to the soul.

"Finally we pray for you many happy days, and that while these days go by, God will bless you and make you a blessing, and that when our earthly work is done, we may be gathered one and all around the throne above, and spend an endless eternity together."

(Signed by the members of what was afterwards the 'Re-union Class.')

"Valens, December 22, 1886."

CHAPTER VII.

Over * Atlantic * Waves.

CLOSE OF TEACHING.

IT was during the early part of 1886 that she arranged with her trustees for an extension of her summer vacation in order to enable her to visit Scotland and England. The dream of visiting the land of her fathers, the home of her kindred, and the ashes of her ancestors, had long haunted her imagination, and flitted like the sunlight through her mind and fired her heart, and now that that day dream was about to be realized, it filled her with joyful anticipations and kindled all the enthusiasm of her nature. In a letter written on board the steamer Circassian, July 20, 1886, as she was nearing the Irish coast, after describing the voyage, the fellow-passengers, and a Sabbath on ship-board, she adds:

"I can scarcely realize that one of the darling dreams of childhood is about to be fulfilled; that my foot is about to tread the childhood walks of my beloved mother's Scotch home; that the heather hills of dear old Scotland are all but in sight. I fear I do not fully realize the privilege I am about to enjoy."

Scotland was dear to her as her father's native land, her mother's youthful home, as well as for all its heroic and historical associations in the ages of the past.

It may not be out of place here to give a few extracts from letters received from her pupils on the eve of leaving for Scotland, expressive of their kindly regard, their good wishes, and sense of obligation or indebtedness to her for all that she had done for them:

"VALENS, July 1, 1886.

"I have very much pleasure in writing to you this evening. I must tell you how very thankful I am to you for all that you have done for me during the time you have been my teacher. I will never be able to repay you for all you have done for me, and I hope that you will pardon me for all in which I have failed to do as I ought toward you. I will remember you till we meet again, and I pray that we may be spared to do so, and wish you a safe voyage."

"VALENS, July 2, 1886.

"It is with the greatest of pleasure that I write you these few lines, to keep you in remembrance of the days we have spent together. I hope your journey may be full of joyous hours and pleasant scenes, and wherever you may be, through life, you may turn this page over and think of your friends of 1886, in the Valens school. I hope that your path through life may be free from trouble and care, and if ever I can do you a favor, I shall be glad to do so. I thank you very much for what you have done for *me*."

"VALENS, July 2, 1886.

"In writing a few lines to you, let me say I have a great deal to thank you for, both in and out of school; the good example you have ever set before me and the many ways in which you have tried to lead me into a new train of thought and to higher aims in life. It will never be known in this world the good you are doing in this school among the scholars. I would also thank you for all the assistance you have given me in my studies. You have done your part and you have done it well. I am sorry that I ever caused you any trouble in school. I was ever sorry for it myself after I had done it, and I ask your forgiveness now. I would thank you, too, for your daily prayers on my behalf. Continue to pray for me. I remember you also, but more especially of late. If it would not trouble you too much, I would like you to write to me sometimes. Hoping you may have a safe journey to the Fatherland, and spend a pleasant vacation."

"VALENS, July 2, 1886.

"I am thankful to you for all the good you have done to me. You led me to draw near to God and made me see how good He is to us all. I am sorry that you are going away to the old country, and yet I am glad. My sorrow is not from jealousy, but it is the thought that we may never meet again in this world, though we will meet in heaven where we will never part again, but will dwell in the smile of Jesus' face. I pray God that He may have mercy upon us and gather us at last around His throne, our sisters and brothers and all those we love, and I know that He will answer my prayer if it is for His glory and our good. Dear teacher, you have taught me many things, such as being useful and kind, and to hold my temper in check: that is where I most fail. I must thank you over again, because I know that I have often caused you trouble. I will try and do better in future. It is sometimes hard to do what

is right and honest, is it not? But when God asks us, we must try. We will miss you terribly at home and at school. I hope you will have a safe and pleasant voyage. God bless you."

"VALENS, July 2, 1886.

"For the last time allow me to call you teacher. I'm sorry that it is the last time, and yet I suppose I ought not to be so, but how can I leave you and school just now? The air seems full of farewells. You will have the others, but I have no one. I can scarcely write, my eyes grow dim so often. I need not say that I have no one. O, thanks to you, I have some one to go with me all through my life. Some one to work for just as you work, and oh, that any of my attempts may have the same results as yours! O, I can never, never thank you enough that you have made my school days so happy, so truly happy! You asked my forgiveness—I have nothing to forgive, for I often thought that I deserved more reprimands than you ever gave me. I have been happier at the Valens school with you than I have ever been, and if you should feel discouraged at any time, O remember, that your influence has been for good. It has brought sunshine to one soul and I know it has made happy not only me, but the other scholars, too. Valens school days will always be a grateful remembrance to me. Accept my best wishes for a pleasant voyage across the Atlantic and a happy visit to Scotland. I sign myself for the last time, your dear pupil."

These extracts are sufficient to show the estimation in which she was held by her pupils, and the kindly, confidential relations which ever existed between them. Mutual confidence, mutual respect, and her deep interest in their present and eternal welfare, understood and acknowledged by them, made all the stronger the ties that bound them together, and all the deeper and truer the friendship thus formed and fostered. In due time she reached the land of her fathers. Her letters from Scotland give expression to the joy and gladness which filled her mind as she visited those places and scenes of historic interest and natural beauty. She visited London, that great throbbing heart of the commercial world, viewed its places of interest, whose historic associations and memories connect the far distant past with the living present, in war, architecture, literature, trade and commerce. Took in its social contrasts, its palatial residences and its poverty-stricken hovels; the magnificence and the meanness; the lordly mansion and the lowly [illegible]; some rolling in wealth and affluence, others grovelling in abject poverty and squalid wretchedness—a world in itself, in every phase of human life, social standing, sin and misery. It was a revelation

to her, widening her intellectual vision and touching her human sympathy, rousing her moral nature and nerving her to more earnest effort in her own sphere, for the welfare of others. She visited the Colonial Exhibition, with its world-wide representation of the human race, the gathering of all its kindreds, tongues and peoples, typical of the last "*great gathering.*" She saw the collected exhibits of mechanical and industrial skill of the world, from the minutest articles, requiring the microscope to see clearly, to the mighty engine that gave life and motion to the thousand busy scenes around her. And amid it all there was nothing that interested her so much, or of which she felt so proud, as the exhibits of her own native Province of Ontario. In that department she felt once more at home.

After her visit to London, she returned again to Scotland, and visited its places of interest, its centres of trade and shipbuilding; its seats of learning, the moorlands of her heroes, the scenes sacred to the muse and the martyr, and gathered new inspiration from them all, and deeper heart for all her work. She visited the places hallowed by the presence of her mother in the days gone by; the ashes of her kindred sleeping in the dust till the last trumpet sounds. She worshipped in the cathedral amid the noblest of the land, and in the little rural church, and heard the *old, old story*, and felt that that alone could satisfy the longing of the human heart. But amid all these scenes, so much calculated to interest and make forgetful of other and distant ones, yet in her letters to the writer she told how often her heart and thoughts would turn to the quiet country school in the land of her birth, to the little faces and forms she had left behind her; to her hours of labor in their midst; to the twilight hour in that school-room, where so often she had knelt in prayer to God for them, one by one, day by day, when the evening shadows gathered round her; and alone with God poured out her heart before Him and committed all to Him anew. However far away, she never forgot the objects of her trust, or allowed her interest in their welfare to flag.

The following extract from a letter to her sister, who took charge of her school during her absence, shows what her thoughts and feelings were regarding her work. It is dated Glasgow, Aug. 16th, 1886, the day on which the school opened. It reads as

follows: "The first day's teaching in Valens will be over, and I cannot 'resist the spirit' to write you. Dear little children, they trouble me when I am with them, but when separated from them, I forget their failings and remember only their virtues." Other letters, written when across the Atlantic, may be found in another chapter.

In due time, after meeting with a number of Canadian friends, like herself, visitors to the "old land," to meet whom was to feel herself at home, she arrived once more at Valens, and resumed her labors among those to whom her heart had so longingly turned during her separation from them. She did so with the range of her mental vision widened by a largely increased fund of knowledge of the world in general; with her mind stored with facts and incidents which she had carefully gathered by the way, with the object of bringing all to bear on her life-work. Two things deeply pressed themselves on her mind, namely, a deeper love for her native land, and more exalted views of the dignity of her calling; and it was to the latter especially that, in conversation with the writer, she most frequently referred, and particularly to that aspect of the work of the teacher having reference to the formation of "moral character," viewing all else as secondary and subsidiary to that great end. The deepest desire of her heart seemed to be to lay the foundation, and build up, as far as possible, the superstructure of moral character in the hearts and lives of her pupils. She never met the writer after her return, when opportunity offered, without referring to that aspect of her life's work and her deep, earnest purpose to devote the remainder of her teaching days more whole-heartedly than ever to the faithful prosecution of her daily duties. With that great end in view the time glided swiftly by. Her second year closed and her third and last opened. Its months passed by without any event of importance, aside from the routine of ordinary school work. The vacation came and passed; the autumn session commenced. Near the end of October she sent in her resignation to the Board of Trustees, and in connexion with that event she gave expression to her feelings in a letter to the writer, from which the following is an extract:

"VALENS, Oct. 27, 1887.

"I have just finished writing the official notice, which means that my stay amongst the people of Valens will terminate eight weeks from Friday night, and a strong impulse comes to me to write to you. I had some thought since summer vacation of taking this step, but have only fully decided this week. I do not think much of it at present, but when the time comes to part I know I shall feel the severing of the tie very keenly, for severing my connexion with school means breaking connexion with everything—Sunday school, church, prayer-meeting, missionary meeting and social ties. I am indeed thankful that my steps were directed here. It seems to me I have taught in the truest sense more than I ever did before; and when I say that, I do not mean that I have done what I might or what I could have done. Far from it. I feel at times so deeply my own unfaithfulness that the thought of my work is a burden. To think of those young immortal beings under my care for three years, and yet to how few have I spoken personally about the great matter of their soul's salvation. God helping me, I intend to speak to all those whom I think able to comprehend what I mean, before I leave, and I ask your prayers that I may be guided aright."

The few intervening weeks passed quickly, and the closing day came. Tuesday, the 20th of December, 1887, she severed her official connection with the Valens section, though the official tie was but a fragile thread compared with the deeper and stronger bonds which united her to the people, young and old, of that neighborhood. A number of friends gathered in the afternoon of that day to bid her farewell, at the close of her public service in their midst, and were treated to a characteristic mingling of entertainment, examination and farewell, musical, poetical and religious, in which pupils and friends joined. At the close she was presented with a beautiful album and Bible, and the following address:

"DEAR AND RESPECTED TEACHER,—At the close of your third year's labors in our midst, and the termination of your relationship to us as teacher, it is with mingled feelings of grief and gladness that we approach you at this time and ask your acceptance of this album and Bible, as a mark of our appreciation of your personal worth, your sincerity of purpose, your unwearying efforts on behalf of our present and eternal welfare. We desire to bear this testimony, that while you have sought earnestly and faithfully to instruct us in every branch of our course of studies, yet your highest aim has been to lay the foundations of, and build up, 'moral character,' that morality, which has its roots in the Cross of Christ.

"We grieve that the happy relationship that has existed during these past years is about to terminate; and while we express our sorrow at the fact, yet we

would at the same time rejoice that all the happy memories and hallowed associations and influences of *that* past are imperishably and forever ours. They have become part of ourselves. Neither time nor space, distance nor death can separate them from us or us from them. They will go with us through life, lie down with us in death, rise with us at the resurrection, stand with us at the judgment, and abide with us throughout eternity.

"And while we cannot without a pang of sadness say, "Farewell" to the relationship that has so happily existed between us, yet we rejoice that all that has made that relationship a benefit and a blessing, will still remain when the formal tie that bound us has been severed.

"It will still be yours to watch over and seek to cherish the seed you have been honored of God to sow, by kindly counsel and intercessory prayer. It will be ours to cherish these counsels and seek to live in accord with them, that in us you may live to reap your highest earthly reward, in seeing us growing up reverential, loving, true-hearted and God-fearing men and women.

"And now, as we bid you a kindly and regretful farewell, we pray God that every kindly, loving word spoken by you, in His name, may be owned and blessed by Him and bear abundant fruit. May He grant you many happy days and much good in them. May he bless you and make you a blessing all your life, and when life's pilgrimage, with all its meetings and partings, its labors and toils, its joys and sorrows, is ended, may we all meet around the throne above, and spend eternity together."

(Signed on behalf of the school.)

"Valens, Dec. 20, 1887."

Miss Robertson made a brief and touching reply. The gathering joined in singing "Shall we meet Beyond the River?" and then gathered around the Throne of Grace, and under a sense of His gracious presence, commended all the past to Him, committed all the future to His unerring wisdom, His covenant-keeping faithfulness and Almighty help, until life's pilgrimage should end. And as the evening shades began to fall, she passed out from that room, sacred to so many memories of the past, hallowed by so many tender associations, and sanctified by so many prayers, and her formal connexion with the Valens school and school section was severed for ever.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sabbath * School * and * Mission Work.

LETTERS FROM HER SCHOLARS.

IT is difficult to separate her work in the Sabbath-school from her daily school life, the two were so intertwined and so much overlapped each other, or were so interwoven into each other, that they may be said to have formed only one life-work, and yet it deserves a separate notice in these memoirs. She united with the congregation here (Beverly), on 27th May, 1885, by certificate from St. Paul's Church, Hamilton, and from that hour to the close of her connexion with us she remained loyal to the best interests of the cause of Christ in our midst. A branch Sabbath-school met in the school-house in which she taught eight months of the year. The Bible-class in connexion with the same Sabbath-school continued to meet during the winter months as well, and to this class she joined herself immediately on coming into the section. As soon as the Sabbath-school opened in the spring of 1885 she took charge of the senior girls' class, a position which she held until the close of the Sabbath-school in 1887, and had the joy of seeing a number of the members of her class giving themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ. Her co-workers in the Sabbath-school teaching staff were whole-hearted Christians; and outside of those, in connexion with the Bible-class were others like-minded, who were ever ready to assist in the absence of any of the regular teachers, and to one of whom she entrusted her class during her absence in Scotland in the midsummer of 1886, and who suc-

ceeded her in the charge of her class when she left. Her daily contact with, and kindly and intimate relation to the children and young people of the school, made her help of the greatest value. She had a peculiar faculty of discerning when the word of God had touched any heart, and where there was any anxiety about spiritual things; and a way, too, that was peculiarly her own, of securing the entire confidence of those who were thus in a state of concern about their souls, so as to win from them the story of all their griefs and difficulties; and without in the least betraying the confidence thus reposed in her, she was able to guide the Bible-class teacher so as to speak a word in season, in such a way as to seem like an arrow shot at a venture, or to open the way for a quiet personal conversation, as opportunity offered, or to write in a kindly way and touch the points of difficulty in such a manner as to deal fully with them; and many blessed results could be mentioned as arising from the words thus spoken, and the personal interviews to which these hints opened the way. Sometimes it was a request to unite in prayer on behalf of some member of the class in particular, or on behalf of some other in which she felt interested. Some of these were answered while she lived, some remain unanswered still, but the intercession on their behalf has not ceased. God is the hearer and answerer of prayer, and in the last letter which the writer received from her, she referred to some of those very instances, in the firm belief that these prayers will one day be answered and God glorified in the salvation of those for whom these intercessions had ascended for years.

She thus blended together her Sabbath-school and day-school work, making her influence felt in each, and thus giving an added power to every effort put forth by her. She corresponded constantly with the members of her class as well as the pupils of her school, and was thus able to say much that could not otherwise have been said, and put it in a more durable form than merely by conversation it would have been possible for her to do. Extracts from answers to these letters, at the close of this chapter, will best illustrate the nature and extent of that correspondence. On no class in the community did she exercise a more powerful influence than on the young men; and many a manly aspiration and noble

desire had their origin in the influence she exercised on those who came within the sphere of its operation. In a letter to the writer from a young medical student, when referring to her, he said, "If the mass of the young women of to-day were of her stamp and character, the young men of to-day in the mass would be very different from what they are," and added, "It will always and in every place be true of Jessie Robertson, that '*She hath done what she could.*'"

Her departure left a void in the neighborhood, but nowhere was her absence more keenly felt than in the circle of the teachers of the Sabbath-school. Hers is, and will be, a cherished memory, and an affectionate remembrance, in the case of her fellow-teachers, as long as life lasts, to those who remain; for since then the circle has been again invaded, and the friends, separated for a short time, have joined hands "over the river," and await the filling in of the divided circle on the other shore.

HER MISSION WORK.

Another feature of her efforts and influence is worthy of note, viz., her endeavors to implant and develop a missionary spirit in the hearts and lives of her pupils. Her mode of working will be best illustrated by one or two special instances:

Three months after she came to Valens to take charge of the school, Dr. Robertson, the North-west Superintendent of Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, delivered an address on mission work with all the earnestness and enthusiasm which pervades his own mind, and which he has the faculty of arousing in others. She was present on that occasion. So were a number of her elder pupils. The next day she asked each of them to write as a "composition" all that they remembered of this address, and then she asked them for a contribution on behalf of the cause which he had so earnestly and successfully pleaded. The sum was not large, but it was forwarded to the superintendent and duly acknowledged by him in a letter to the class, through their teacher, and that letter was used of God as a means of deeply impressing the heart of at least one member of that class, and of giving all a deeper interest in mission work. In this way she utilized passing events so

as to make a permanent impression in the minds and hearts of those intrusted to her care.

She succeeded also in enlisting the sympathies of the younger children in her school in mission work, and received their voluntary offerings. They were named the "Little Candles" of Valens school, and their first contributions were sent to their Indian friends in the North-west, and enclosed with the amount were the names of the little contributors in their own handwriting.

She was not one who urged others to give and withheld her own means. She led in the way in which she asked others to follow. In her journal for 1887, the last year she was in Valens, and the year during which the above little "band" was in active operation, we find the following entry: "For Jesus' sake." The dates, the contributions and the objects contributed to, are also given, the total amounting to over one-tenth of her income. She had learned that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," and that "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth"; while her memory is gratefully cherished by each of that band of little ones who from her first learned the pleasure of giving.

Some extracts from letters of these scholars, written to her when she was yet with them, show in their own words her influence and her teaching. They are as follows:

"You have been very good in trying to lead us in the narrow way."

"You have taught us about Christ."

"You wanted your class to write you a letter to tell you if they were Christians. I am not one. Oh, how I would like to be! Without Christ I cannot; but Him I have not yet found."

"When I ask the Father above for strength or anything, He always gives it. I will try and get all the rest to be Christians. 'Won't that be joyful when we meet to part no more?'"

"I am very happy to tell you I am sure I am a Christian. One night last week I lay awake a long time thinking. Then I got up and prayed that God would take away my sins and make me a true and sincere Christian."

"I think the lessons are nice every Sunday, and I seem to enjoy them better than I could a while ago. My dear teacher, you have been the one who has brought me so near God; and my heart is not so hard now. I understood and liked so much the lesson we had about confessing Christ. I would

like to say not only with my lips, but with my heart, 'I'm not ashamed to own my Lord.'"

"I thank you very kindly for the Bible you gave me. As each day goes by I will study it more. I love to go to Sunday-school to learn about our Saviour Jesus Christ. Sometimes I think I am Christ's, and the next time I think I am a long way from him. I have no one else to speak to me so kindly and softly as you do."

"I love the Saviour and believe His Word. I would like to be a true Christian. I have asked myself the question, 'Where art thou?' and have prayed God to show me. I ask Him to help me in all my difficulties, and I know He does. May He help me to do my life-work well. As we are about to separate and our life-paths go in different ways, I can only hope we shall meet again on the 'beautiful shore,' never to part again. I thank you very much for all the good instructions and good example you have shown me in the past three years. May God bless you in your daily work, whatever it may be."

"To-morrow will be your last Sunday to teach us. I am very sorry it is so, for I have learned a great deal since I have been in your class. You want to know about my burden and troubles, and if I have truly given my heart to Jesus Christ. I think of the 'living water,' that first lesson that you taught me. I saw that it was for me, but I don't think that I have really drunk of the living water yet. But pray to God to give me that living water that I may not thirst again, and that living bread, that I may not hunger again. O do pray for me, my dear teacher, for I think that my heart is hard yet. You told me all Christians have failings, so I think I have my trouble in my temper, which doesn't seem to get any better. But if I don't try to keep it in check, it will get the better of me. Dear teacher, will you please write me a letter before you go away? It will help me some. That text, 'Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, to-day and forever,' is just grand. If we could just be like Christ, what a pleasure it would be. I will read the lesson for to-morrow many times. When you are far away it will be a remembrance of the last Sunday that you taught me. What grand words those are which tell us, He will send the Comforter, that He may abide with us for ever. Good-bye. May God bless you and guide you."

"Having ended my school days with you as a pupil, I will write a few lines in remembrance of days gone by. You did everything in your power for my advantage and success. I ask you to pardon me for the past. I start before long on my own journey through life alone. I want you to remember me ever in your devotions."

"I promised to write and tell you my trouble. I want to be saved. You spoke to me of this last winter, and I have prayed ever since, but have not found peace. I cannot believe God will save such a sinner as I am, and yet if

I do not believe I cannot be saved. I feel as if it were indeed a solemn thing to live."

"I never was at a school I liked so well as Valens, and the scholars, too. It is my earnest prayer every day that we may all meet each other again in heaven. There are some in our class who have not yet accepted Christ Jesus as their Saviour. I hope it will not be long before they have all given themselves to Him. I have accepted Him as my Saviour, and I will work for Him and try and bring others to Christ. I feel so happy now. I remember the night very well. I was sitting alone with my Bible and hymn-book. I came to a few lines in the latter and studied over them, and they just seemed to melt my heart, and I believed that Jesus died for *me* on the cross, so I just asked Him to take me and I gave myself to Him that very night."

"All earthly joys may leave us, trials and sufferings, sorrows and misfortunes overwhelm us, yet all is well to him who hears a still small voice above the storm. May I ask you to remember me in prayer that I may be given strength to resist temptation, and that my feet may be ever guided onward and upward in the Divine path? I shall try and remember you each day at the 'holy hour' till the 'reunion.'"

"Though the tie that formerly bound us as scholar and teacher is severed, yet I hope that our correspondence will be carried on as friend with friend. Allow me to thank you for the interest you have taken in my spiritual welfare. I am getting on very well. I think that it is great and wondrous love on His part, that our Master keeps us and allows us wavering creatures to be His servants at all. Truly the Christian life is a 'warfare' or else a sham."

"I desire you to forgive me for all I have done wrong. I am very sorry that all our happy intercourse as scholar and teacher are forever at an end, and that I call you my dear teacher for the last time."

CHAPTER IX.

Valens * Reminiscences.

RE-UNION AND LETTERS FROM ELDER PUPILS.

ANOTHER touching incident in connection with her leaving was an arrangement entered into with the members of her *Fourth Class* to hold a "reunion" at the end of ten years, when all who were alive or within reach, were to meet in the Valens' school-house, to recall all its pleasant memories and hallowed associations, to compare notes of their pilgrimage journeys in the interval, that with hearts kindled afresh with the glow of tender friendship, the slackened bands tightened once more, they might set out anew on the race of life; on its "home-stretch" to gather at last in the "Grand Reunion" of the Ransomed of the Lord, when they shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, when they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. The following is a copy of the card then printed:

Re-union.

VALENS SCHOOL-HOUSE, DECEMBER 23, 1897.

Lizzie Dickson,
Kate Gray,
Ann Mackellar,
Bella Cowie,
Will Gilbert,
Andrew Cowie,
David Patterson,
Will Dickson,
Jessie Robertson,
and friends.

Mizpah.

The youthful, glad, joyous, light-hearted company whose names appear on the above "card" little dreamed as they gathered that evening, that before another year had elapsed, before *one* year had passed, death would invade their happy circle, and that one link in that chain of friendship would have parted, and above all, that link into which all the others joined. The circle had lost its centre, so far as earthly presence was concerned. The cherished memory alone remains on earth. She left their midst in the bloom of health, the flush of youthful joy, the gladsome expectation of many happy days and the cherished expectation of that glad Re-union when the decade that lay between had glided by.

It may not be out of place to insert here a few lines from one of her pupils. It is entitled "*Valens Reminiscences.*" It reads:

"Our thoughts go yearning back
O'er that simple childhood's track,
When the longest road we knew
Was the one that led us to
The school-house."

Especially do our hearts yearn over the last years spent in the dear old school-house, sacred in its associations, sad in its memories of her who once so skilfully and with such rare tact directed the little busy bodies, instructed the active brains; so faithfully and influentially "cast the bread upon the waters"; the teacher, friend, adviser and helper of our school days. She has only gone before. In the other life she awaits the glorious "Re-union" and the "return after many days." Her intense interest in the work, which she has expressed as second only to the "holy calling," begat methods of teaching original and peculiarly her own. She was often weary *in* her work, never weary of it. In her boys and girls she saw the future men and women; and the nobility of life was unwearyingly held up before us. Who can say how many characters have been moulded, how many principles of right and wrong inculcated, how much stimulus to further advancement given, by the simple recital of verses suitable to the "little ones," and by lessons taught from the history of nations and of individuals, which sinking into the hearts of the scholars, will yet expand into unbounded circles of influence. When the "little ones'" own offerings were

sent to their heathen sisters, they were unconscious what a missionary spirit of holy unselfishness had been kindled within them. Compositions and letters were regarded as much more than merely school-exercises; and the loving advice given will be treasured while life lasts, and held as sacred in loving remembrance; and the seed sown in these will bring, nay, has brought, more than one of her pupils within "the kingdom." From the literature we learned to love books and to value them as a help to self-education. "Acknowledge God in all thy ways and He shall direct thy paths," said the Psalmist. Surely this life was an illustration of the fulfilment of that promise. In the morning many an unspoken prayer ascended from her seat of labor for blessings on the day's work, and the sunset, her favorite hour, sealed the prayer that rose from the then deserted school-house, and when sometimes the moonlight found her still there kneeling at one vacant seat, and another and another, we are led to exclaim, "Truly more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." "She being dead, yet speaketh." We can see on the school-room walls in quaint letters the motto, "God is Love," the echo of her teaching to the "little ones." Eternity will reveal the extent of her influence. The years will quickly pass until we have the grand and great "Re-union," when they that teach others to discern the truth "shall shine in the brightness of the firmament," and they that influence many to righteousness shall shine "as the stars for ever and ever."

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM ELDER PUPILS.

"It seems a long while since I spoke to you about those matters, and it was much longer that I thought before I spoke. I know I would have a greater influence if I were a Christian. I am so glad that I went to school when you came to teach. The last of my school days are, and will be, my happiest ones. I never thought of life being earnest and real until I heard it from you."

"I enjoy reading the books you lend me very much. I am sorry I will soon be leaving school. The time has passed so quickly, just like the waters of that little stream beside Valens school-house."

"I hope you will forgive me the wrongs I have done you. The first chapter I read in the Bible you gave me was about the waters of life. The first psalm was the seventy-third, and the first paraphrase was the one that begins

'Twas on that night when doomed to know.' All these are favorites. That was the chapter that made me think of God, love Jesus, and become a Christian."

"I have thanked God, and thank Him again, that He has permitted me to know you. You do not know how you have encouraged me. When we have had a talk it seems as if I am nearer God for days and weeks after. It has always been a pleasure to learn when you take such an interest in us."

"I cannot write to you without expressing my sincere thanks for the kind attention you have given both to my spiritual and worldly welfare. The words you spoke to me seemed to haunt me. I had a strong realization that if the Spirit left me this time He might not return again. I was compelled to pray for rest for my soul. I prayed with my whole heart, and then joy came."

"I cannot bear this state of mind much longer. I am getting worse every day, and I do believe that my heart is getting harder. Does every one have such trouble? Did you have it? You asked me if peace had come. Must I wait till it comes, or what must I do? I often wonder how the other girls who joined the Church had the courage to speak to any person on such matters. I know I cannot do it. I can talk more freely to you than to any one else. I am frightened of even my friends and relations knowing my feelings. O! will it all come right? If I should be converted, shall I then have courage to tell other people? Does believing really give rest, and satisfaction? It must be wonderful then. I never thought of 'Wonderful words of life' in that sense before. I read the Pilgrim's Progress to the 'Palace Beautiful,' but Christian did not start his journey as I feel. He was frightened of death. It is not that way with me. It was Mr. Mc ——'s speech at the examination in regard to starting life rightly, that has led me to realize I was not on the right track. I am tired of life of this kind, and do not know what to do. I wish you would help me. That last Sacrament Sunday I wished I could have crossed the aisle to you. I was sorry I did not tell you. I prayed that I might have courage to do so. I am glad that you know now. Our minister (Rev. S. Carruthers) preaches to suit me exactly. He seems as if he were trying to break down the obstacles that are in my way to the path of a Christian, although he knows nothing of my state of feeling.

"I don't know what I shall do when you go away. I would beg of you to stay, but perhaps God has other work for you to do. I always thought myself rich when I had two friends, Jesus and you. I was never troubled much about my soul's salvation till the time when you explained so beautifully the lesson about the living water. * * * Then you and I went for a walk, and after that night I felt at peace with God. So you see, dear teacher, this is one reason why you came to Valens. I feel very thankful that there is another world where we 'shall meet to part no more.' God bless and watch over you. I hope you have obtained satisfactory letters from those you wrote to about giving themselves to Christ, but if not, we must work on by God's help. I

know you are interested in how your scholar progresses in her voyage through life, and will be glad to hear that God has given me strength to speak for Christ. Some of the girls have not as yet given themselves to Him. They pray and yet have not rest and peace. I cannot explain it; unless you had that way to come through to be converted, you cannot understand. I was as they are, and I am Christ's now; and I think they will come through much in the same way as I did. 'Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, to thy precious bleeding side,' is my prayer."

"I like to think of the two closing scenes—closing for vacation—I saw at Valens. The remembrance of them did not close with the occasion. When remembered they bring thoughts of parting. Then the mind naturally wanders on by extending the subject."

"You wonder if I was not tempted to be sorry for taking the steps I did a year ago. I have not yet rued my choice. I tried the world and found much less satisfaction than I had anticipated. Things became more disgusting each day until I fled to the 'Rock of Refuge.'"

"The temptation I was then exposed to was not a little, and as you said, I did not always come off victorious, but often lost that 'peace.' Sabbath services and Wednesday evening prayer meetings I much enjoy. The latter I find to be a great spiritual help. The presence of the Spirit can not be mistaken, leaving no room for doubt. As you say, so may I, scarcely a day has passed in which your name has not been uttered at the throne of grace. This affords much encouragement, especially when the way appears to be darkened, and our prayers void. Sin drags a fellow down when he least expects to fall."

"You ask me to tell you how I am getting along in the 'good fight.' I can answer, Very poorly. Sometimes I am so discouraged with my failures; but then, as you once told me, I must just 'Cling to the Rock.' I was glad to be at church with you and our Master in common. On Sabbath evening Rev. J. K. Smith preached such a loving sermon, in which there was spiritual feeding."

"I thank you for your letter. I always feel better, more earnest, and just as if your talks put down all that is low, and turned my mind higher. I often wonder what and where I would be, if you had not come to teach at Valens."

"When I read your letters and see such words as 'honor,' 'purity,' 'modesty,' as my qualities, I cannot help but feel conscience-stricken, and think of the many times I have been deficient. However, I thank you for holding out what I may become."

"I will not think you are lecturing me, no matter what you may say of my mistakes and faults. I often wonder why you take so much interest in us all—I mean us scholars. I think it must arise from that sympathy with all our fellow-creatures, about which I have made quotations from David

Pryde. I have been re-writing the selections you gave us from Ruskin, from Blackie and from David Pryde, in ink, that I may keep them. In regard to dancing, I may say I am thoroughly sick of the word. I have argued the question with myself time and again; have tried to sum up all the good and all the evil there is in it, and I have prayed over it, too. Of one thing I am convinced, that those who not only ask, but *coax* professing Christians to indulge in what to them is questionable amusement, will, if yielded to, ridicule their want of courage and inconsistency. I shall have to give it up altogether, for it deadens my love for better things."

"I can only say, thanks, thanks for your beautiful present, the Bible. It seems that you had taught me a great deal of my better knowledge, and then sent me out armed with the 'Sword of the Spirit.' I shall read it more than I have hitherto done. The motto will be so useful to me, both in teaching in Sunday-school and in studying it for my own benefit."

"If I know my own mind at all, its inclination is to teach a school, in the deepest and truest sense of the term; to do some little good in that way."

"Since I left school, Miss Robertson, I think that you used to feed us intellectually. I prize the 'quotations' that you gave us more and more. It was you who first induced me to think of something beyond what my neighbors had for supper—to repeat an expression I once heard you use. I am trying to keep myself from that bad habit of 'gossip' and backbiting, so prevalent all over; but it is really hard to do sometimes. I despise myself when I practice either of these. I feel as if I were a hypocrite when I am with those I have talked about. I have made a few more selections, and hope some of them will suit you to use for the classes in school."

"Without you and your letters I seem to fail miserably in my upward and onward course."

"I often wish I could live the years of my school days with you over again. But alas! vain regret, the present alone is mine. I think I can feel for you, too, so soon to bid good-bye to the scenes of so much deep interest; but you have the inward satisfaction of having accomplished your work, and I think that I can say that you carry away with you the lasting respect and love of the scholars and of the neighborhood. Thank you for the confidence you have in me. You are still teaching me, though I do not see you."

"While I was doubting, your letter arrived, and set my mind at rest. I have more faith in taking heavenly counsel in matters great and small than I ever had. The question of what kind of amusement a Christian may indulge in, has met me here again. Games are played that I know you would condemn, and so do I; but I do not wish to be unsociable, and to make friends one must 'show himself friendly.' Even in our hours of pleasure we can do some little good. I do not believe there is anybody who keeps Sunday like a Scotch Presbyterian. I wish I knew more about the views and rules of that

Church. I think that nearly all of the young people share an interest in Mr. Mc——'s prayers. He must have a strong love for his fellow-men. What a change there will be when I return home. I thank you for your speedy letter, telling me of the glorious news. Is it not remarkable? I have just received a detailed account of the work from Mr. Mc——, and when I think of it all, it awes me to think how close the Holy Spirit has come to Kirkwall. There are others whose names he does not mention, as converts; and I am praying for them, as well as for those that you wrote of in your letter, believing that God will answer in His own good time."

"School has closed, and the last afternoon has passed. I am glad you are going to carry out your plan of giving 1897 cards. The *last* afternoon passed forever, and the old school bell has rung it away, but not to be forgotten. It, as well as the years that preceded, are fresh in my memory; those years, so blessed to me and to all of us scholars. Oh, Miss Robertson! your labor has *not* been in vain."

"Your much-looked-for and very welcome letter reached me, and, as your letters always do, brought a sense of—I scarcely know what to call it, but it seemed to do me so much good, to encourage and soothe me, and to give me more patience than I generally have. You don't know how much I should like to see you before you go away, nor what a great joy it would be to sit together once more in our church at home. I think that I never had such sweet communion as I had the first and second times that we sat together at the table of the Lord. I don't believe that I am growing in grace or making higher attainments in the Christian life, and there is no standing still. Were you ever in that state? The remembrance of the vows that two years ago I took upon me, makes me feel like a hypocrite, but I do not regret the step. I don't know how it is, Miss Robertson, but your letters send me into myself, and make me examine myself. There seems to be so much of the practical in life, or, as you call it, 'life's needed lessons' here, that one gets or seems to grow into the habit of not thinking of anything beyond the daily work that has to be done. Perhaps this cross, if a cross it is, is sent purposely, and I am not making a blessing out of my trials by bearing them with Christian patience."

"Before you connected yourself with the church I wondered whether you were a Christian or not, and how any one not a Christian could, in the true sense of the word, teach a school."

CHAPTER X.

Criticism of Writings.

IT was the privilege of the writer to know the lady who is the subject of this memoir, during the closing years of her brief sojourn here. I use the term *privilege* advisedly, for it is always a privilege to enjoy the friendship of those whose influence is elevating and ennobling.

To say that the great mass of those with whom we come in contact in life have no influence upon us, might be taking high ground; but it is correct to say that in most instances that influence is imperceptible. Others again seem to arrest our attention without any apparent effort to do so, and through the simple, although it may be subtle, influence of only occasional association, lift us higher and more heavenward. Like the welcome sunshine of springtime which loosens the wintry bands of ice with which old earth has been bound since autumn, and which awakens a sleeping vegetation to crown the earth again with beauty and glory, they, by the sunshine always resting upon their features, thaw out from within us, cold, chilling views of life, and clothe the barren soil on which these grew with flowerets and fruits of higher and holier things. Such was the influence exerted by Miss Jessie Ewart Robertson in the later years of her maidenhood, the only period of her brief life which came directly under the notice of the writer.

During a large portion of this period Miss Robertson was engaged in teaching the school in Abingdon, to which reference has been made elsewhere in this memoir. Her memory lingers in that region, embalmed in the grateful young hearts of those for whom

she made plain paths in the realms of secular knowledge, and to whom she so freely lent a helping hand to assist them in clambering up the stepping-stones that lead to everlasting life.

One could not be long in her company without discovering that innate love of the beautiful which she possessed in so remarkable a degree, and which led her to love everything which nature presented, and which nature's God had made. The clouds that flit across the sky had characters which she interpreted, the brooks had voices which she heard and understood. To her every leaf and flower and shrub had a language of its own, and that language was, as read by Miss Robertson, more ancient than the tongue first used in Eden, for it both came from and spake of Him who had been the Architect of nature before the bowers of Eden had been fashioned.

Most of all in the things of nature, did she love the *sunset* that lit the distant west and hung the sky with garnishings of gold. Almost daily would she speak of it, while this ancient orb was being cradled, and oftentimes would she refer in subdued tones of reverence to the land that lay beyond the west—the illimitable realms of the far away, where sunsets are unknown.

All lovers of the beautiful have felt those longings that possess the being at times, and so fill the soul, that they would fain have wings and fly away to the realms of greater good—to the fulfilment of some higher destiny. The body seems almost a fetter which ties the unwilling spirit down to earth and earthly things. When they gaze upon the sea with its other shore so far in the distance, they would fain soar away to sit them down by the sea without a shore. When they watch the clouds flit across the sky, they would fain clamber on its peaks and be wafted by the winds of heaven to that land where clouds are all dissolved and vanish evermore. When they look upon the beauties of the floweret of the meadow, they long to roam in fields of light and glory where the flowers bloom forever.

The spirit here delineated was developed in Miss Robertson in a remarkable degree, so much so, that it almost led her in earlier years to complain of the lot that necessitated so much of life to be spent amid the dead levels of ordinary sublunary duties.

The swallows have instinctive intimations of the approach of winter, and so plume themselves for the flight to the sunny south lands long before the tender flower has felt the chilling breath of frost, and before the hills have been covered with the white garment of winter. How they get this information exactly at the fitting season we cannot tell. So it may be sometimes with mortals here. Those indescribable longings for the enjoyment of some greater and higher good, may be in some measure at least the work of that Spirit which plumes the wings of the soul, and makes it ready for flight to those realms of endless summer, where no single desire remains ungratified. And may not this be our explanation of the reason why the cord that bound the useful young life to earth was severed so soon, and the released spirit allowed at so early a period to soar away to realms where irrepressible longings are met and satisfied, even on the very threshold of desire?

It is the duty of the writer, however, because of the nature of the work assigned him in preparing this memoir, to speak of the writings of Miss Robertson rather than of her gifts and their development; to speak of the quality of the first ripe fruits that were gleaned from the tree, the major portion of whose fruits will mature in Paradise. Individuals oftentimes have gifts, the possession of which is not known to them. They pass over the entire pathway of life, without ever having discovered that they possessed them, and the loss to the world from this source alone is beyond all human estimate. Others only discover the wealth of which in this way they are thus possessed, when much time has been lost, and it may be, the most useful period for doing effective work is past. Hence the duty incumbent on those who have gone farther on the journey to seek out gifts of value that have been bestowed upon those who are coming on.

That Miss Robertson possessed gifts as a writer in no ordinary degree is evident to all who examine the fragmentary sketches that have come from her pen. That she was unconscious of the possession of those gifts until her work was nearly finished here, is also evident from the fact that nearly everything she wrote for publication was produced during the closing years of her young life. That more years were not given her to develop these gifts

may seem strange to us who remain behind, but we only "know in part" now. Why may we not believe that they are unfolding with a wonderful power in that sinless and deathless land, so singularly favorable to development of the completest kind?

From the productions of her pen that are embodied in this memoir, it will be apparent to the reader that a tone of what may be termed *trueness* characterizes them all. They bear on the face of them evidences of honesty. Each one is a mirror in which the character of the writer is reflected. Her soul evidently accompanied her pen, so that deception in intention in such a case is an impossibility. Would to God that this might be said of all who handle the pen of the ready writer. The world would then be rid of a weary burden under which it is staggering. Men would then no longer conceal the venom of the serpent under the guise of much fair speech expressed in written characters, and the unwary world cease to be misled by the charming of the charmers. When we meet with an individual who is real, and whom we have reason to believe is as he appears to be, we feel that we are in the company of one of nature's noblemen, whose very presence seems to exalt humanity and bring it nearer heaven, and so it is when we find trueness too transparent to be mistaken in authorship. Trueness or honesty is the foundation of all successful character, as it is of all successful authorship, and this characteristic, as has already been intimated, underlies everything emanating from Miss Robertson's pen. It was this trueness or realism that tended more than anything else, perhaps, to draw the attention of the young toward her productions in so marked a degree, when writing over the signature of "Uncle Tom." There was a reality in the writings, a sincerity that young hearts are probably quicker to detect than those whose experiences have led them to be suspicious, and when this realism is apparent it always has for them a peculiar charm.

That trueness to which I refer is abundantly evident in the records of the diaries which Miss Robertson appears to have kept from a very early period. Unlike many such records which speak only of pleasing incidents of time and place, and more especially of things that relate to self-glory, she evidently aimed at making these records what they should be, the mirrors of the real self and

soul in which the image of the undying self would be delineated with the exactness of the photographer's art. When photographs of the spiritual being are thus taken with unerring faithfulness from time to time, they furnish material for the comparison of spiritual development as exact and trustworthy as the photographs of the person taken at various periods in life. It is only transparent honesty that could pen the following, taken from the records thus chronicled during the term of teaching in the Campbellville school:

"I am neither mentally nor morally improved. Everyone seems happy but myself. I feel jealous, irritable and miserable toward the whole world. I almost wish I had never been born. I know I am on my way to perdition."

In these words we find a most surprising echo of fidelity to self. We have all probably felt thus sometime in the dead past, but who of us has had the honesty to say so? The references in the quotations we have cited relate very probably to that period of life when the soul is journeying through the dreary winter land of spiritual death, and when it has not yet caught glimpses of the beautiful spring, the dawn of which in all such instances is pretty certain to be near. Those transition periods, like the dreary days when thick clouds obscure the sun, are usually very dark, and it is this that makes the light and glory of returning friendly suns ten-fold more welcome when the clouds have fled. Hence we are not surprised to find expressions in those chronicles of faithful record, at subsequent periods, of which the following are ensamples:

"I feel a peace which passeth all understanding." "Now each evening as it closes brings to me the thought, one day nearer to our home beyond the sky."

This wonderful fidelity of record is the same, it matters not to which page of the daily narrative we turn, whether treating of the vanished days of girlhood, which come back nevermore, of the incidents of the present or the aspirations of the future, the stamp of honesty is on the record. There was but one self in the composition of that life. There was not one for society and one for home life. There was not one for the presence of the living and another and a very different one for their absence. One and the

same character shines out on every page of everything she wrote, lived every day of the life spent on earth, and passed away when the life-work was ended to join that company, it may be not over numerous, in heaven, whose lives were the personification of trueness on earth.

Then there was a *naturalness* that is always pleasing. Manifestly there was no labored effort, no reaching forth after something that was unattainable. It is this peculiarity that constitutes one of the principal charms of the Book of Books. As in individual character, so in individual authorship, naturalness is always pleasing, labored effort always heavy, and cumbrous and repellant. The first represents the thoughts of the individual in the beautiful simplicity of the homeliness of the neat and well-fitting attire of every-day life; the second as decked in fineries that are ill-fitting and very unbecoming to the wearer. The rose would be robbed of more than half its beauty were it to attempt to imitate the thorn in its habit of growth, and the lily of the valley would lose its unpretentious charms, its greatest glory, were it to attempt to displace the dandelion in the fields and on the highway. Thus it is with naturalness of manner as well as of deportment. We only admire these when they are themselves, and when we thus find them we take kindly to them, even when accompanied with eccentricities, that of themselves are not calculated to attract us. When Miss Robertson writes, the plot is her own, hers are the ideas from first to last, and hers the language in which these ideas are clothed.

Nowhere do the writings of our authoress appear to better advantage than in the *letters* which emanated so freely from her pen. They breathe a friendship that is at all times refreshing. They take the recipient into the inner circle of her confidence, filled with the conviction that nothing is to be feared. Their frankness and sincerity and naturalness abolish space for the time being, while the recipient imagines he is speaking face to face with a friend. The marvellous power of so using the pen, that the embers of the friendship of vanishing years shall be kept more than smouldering, though time and space both intervene, was possessed by Miss Robertson in a remarkable degree. This naturalness shines out most brightly in these letters, and it is difficult to say in which of these we find it in best form, for we find it in them all,

and always in a form that is very pleasing. Most of all it is worthy of study, perhaps, in the letters descriptive of place and character, notably those which relate to Scottish character and scenery. She evidently loved the themes which treat of peasant life and its surroundings, whether these were created by the hand of God or man. The sublime in nature she evidently admired, the beautiful handiwork of the great Architect of nature she loved, and the living adornments of nature, as the flowers, the trees, the moss, every living thing that grows out of the earth, seemed to her an open book of treasures in which she found characters written with the finger of God. When we find a maiden concluding, as Miss Robertson did, as stated in her diary, that her personal wardrobe would suffer rather than that she would be deprived of seeing more of the beautiful in nature, we have some measure of the interest with which she viewed what was worthy of admiration, even in this sublunary sphere.

There seemed to be an inspiration in her letters which found ready response in the minds of those who received them. This is at once apparent on reading the replies from the parties to whom they were written, more especially the replies written by the favored pupils of her Valens school days. Their quickening, life-giving, soul-inspiring influences are there abundantly manifest. Of Dr. James Hamilton it was said, "his life was good, his books were better, but his life was best;" but of Miss Robertson, it may be said her life was good, her *letters* better and her life best. When the influences that have led one and another to set out on the pilgrimage to Zion, have been sought and found, of how many may it not be said that they were first led to think seriously of the great interests of the soul, by the letters which she wrote them?

The *simplicity* of the writings of our departed friend is a characteristic which shines forth brightly in them all. There is nothing about them involved, or complex, or difficult to understand. Some authors so obscure their meaning even in treating of things not difficult in themselves, that the labor of ascertaining what is meant exactly is so great, that it more than mars the pleasure derived from the perusal of their writings. It may be compared to the labored mining for gold when it cannot be found in paying quan-

tities. Simplicity in writing consists in saying what one has to say in the most direct and natural way, and by the use of the common words used in conveying thought in every day life.

This does not imply any poverty of language, for in this respect she had fallen heir to an inheritance which would never have been exhausted. The language of common life is not necessarily poor, for the variety from which to choose is nowhere more abundant than in the ordinary walks of the people, where the simplicity of expression has oftentimes an incomparable charm.

Nor does it mean that the exact word was not chosen for the conveyance of the exact thought, for in this respect also she was gifted in a most remarkable degree. Indeed, her vocabulary in this line seemed to comprise most of what was worth having for the accurate conveyance of thought. It does mean that she possessed in an uncommon degree the enviable faculty of so expressing her thoughts on paper, that it reminds one of conversing face to face with a friend. Most of all is this apparent in the letters which she wrote, but it also shines out brightly in those charming little episodes that appeared from time to time in a Canadian periodical over the signature of "Uncle Tom." This simplicity, combined with a desire to be helpful to others without seeking any return, drew forth numerous and ready responses from the young readers of that journal, which showed their strong faith in the sincerity of the writer, and in her earnest desire to advance their interests.

The *ease* with which Miss Robertson wrote is at once apparent to the most hurried and least careful reader. She was evidently so much at home in the use of language that she never required to search for words. They came to her apparently without being summoned, each one in its place and precisely at the right time. Those who are thus happily gifted possess a great advantage over the less favored in this respect, for they find the words with which to clothe thought always at hand without having to search for it at all. The gentle, unruffled flow of the waters of the brook which go evenly on without effort, remind us of the style of our authoress in respect to ease and facility of expression.

The wide range of her reading no doubt contributed very

largely to this end. She seemed quite at home in nearly all the wide fields of English literature, especially the late authors, which is at once apparent from the happy quotations with which her writings abound. These are never inserted to fill space, as is the manner of some, but to enforce the ideas represented in the original language of the authors quoted, since this could seldom be improved upon. So skilfully were those thoughts of writers, living and dead, interwoven into her narrative, that it oftentimes invested them with an interest which they seemed not to possess before.

The *originality* of the writings passing under review must not be overlooked. Our authoress had a style of her own, and it was her own whenever she wrote. We can never wear a garment so becomingly as those for whom it was made. No more can we borrow the style of another in which to express our thoughts. It is true, doubtless, that we may so admire the garb of another, that we may have one made resembling it for ourselves, so we may admire the style of another in authorship to such a degree that our own, unconsciously on our part, bears some resemblance to it, and this may happen without any intention on our part to borrow the style of the other when we wish to express our thoughts. It may only prove that the style of such writer resembles our own natural style, or *vice versa*, and that this resemblance is the ground of our admiration for it. But we fail to discover a close resemblance in style to that of any other in the writings under review. They are peculiarly the expressions of the author, given in simple, expressive, clear and forcible language; and the same holds true of the subjects of which she wrote. They were her own, self-chosen and mapped out in her own original way, and in that way which was well designed to secure the intended end, as is abundantly clear from the design of all that we read over the signature of "Uncle Tom."

Miss Robertson possessed, in a marked degree, one attribute of authorship which, if wielded without discrimination, might have given pain rather than pleasure. I refer to the power which she possessed of using *sarcasm*, which scorches and withers when it breathes upon an adversary not well furnished with the same weapon of defence. Happily this power was kept well in check,

as we find almost no trace of it in her writings. It may be necessary sometimes to ride this Bucephalus, but it should be held in with a strong rein, otherwise it may bear away its possessor into an enemy's country—a dreary, hostile land. Because of the themes upon which she loved to dwell, as home, and hearth, and school, and church, it would have introduced a discordant note into the beautiful harmonies of those happy themes.

If the earlier years of Miss Robertson's life were not laden with that abundant fruition which sometimes characterizes even the young vines of the vineyard, this was more than atoned for in the later ones being filled brim full of activities, every one of which was actuated by a benevolence of purpose. She seemed to wield a magic wand of enchantment when dealing with young people, insomuch that her power over them almost appeared as a species of witchery. Happily this power was exercised for good, and when we come to look for the whole results of it, we shall have to follow the many rills of virtue flowing from the fountains of her teaching and influence, as they wend their way in ever-increasing volume adown through all the ages, till the music of the healing waters in their flow shall be hushed in the broad ocean of eternity.

Why one so gifted with the pen should thus be cut down a good while before life's noon had been reached, is only fully known to Him whose "way is in the sea, whose path is in the great waters and whose footsteps are not known"; who guides the complicated movements of the wheel moving transversely within the wheel, every movement of which notwithstanding is sure. We often wonder why grain is gathered into the garner of eternity when apparently not fully ripe, while doubtless the apparent imperfection as to what constitutes ripeness is to be found in the mistakes of our own judgment. So, too, we express surprise that the workman should be removed from time while the work of life is still incomplete. Here, too, we err, "not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God," for our measure of completed work is the standard of finite fallibility sitting in judgment on the work of the Infinite and infallible. If we knew all from the beginning to the end, we would doubtless find it true that none of the Master's workmen ever

laid down the tools of earthly labor, never to take them up again, whose work was not completed.

Seeds of truth were diligently sown by our authoress with both tongue and pen, as has been already intimated, particularly during the later years of her life, and many of these are growing now in youthful hearts which will yield two harvests, one in time and one in eternity.

The seeds of human thought oftentimes prove a most wonderful power of productiveness. Like the water which has passed the mill where it ground the corn, to repeat the same further adown the stream, so seeds of thought chronicled in human hearts, or on the page of story, have the power of re-germination in an unlimited degree.

It has been thought fitting, therefore, because of this unlimited power of reproduction in human thought, to gather up the gems of these which the printer's art has rescued from oblivion, and to give them again to another circle than that to which they were first addressed, in the full and reasonable hope that, like the waters of the brook, they may go on *forever* wending their way of usefulness adown through all the ages.

CHAPTER XI.

Unpublished Essays.

THE following essays were written at different times. The first one, before referred to in the first chapter of this book, was written at a very early period. The three following were also school-girl productions of different years. "Ancaster Mountain" gives expression to her thoughts there in 1877. "A Ride in a Lumber Waggon" was one of a number written for Abingdon Literary Society, of which she was a promoter; "Christians Like Ourselves" for a missionary meeting when in Valens, and the other two, "The Last Lesson" and "Girls," were contributed to the *Manuscript Magazine* of St. Paul's Church Literary Society, Hamilton.

Life is Short.

Life seems to be long to look forward to, but older people tell us it seems short when it is past. "Life is but a vapor, which appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." It is but "as yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night." It does not matter so much whether it is short or long as it does how we spend it. When it is done God calls us, and if we love Him we need not be afraid though the summons, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," come at any time.

We are not told when the time will come, but we are told to "be ready" and to be "watching," and that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." Jesus said to his disciples, "What I say unto you I say unto all, 'Watch.'" So let us obey

Him and be glad to go with Him, whether the call comes in the morning or at midnight.

Charity.

"Charity," we are told, "shall cover a multitude of sins." If we cannot give much to one who is homeless and poor, we can give them a share of what we have—a chair by our fireside, a place by our table, or even a smile which may so cheer them that they will well feel somebody cares for them, and go to work again and get a home for themselves. Charitable people are happy because they are making others happy, and because they are doing what God has given them to do. Some people give because they like to be called charitable; but that is only pleasing themselves, not because they love God and their fellow-men.

We should be charitable from love, not duty, and when anything is done from love it has a great influence, and makes others love back again. Even those who hate us are made our best friends if we can show them in some way we love them.

Paul wrote, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

Spring.

This is the most beautiful season of the four, because in it all trees and plants are opening to new life and vigor, springing up from the earth or putting forth blades, leaves or shoots. They all help to make the earth beautiful, and they provide food for us, as well as animals to live on. Flowers are peeping up here and there, dotting the fields and woods with their many colors, and these and the green grass make a beautiful carpet. The air is scented with the perfume of the flowers. The trees have all on a new dress; the maple and beech are in light green, while the evergreens put on a brighter array in the opening of spring.

The birds, too, return to us again and sing cheerily all day long. Lambs frisk and jump and play, and everything seems to rejoice in the glad spring time. Our gardens, too, have to be worked and planted with care; and farmers are all busy sowing the seed. If we do not sow, we cannot reap.

How thankful we should be to our Heavenly Father, who gives us all this beauty and sunshine and life and health, and so many blessings, of which the coming of spring is one!

Love of Country.

Each of us should love our country and seek its glory. It is a duty we owe. Is it not our native land, our childhood home? One who leaves his country for another may love the land of his adoption, but if he be a true man he can never, never forget his old home—the land of his choice, the land of many who are near and dear to him. No wonder he sighs as he stands on the deck of the ship, so soon to carry him away, and strains his eyes to catch a last glimpse of his native land. In after years, as he sits by the fireside of his new home, his eye grows moist as childhood scenes and remembrances of home come to mind. If a Scotchman, the red-blooming heather of his native hills or the thistle—the emblem of his country—will cause great heart-throbs of emotion, as he still remembers with love and pride, the mountains, "burnies and braes" of auld Scotia, and regrets, O how much, to know he "shall hear the sound of Lochaber no more." If an Englishman, he remembers with delight "The stately homes of England," its ivied towers and its ruined walls; the rose-covered home, English bravery, English songs, English flowers, and above and floating over all, "The flag of Old England for ever."

If an Irishman, he remembers with pride the beautiful Emerald Isle, the shamrock-covered valley in which he laughed and played in innocent glee, and, however far he may wander, he will never forget "Erin mavourneen, sweet Erin go Bragh."

Even the American with his shrewdness, who seems to have no time for sentiment, when in other lands and under other govern-

ments, will boast of "The land of the free and the home of the brave."

The Frenchman, too, finds no place like home; all else is dull and cold. While the German longs for the dear, dear Fatherland, "Where German hymns to God are sung."

It must be with a sad heart one says farewell to home, takes the last look at each familiar spot, so filled with recollections of happy days now gone forever past. Each brook and dell has a tale for him.

But why should any one indulge in vain regrets? This fair Canada of ours—the land of the maple leaf—offers to all who come a new home.

We should love our country as we love ourselves; and if we do not we are not worthy of it. Surely if

> "The shuddering tenant of the frigid zone
> Proudly proclaims the happiest spot his own;
> The naked negro, panting on the line,
> Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine!"

all true patriots may say of the land of their birth,

> "Our bosoms with rapture beat high at thy name,
> Thy health is our transport—our triumph thy fame."

Ancaster Mountain.

A beautiful scene is before me. In the distance, as far as eye can carry, are the shimmering waters of Lake Ontario. In the mount-encircled valley the harvesters are busy with the ripened grain. It suggests domestic peace and prosperity, and quiet home happiness, seemingly undisturbed by the cares of the outside world. The mountain is so beautiful it arouses a sense of happiness too deep for words, making one long to sit and drink in of such pleasures for ever. Strains of distant music are wafted faintly up the valley. The evening is one in which all Nature seems in silent contemplation to adore its Maker. His handiwork, as shown in the green foliage blending harmoniously with the blue waters,

and the sunset tinging all as with a halo of glory, leads us from "Nature up to Nature's God." He who made and keeps these has a reason for so doing. And if He did all this to make us happy, what are we doing in return? These mortal minds of ours do not fathom—we stand in awe and question. Can we thus, day by day, gaze on scenes like these, which rouse such inexpressible feelings, enjoy so much of love and feel no love in return? Our spirits are saddened by the thought of opportunities lost and gone forever. A heaven-sent feeling arises, and we shake off the sloth we are wrapped in and look about us for something to do. Always find it, do it, and feel that,

> "Something attempted, something done,
> Has earned a night's repose."

Then are we repaid. Yet how often are we sighing over lost and misspent days.

A Ride in a Lumber Waggon.

We had the pleasure, not long ago, of having a ride in a lumber waggon. It is not because it was the first one we ever had that we take this subject, for we had enjoyed the experience before; but it was usually optional—go or stay. This time it was take this mode of conveyance or be left behind. We chose the better offer, and accepted thankfully the ride. It was a hot day in June; dust about the depth it requires "wading," and twenty miles to ride. The prospect was not charming, and was not enhanced in any degree to think that the journey had to be performed in a "lumber waggon." Burns found poetry in a mouse's nest; Ramsay edified "The Swine" by sounding their praises in poetic diction, but Shakespeare himself would find a difficulty in making two lines, if he found the making of poetry on such a ride anything like the ride itself, for just as he would be getting his sublime ideas formed into words—jar—shake—jolt—and then his fine thoughts scattered to the winds. We do not write poetry, but the likeness of this ride to life struck us.

In the first place it was *rough*. We were not so gently dealt

with as we would be had we a carriage, springed and cushioned, to convey us. But in life most of us "rough it," and it is the few who can fill the hollows, smooth the ruts and cast aside the stones by means of their shining dollars.

Secondly. It was *enjoyable*. So ought life to be. Long-drawn faces and gloomy subjects do not correspond with opening buds, singing birds, smiling landscape and bright sunshine, and God made these as well as us. The test when enjoyment is right or wrong, is simply when we can ask God's blessing on its participation.

Thirdly. We *may be derided*. We met another waggon; we gave half the road, and we passed on, but not without being laughed at. There are times in life when we don't deserve it, that our best efforts will be ridiculed, our motives misrepresented and our actions wrongly colored.

Fourthly. Our lives may *be roomy*. This conveyance was large. There was room for all and everything, without being crushed, and for as much again, had we it to put in. Shut away from our fellow-men our souls shrivel up and are bound so much by self that there is not left within

> "A heart that can feel for a neighbor's woe
> Or share in its joys with a friendly glow,
> With sympathies large enough to enfold
> All men as brothers."

But if, instead, we cultivate a feeling of friendliness and fellow-sympathy—a roomy feeling—our souls will grow large and rich, our natures become more genial, our lives useful and helpful, and when life is over we shall not merit the epitaph,

> "Gone to the vile dust from whence he sprung,
> Unwept, unhonored, and unsung."

Fifthly. We need not meet trouble half way. We dreaded the pains and aches and discomforts of the ride, but there were none. We enjoyed it and it did us good. So seeming troubles often cause us more worry than real ones.

Christians Like Ourselves.

In speaking to a lady in Glasgow on the subject of Foreign Missions, our conversation turned upon the necessity of commending our Christianity to the heathen by our manner of living. "I often think," said the lady, "what kind of Christians we would like to make—is it Christians like ourselves?" The remark struck me at the time as being very significant. I thought of Glasgow with its drinking dens, where old men and old women, young men, and, sad sight! young girls, jostle each other at one counter in their eagerness to secure what brings to them but misery and degradation—Glasgow with its thousands of deformed children, and the evil still going on—Glasgow with its tenement houses, where, in *one* room the wretchedly poor, irrespective of sex and age, eat and sleep, come into life and depart from it. I have thought much of it since, but nearer than Glasgow, the question strikes home. In all our giving and working is our object to make Christians like ourselves? As members of a Christian Church, and as residents of a Christian community let us endeavor, with honest inquiry, to see if we commend our Christianity to those whom we term "the poor heathen."

Amongst those who worship idols, their faithfulness to their gods is a marked feature. Whatever is neglected the gods must not be—when the hours for prayer are sounded everything is made secondary, and prayers, "vain repetitions" though they be, are offered faithfully to gods, who cannot answer. In this respect are we more to be commended than they? Which of us has not to regret neglected prayer—unhallowed days? How often is the morning sacrifice hastily and thoughtlessly offered, or neglected altogether? How many are the nights we lie down to rest with everything but God in our thoughts, and allow ingratitude to reign where humble thankfulness should characterize us as His children. We are too ready to enumerate our trials, but slow to acknowledge our blessings. In the matter of prayer, is it Christians like ourselves we are trying to make—could they not teach us a lesson?

Again in self-sacrifice, those whom we seek to convert could teach us. The Mahommedan thinks nothing too great if it be for Allah's sake; the Brahmin, in his devotion to Buddha, counts his

sacrifice as pleasure; the idol-worshipper counts not his life, if the gods demand; the heathen mother offers up willingly her child, though dear as life, if given to please the gods. Does our Christianity, which knows so little of sacrifice, commend itself as being superior to theirs? Can we go to them with a religion which has but little exercise on the outward life? Is there not room for them to say with significant emphasis, "heal thyself," or, show us the beauty of your religion and we will embrace it?

In the third place, do we commend our religion to the heathen because it teaches us brotherly love? Let the bickerings and slander, the petty jealousies and envyings, the "roots of bitterness" which spring up amongst us, answer. Prophecy must be fulfilled in ourselves—the lion and the lamb must lie down together, and the bear must eat straw like the ox, ere we can with power in our hands, carry the gospel of peace to those who know it not. For the sake of illustration let us imagine a heathen, a worshipper of idols, to take up his residence amongst us. Practically there are many such, but we have reference now to one who knows nothing of the true gospel—who has never heard of Jesus as the Saviour of mankind. Is our manner of life such as would convince him of an influence in our lives which he knows not—of a God who, though merciful and long suffering, can not look upon sin with any degree of allowance?

I do not belittle the importance of foreign mission work in writing this. The command has gone forth, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;" but I do mean to say that unless we commend the gospel of Christ, both in our individual and national life, much of our labor shall be in vain. The most effectual preaching is that which shows a sincerity of purpose—the most convincing testimony that ours is the only and true God, is to be found in the way we honor Him.

Girls.

For some years it has been the writer's privilege to associate intimately with girls of all ages, sizes, dispositions and attainments, and though the following depictions may savor of ideal portraiture, there is a phase of girl-life which at least reaches toward the ideal.

Somebody spoke of a "rose-bud garden of girls," which metaphor has the double advantage of being both pretty and forceful; pretty, because it suggests to our minds the loveliness which may adorn a girl's character, and forceful in that in the severely literal expansion of the metaphor, we must take into consideration the fact that with the beauteous buds must be the thorns, and further, that careless handling will bring before us more of the unpleasantness of the thorn than the beauty of the bud. Come into the garden, then, with me, and we shall cull a rose-bud bouquet this evening, to please the sense and to teach us the language of flowers.

The first bud we pluck is one which is just commencing to unfold; the delicate inner leaves of the flower are carefully guarded by the outer covering, yet we see enough to know that the gradual natural development will produce a beautiful flower. Just so have I seen a little maiden—a real child—for even in this precocious age such are yet to be found—modest, innocent, respectful, obedient, yet merry withal. It is true, indeed, there will be the thorns on the little stem, but careful nurture will develop the blossom, while the thorns remain performing their legitimate duty—protecting the stem that the flower may grow. Parents, teachers, companions, older brothers and sisters—shall we not remember that we are the influences, the spiritual dew, rain and sun, whereby that budding life of promise is to ripen into perfect flower.

The next bud we pluck is more unfolded. In all the garden there is nothing so graceful in my eyes as this half-blown rose. The soft pink leaves disclose a beauty and emit a fragrance which we seek for in vain, either in the opening bud or in the full developed flower. This is a stage of maiden growth which Longfellow beautifully describes in the following lines:

> "Standing with reluctant feet
> Where the brook and river meet,
> Womanhood and childhood fleet."

Life purposes are just forming. Character is being moulded for time and eternity. The all-absorbing influences which gather about a life are drawing to a focus. Oh, the pity of it, that so many maidens' lives are more truly represented by the flower on that other stem! We shall examine it and learn the lesson it teaches, but we shall not pluck it for our bouquet. Do you ask what is the matter? Some careless hand has tried to force nature, it has blossomed too soon, and see the result—pale, wilted leaves, without fragrance and without beauty, yet a flower even as the other. Thus do we see many a bud of promise marred by the hand of too ambitious or worldly parents, careless teachers, and thoughtless companions. Who does not know some such "buds of promise" which once we hoped to see ripen into earnest, useful womanhood, but with pain we have to stand and see them drawn into the whirlpool of frivolity and selfishness! These girls in their "teens"—why do we let them slip away from us—why do we not long more, pray more, and work more, that we keep them with us to be indeed the graces of our homes, gladdening and cheering with their presence the lives of those around them.

One more flower shall we pluck for our bouquet. I see your eyes rest upon that rare blossom there. Yes, that is the one which best blends with those we have already plucked. It is indeed a delight to the florist's eye—a tribute to the gardener's skill. Not so simple and graceful as those already gathered, yet it must be the one around which the others may cluster. A perfect specimen it is—the queen of the garden. The thorns indeed are there, strong and sharply pointed too, but handle carefully and they will not offend. Does it not remind you of some characters you know, fully developed in feminine virtues, just such an one that a kindly, strong hand might wish to transplant, that the queenly flower might blossom in another home. We see her there, at once a pleasing companion, a sympathetic friend, a prudent wife, a careful home-keeper, an helpmeet in the truest sense of the word.

Our bouquet is gathered; if you think, my maidens, that there is any beauty in its arrangement, let me tell you that yours is the privilege to grow and blossom, one of a "rose-bud garden of girls."

The Last Lesson.

At the close of a December day a teacher stood at a western window, looking pensively at the setting sun, which, dipping beneath the horizon, left behind it a wave of opalescent glories. It had been a wearisome day, and now, left alone, the teacher watched longingly, almost enviously, the merry, light-hearted boys and girls, so free from care, as they bounded homeward laughing and playing as only children can. In a few weeks she was to leave them, the children, who for some years had been her most intimate companions—much work was yet to be done, while cares, aside from her school duties, weighed heavily upon her. The teacher herself was not one of those bewilderingly bewitching specimens of feminine perfection, so ethereally depicted by the idealist's pen—just an ordinary country-school teacher—in rustic phraseology "school-ma'am," with more of the human and less of the angelic than is usually ascribed to the heroines of fancy. Her duties varied strangely, yet each succeeding day's events seemed a repetition of its predecessors. At one hour the difference between *p* and *q* had to be patiently explained in the simplest of Anglo-Saxon terms, at another the problems of Euclid had to be solved—frozen tear-drops to be gently wiped away from pitiful little faces which had braved the cold to get to school—little brown hands to be rubbed until proper circulation was restored; efforts to "keep to the right" to be commended, moral lessons impressed, a love of the beautiful to be instilled, erring ones reproved, occasional reminders to be given that a handkerchief was painfully requisite, not infrequently fierce feuds to be settled—for children are only men and women in embryo—and innumerable questions answered.

But all the day duties past, the teacher lingered in the quiet room. The children's shouts had died away in the distance; not a sound to be heard but the slow, solemn tick of the old school clock; the white bare walls were guiltless of any adornment save a few mottoes, the joint production of teacher and pupils. Presently a step was heard. The shuffling sound bespoke a schoolboy's tread; then the door was suddenly opened, and one of her boys made his appearance. A smile from the teacher bade him come in. A queer little specimen of humanity he was—brimful

of mischief usually, but apparently on good behavior now. His little home-spun jacket lacked two or three buttons, but with admirable ingenuity he had drawn some of the cloth through the button-hole and kept it in its place by means of a match which he had forced through the cloth. "Please, ma'am," he began, and then stopped. Her hand was gently laid on his little rough head, for remembering the manners taught him, his apology for a cap was removed on entering the room, and with another smile she asked him what was wanted. "Please, ma'am—Ettie's sick—the doctor says she won't get better." After a few inquiries about Ettie, the messenger was dismissed and the teacher was again alone. As the evening shadows deepened she knelt at the window, watching the fitful, troubled light and gathering cloud masses which betoken a wild winter night. But Ettie is sick and must be visited: duty demands it, affection whispers it. Her heart grew rebellious; when she thought of others in homes of luxury, life seemed all bitterness, and she questioned the kindness and almost doubted the love of that Providence which had placed her in such uncongenial surroundings. Her emotion finally gave vent to expression as a woman's deepest feelings generally do—in tears. Alone in the twilight it brought peace, and after a few minutes—tearful, yet subdued—she rose to leave the room which from tender association seemed almost sacred.

And who was Ettie? One of her youngest pupils, a sweet little maiden of six—one would think too young to be a laborer in the vineyard. A child much like other children of her age, save a marked delicacy of constitution and singular attractiveness of appearance, produced by a contrast of golden hair and darkly brown eyes. She had a long distance to walk to school, and many a bunch of spring violets and brightly colored autumn leaves had her little hand gathered for teacher. She had solved the mystery between *p* and *q*, but try as she would, Ettie could only say "crue." Many a tear she shed over "crue," being an extremely sensitive child; for the school-boy who wouldn't repeat "crue" and re-repeat it, and say, "Ettie, say *q*," is the school-boy of the millenial period.

Busied with thoughts of the past, realities of the present, and dreams of the future, the teacher absently prepared herself for the

weary walk through the snow to Ettie's home. Arriving there she was ushered into the curtain-shrouded room where her little scholar lay. Her brown eyes shone with that supernatural brilliancy which ever bespeaks that the end of the journey is near. Perhaps as the setting sun gilds the western windows with its own reflection, so the vision of the one about to go home grows bright with the reflection of the glories of the "joyous city" which eye hath not seen, while the mass of tangled curls clustering around the waxen brow seemed befitting an angel. The grief-stricken mother moved noiselessly to and fro, doing all that only a mother can to allay the sufferings of her dying child. The father stood with folded arms watching every movement. The teacher was motioned to the bedside, and bending over the little one she whispered, "Do you know teacher, Ettie?" The golden head nodded "yes," and again the teacher bent over her. "Do you remember the text you learnt for me?" Again the golden head nodded, and with labored breath she gasped rather than spoke, "God is love." It was enough. The little life work was done; the mission accomplished; the lesson faithfully learnt; the text indelibly imprinted on the memory of those who heard it. Heart-broken mother, anguish-rent father, doubting teacher, learn the lesson as the little violet of Paradise taught it—God is love. Question not the dispensations of His hand. Can He who is the full fruition of love, nay more, is love itself, dispense other than love?

A few hours after little Ettie passed into the beyond, and on a fierce December day all that was mortal of her was laid in the narrow home God's love had prepared for her; the storm raged wildly, drifting blinding clouds of snow, rejoicing in their fury, soon hid from sight the home of the little sleeper, and the forest pines, moaning a dirgeful requiem for the departed, re-echoed God is love. When the winter is passed and the rain is over and gone, the little blades of grass on the green-grown mound testify that God is love. The autumn winds strewing the earth with tinted beauties, and the soft breath of Indian summer whisper of sorrow which is joy; of sleeping which is waking; of death which is life; of God who is love.

CHAPTER XII.

Republications.

THE greater number of the following articles were written for and published in the home department of the *Canadian Live-Stock and Farm Journal*, of Hamilton, Ont. Two of these, "The Sunshine and Shadows of Life," and "How Should Farmers Spend Their Evenings," were competitive subjects, and in each case Miss Robertson was successful in winning first prize.

A Growing Good.

So much has been said on "growing evils," that we hope to draw the reader's attention by an original title at least. The "growing good" we refer to is the cultivation of politer manners among farmers' sons and daughters. The time was when if a young man or woman used the innocent and polite phrase, "I beg your pardon," it was a signal for a volume of taunts and jeers from his or her less aspiring companions, but now it is an essential of every-day conversation.

No longer, we trust, does the average country boy consider it an exhibition of unmanly conduct to open a gate for his sister to pass through, and then offer to close it for her; nor does he think it a positively criminal offence to carry her cloak or parasol. The usual mark of respect to a lady is no longer a fruitful source of comment in country neighborhoods; we have seen a little lad of eight raise his rimless straw hat as gracefully as ever city gentleman raised his "Derby." We are pleased to note this "growing good," and trust it will continue. So long as farmers' sons and

daughters neglect to cultivate these little courtesies which tend to refinement, just so long will they be unable to command that respect and esteem which many of them truly deserve. Let the common but false idea that because farm work at times necessitates rough clothing, the manner must needs be in accordance, be dispelled. Politeness is not foppishness, and we hail the dawn of a new era when the term "country cousin" will not be synonymous with awkwardness, and even rudeness, as we fear it sometimes has been.

"Penny Wise and Pound Foolish."

We think this proverb is very aptly illustrated by many of our farmers with respect to gardening. "Oh, I have no time to attend to a garden," is the usual reply when spoken to on the subject. Now, if a man can be convinced that a certain mode of procedure in regard to his crops and animals pays him well for the time and money invested, he requires no further persuasion to induce him to follow this method. On the strength of the foregoing statement, then, we will endeavor to produce proof positive that gardening pays.

First, then, it pays on the ground of comfort. If a farmer has a garden well filled with fruit and vegetables it lessens his wife's labor and worry—for no thrifty housewife likes to be confined to one bill-of-fare for several days or weeks in succession—and adds to his own and his household's enjoyments. In many country districts fresh meat can not be obtained as a daily article of food, and there is no resource but the inevitable salt pork. In too many farm houses, pork, potatoes and pastry, constitute the bill-of-fare. Is not the health of a whole household worthy of consideration? And this diet must lead to indigestion, with its train of woes.

Second. Gardening pays on the ground of *economy*. A farmer can supply the necessaries for his household much more cheaply off his farm than he can by buying them. We know it takes time —which is money—to attend to a garden, but the bills of doctor, grocer and butcher are materially reduced, and money in hand re-

alized from the surplus amount of garden produce, as well as the power to occasionally send a basket of fruit to those less comfortably situated.

In the third place a garden pays a farmer for *his children's sake.* If not confined too closely to it, nine-tenths of our farmers' children will love the garden with its fruits and flowers. A plot can be given them as their own special property, the proceeds to be theirs. The work among nature's productions will make them healthier, purer children, and besides, give better opportunity for inculcating usefulness by teaching them to give freely of their little stores as well as foster a love for the beautiful. Then to farmers we would say, start your garden at once—this spring. You will be just as busy next year as you are this; your little ones will daily form ideas of life. If you wait for one, two or more years, it will be too late.

Whither Bound?

There are three scenes in this busy world of travel that have a peculiar charm—a vessel starting on her course, her meeting with another in mid-ocean, and her arrival at her destination. These are scenes the effective picturing of which would require a master hand. A noble ship is about to start for a distant port. Amid cheers and yeo-heavoes she is launched, and the tide of passengers proceeds to occupy the roomy decks and spacious saloons. Notice the thronging, jostling, surging sea of humanity as the vessel gives visible evidences that she is about to start on her course. In the motley crowd we notice people of all nationalities with their corresponding characteristics, people of all ages, with their corresponding requirements, and people of all callings, with their corresponding attainments. The clergyman and the gambler, the millionaire and the beggar, the rude and the refined, are forced into close proximity. The votary of fashion, who travels to while away the weary hours; the merchant, with brows knit in the solution of some vexed problem; the invalid, seeking the lost

treasure, and the poor emigrant, hoping to better his condition in a more genial clime, form distinct parts of a great whole. The deafening sounds of shouting, "This way for the Express," "All aboard," mingled with cries of "Up sail," "A little more to the leeward" "Port your helm," dazes the "green" traveler, frightens the timorous, but are passed unnoticed by the traveled traveler.

But look, the vessel moves! She rocks, roars, splutters, and finally starts. As she slowly moves off, good-byes are said, and dear ones on shore wave their signals to loved ones on board. Mingled feelings of joy and sorrow strive for the mastery; but as the shore recedes new objects present themselves, and the mind is gradually weaned from the bustling scenes. Fellow-voyagers take traveler's license, and are not expected to observe the strict etiquette of our private parlors, and mutual questions are asked as to "whither bound." A reciprocal interest *pro tem* seems to spring up.

Our vessel has now left the land far behind, and on all sides nothing is seen but sea and sky. A strange indescribable feeling involuntarily steals over one, when he finds himself for the first time out of vision of *terra firma*.

After a time a sail is seen, and soon the flag is raised. The answer is returned. The name of the vessel and "Whither bound" are ascertained, and each proceeds on its way.

Some days pass and we near our destined port. The horizon gives warning that we must prepare to land, and in the disembarkation is re-enacted the confusing scene of the embarkation. Lonely indeed are those who find no friend waiting for them at their journey's end. While some call this home, others can only call it a strange land.

We have thus attempted to sketch a pen picture of a voyage which in many of its phases closely resembles the voyage of life. Our embarkation may be said to have been made when we leave the parental roof to push our fortune on the waves of the busy world.

Let us suppose the case of a vessel starting on her journey without either rudder or compass. Whither would she go? After drifting helplessly for a time at the mercy of wind and wave, she would eventually dash against perilous rocks and be destroyed.

But granting that our good ship has all the requisite qualifications for successful navigation, and yet starts out with no particular destination in view. No traveler would be so beside himself as to venture on board in either case. And yet how many of us, in the grave affairs of life, act quite as foolishly. We drift on our voyage, guiding our actions by no fixed principle; setting no definite aim in view, but waiting, like Mr. Micawber, "for something to turn up." Let us, then, before we drift on the barren rocks of a wasted life, "tack about," as sailors say, and ask of ourselves, "whither bound?"

There are many dangers to which vessels are exposed as they follow their course. One starts with glowing prospects; everything goes well for a time, but she nears a dangerous coast. A sister vessel hails her—"Ship ahoy! Steer to windward or you'll run on the reefs. Beware of the shoals as well." So in life's voyage many start with fair prospects; their sky is unclouded, everything seems propitious, and through over-much success they go unheeding on their way. They near the hidden reefs of forbidden pleasures, or sail in close proximity to the shoals of selfishness and indolence. Kind friends warn them of danger, and unless the warning be heeded, we may sadly say, "Whither bound?"

Other vessels, small, insignificant cruisers, do duty in coasting near home. With these it would be inadvisable to venture on the broad ocean, and yet these, too, may wreck upon the reefs. They must be kept in ready trim, with sail and oar, as well as the large ones. So in life it is the part of some to lead quiet, uneventful, unexciting lives. As Grey beautifully expresses it, they "keep the noiseless tenor of their way." The reefs of diffidence and discontent must be shunned by these. If duties are neglected because humble, we say, "Beware! Whither bound?"

One other class of vessels we would notice. These are in but little danger of grounding on the shallows or of drifting on the shoals, being piloted, when landward, with an eagle eye. It is in their daring that their danger lies. "Swamped through overloading" is the epitaph written for them by the morning paper containing the story of their loss. In life's voyage we frequently find men gifted with rarest talent venturing beyond their depth, and ruin follows in their footsteps. Would these but pause in time to ask themselves, "Whither bound!"

Although the pathways of the deep resemble those of the voyagers on life's ocean, in that they are trackless, there is this difference, that while vessels may head in a thousand different directions, we journey but in two—an upward and a downward—to the fair haven of rest, or to shores where all is trouble. All voyagers sooner or later arrive at the destined port. Some rejoice in the thought of meeting with kind friends and joyfully sing, "We're Homeward Bound," while others can have no enjoyable anticipations. It is a cheering knowledge, a comfort unspeakable, to know that we as travelers are "homeward bound." Storms will come, threatening to overwhelm us, but why should we fear with an unerring Pilot at the helm? He bids us "pull for the shore," and if we heed His command, all will be well.

Unsympathetic Homes.

There are many homes which it is impossible to enter without being attracted by the manifest attachment and good-will which pervades the home atmosphere. But even when these admirable traits are markedly displayed, there is often a lack of sympathy—perhaps to say a lack of reciprocal interest or congenial feeling would more truly express the idea meant to be conveyed.

Writing for a journal whose circulation is largely confined to farmers, we will specially direct our attention to "evils" we have seen in this respect in farmers' families.

In many families one or more of the boys is found aspiring to a college education. In not a few instances brothers and sisters make sacrifices and the boys go to college. There they mingle with the educated—frequently meet the cultured, and are welcomed into the homes of the refined. They return to the farm at intervals, and though the love they bear to the old homestead and its inmates cannot be questioned, a painful lack exists. The monotony of chickens, cows, crops and local items grows wearisome at times, and a longing which may not be expressed, grows in the heart for some one *at home* to sympathize with and enter into hopes and aspirations for the future. Even the kindest sisterly

offices can not wholly make up for the deficiency of higher education and the want of womanly graces. Thus college brothers, idolized as they often are, find that for congeniality of feeling they must look elsewhere than home.

In other families, where the farmer is tolerably well situated with regard to the comforts of life, we find daughters receiving an education, while the boys are kept working at home. With the ordinary English branches a knowledge of music and the arts is obtained. A girl sees enough of society to feel keenly the difference between "the lettered and the unlettered." Are there no extenuating circumstances if at times she wishes her brothers were more gentlemanly in deportment and less uncouth in language? She loves them, of course, as any good sister will, but the gulf between them can not be denied.

In other homes we find the inmates more on a level—a fair share of general knowledge and an appreciation of good literature characterizes all members of the family; but even there the void is felt. Each may have a favorite inclination—may be struggling to attain a pre-eminence in some particular department—for sympathy, indifference is given; for encouragement, banter. "Oh, he doesn't mind it!" Doesn't he? Few human beings exist who are not in a greater or less degree susceptible to sympathy. A man or woman of true metal struggles bravely on without it; nevertheless the burden would be lighter were it extended.

But even where ties are stronger than that of brother and sister we find the "aching void." Conjugal affection often loses the ardor of early days by conscious or unconscious indifference on the part of either husband or wife to the efforts of the other. The very subtlety of the manner in which the feeling grows and exists may prevent its discernment for years, but eventually a nameless something will enter the breast of one who continually finds heart-throbbings unchorded. In the efforts to secure a comfortable maintenance, social position and the education of their children, there may be perfect unison, and yet that secret void exist, sapping the foundations of domestic happiness.

Characterizing the above as existing evils, we would seek a remedy which, though not wholly extirpating the trouble, might in some measure lessen it.

Much of the first and second evils could be remedied by parents giving their children equal opportunity for the foundation of a good education. It is a mistake, we think, to highly educate one and deprive the others. Give them all a start and then let each depend on his or her own exertions. Let parents relieve themselves of the odium of partial dealing with their children. But when circumstances exist as we have described, let the boys who have left the farm to follow professional or mercantile pursuits not forget what they owe to those at home, and let them show their remembrance in some tangible way.

An occasional sheet of music, a popular periodical, an interesting book, a good long letter at intervals, describing phases of life as they find it, will do much towards making those at home feel there is something in common between them. At the same time let the boys and girls on the farm endeavor to so cultivate their minds that they may converse intelligently, as farmers' sons and daughters should, and hold their own even against college brothers. That was no ordinary girl who stayed at home to read when the other young people of the neighborhood engaged in a perfect round of merry-making, in order that the brother at college might not find home altogether barren in the matter of literary delights. In this connection, however, we beg to remark, that brothers are not quite scatheless in one respect. How many a boy when he is ready to engage in his life-work marries—often the one he chooses has but little sympathy with his early struggles and less interest in his family connections—the sisters and brothers whom he ought to have assisted are left to struggle as best they may, and not unfrequently bitter disappointment is the miserable substitute for the fruition of hope and sacrifice.

When the girls leave home, we do not think the boys feel so keenly the difference between their attainments; and besides, very often if a boy is determined to leave home, he can, while a girl would be guilty of culpable neglect to her parents were she to do the same. Still girls can do much, and a young man whose asperities do not soften under the influence of an agreeable and refined sister is not likely to become a great benefit to the community.

The remedy for the third evil may be summarily comprehended

in a few words. Let that amount of interest, compliment, praise, or sympathy, as the case requires, which would be given to a friend, be transferred to brothers and sisters; give "the prophet a little honor." Let not the home atmosphere depress or chill the buoyancy of youthful spirit; give the pent-up fountains of natural affection a channel through which to flow. The reflex influence will bring its reward, thirty, sixty, and one hundred fold.

In the more delicate subject of a wife's inattention or a husband's indifference, we venture to say that in not a few instances both may look to themselves, not each to the other, to find the fault. Should a husband who takes no notice of the many little decorations which wifely hands have arranged, who turns away with ill-concealed impatience, if perchance his over-burdened wife occasionally asks for advice or assistance in the discharge of domestic duties; should such a husband wonder why he at times has to suffer an indifferent if not a negative interest in matters which to him are all important? We do not, of course, attempt to justify those wives whose narrowness of idea and illiberality of mind would hamper their husbands in every undertaking. Unhappy themselves, it seems to be a source of pain to see others enjoy life. The remedy in such a case is more easily discussed than applied. There is a happy medium which has been reached in many homes where the wife does her part well, and has true sympathy with her husband in all his undertakings, and where the husband does his part equally well, protecting with true manliness those dependent upon him. Such homes whisper of Eden, and no matter what storms may come, in perfect unison, husband and wife together brave them, leaving to their families an enduring record of the happiness of home.

The Sunshine and Shadows of Life.

"Shadows dark and sunlight sheen
Alternate come and go."

So wrote America's summer poet in words true as they are musical. Beautifully true in the natural sense, we find them also true when applied to life.

It must be a dead soul indeed—dead to all things lovely—that has not noticed the bright sunshine gladdening hill and dale, glinting the crests of the tiny wave of some little stream or inland lake, and causing the ripening grain of a rich harvest to assume that golden brown only describable by pen inspired of poetic genius; ever and anon a dark shade overcasting all, caused by some light fleecy cloud passing between sun and earth, only tending to enhance the beauty. Away to the horizon where the shadow rests is a background of rich green foliage, blending harmoniously with the deep blue of the sky, and the lighter green sunshine-tinted in front.

When children, we have watched the alternating sunshine and shadow with much interest. Stretching as far as our childish vision could reach, the dark line could be seen hastening toward us. In our childish innocence, laughing as only children can, we have more than once run to see how far we could go before it would catch us, happily unconscious that we were playing a part which would have to be acted with intense earnestness as we grew to maturer years.

But the scenes of childhood are gone, leaving only tender memories. All around us are still flitting those alternations of light and shade which characterize the world of nature. Whence come they in life? We would draw aside the curtain and ascertain their origin. In this inquiry nature will help us wonderfully. We will require much of her assistance, for there is a peculiar similarity between the natural and temporal; nothing occurs in the latter, but some phase of the former can be taken as illustrative of it.

Many homes are darkened by shadows—we might say every home. Perhaps this shadow is caused by a father unworthy the name, an untrue mother, an erring son, or a wayward daughter. Perhaps a cloud has fallen over it by reason of financial reverses, social temptations, bitter disappointments, false friendship, or physical weakness. Be the cause what it may, the shadow is certainly there. If any one doubts it, let him become a closer observer of human nature. Why so many anxious, careworn faces in the world around us? The deepening furrows whisper the story, "life's shadows." It is true, indeed, that in life, as in the natural world,

there may be days and week of unclouded sunshine, but eventually the *shadows will come.* In the strange dispensation of providence there seem to be some homes and some lives whose normal condition is shadow—sunlight the exception. And this is not always the fault of the home or the individual. Superior mould often has to live in the same condition of life externally as common clay. Sensitive, delicate, honorable natures often have to come in close and personal contact with that which is rude, harsh and mean. And why? On the same principle that sunshine and shadow exist. Does the thought often occur that it is the sunshine which causes the shadow? Had the former not been, the latter could not be; had the latter not been, we could not have fully appreciated the beauty of the former.

But we have only examined the matter as the world views it—externally and materially. Let us now throw around it the soft radiance of spiritual sunlight. It is true, indeed, that in the spiritual world, as in the natural, there are "shadows dark and sunlight sheen." If not, whence these longings unutterable, indescribable—for something higher, nobler and purer? Whence these unsatisfied yearnings? Whence the gloom and doubt and darkness that at times almost make us question the grand plan of creation and redemption? Whence, too, the sweet companionship of kindred spirits, those seasons of spiritual exultancy which seem an earnest of eternal bliss; that radiancy of soul which alone can come from the Father of light?

Be the shadows light as the snowy cloud that occasionally intervenes between earth and sky, or as the summer storm-cloud which, having spent its fury, passes away, leaving a clarified atmosphere and a heaven of purer blue; or be they as the deep, gloomy, portentous dullness of a winter's day, there may also be found the glorious sunshine.

We may find it in ourselves, and yet not in ourselves. In ourselves, because we must make the effort to bear the burdens of others, thus making more of sunshine in other lives, and by so doing turning away from ourselves. Is one discouraged and almost weary of life? A dark cloud seems to shroud all. Let one so situated seek those who are in even more leaden darkness

than himself, and just in proportion as the attempt is made to lessen the burden of the more overshadowed one, will the clouds dispel, and the sunshine grow brighter. Do you doubt it? "Learn the luxury of doing good," and be convinced. Are friends untrue? Shadow deep enough, heaven knows, but there are those who are longing for sympathy. Instead of brooding over your own griefs, listen to theirs, sympathize with them, counsel if you can, and behold the sunshine! Is a mother discouraged and wearied with her thoughtless, wayward children? Heavy shadow, but let her anticipate the sunlight which will gladden her declining years, when she sees her children filling useful and honored positions in life. Is a teacher perplexed and almost giving up her effort to lead the young minds entrusted to her care to live for a noble purpose? Are the shadows drooping heavily about her? Let her remember hers is a work which will stand long after "all shadows flee away," and with this hope to comfort her, she finds in her daily work the sunshine of building for eternity. Is the earnest pastor at times wrapped in thick clouds of darkness, because of the spiritual weakness and coldness of his people? His sunlight appears when many souls are given him for his hire, which reward will most certainly be his, if he only prove himself faithful and true. Of all vocations, the holy calling seems to be peculiarly one of alternating light and shade. As spiritual gloom is the most intense, so spiritual light is the most radiant—the clouding or the dismantling of the effulgence of the Sun of Righteousness. These are but instances of what is true in every case—the secret of life's sunshine is found in the words, "Bear ye one another's burdens."

Of course, there are times when, from physical causes, the shadow appears more ominous than it really is. A disordered system not unfrequently is the cause of a dark day; the incautious partaking of some article of diet sometimes disturbs the equilibrium of mind and body for a week; but we are attempting to deal with real—not imaginary—lights and shadows.

We beg to extend, ere we close, a word of sympathy to those whose lives, temporally speaking, are apparently all shadow. Care-burdened ones, have you never observed that the most glorious sunsets are those which appear at the close of a day of storm and

cloud? Come and let us together look upon it! See the heavy masses of cloud breaking in the west—the darker the mass, the contrast of silver edge being all the more striking. What a blending of color—saffron and amethyst, blue and gold—a perfect picture painted by the Divine artist on cloud-canvas; truly "the gorgeous upholstery of heaven." Behold the troubled cloud-waves drift apart to allow the soft, subdued rays of a setting sun to throw beauty over the landscape. As it dips beneath the horizon there is a sacred calm, a holy peace, to break which by utterance of words seems almost sacrilegious. Beautiful sunlight after a day of shadow—fitting emblem, we trust, of those whose daily lives seem to be one prolonged shadow. "And it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light."

"Gang Forward."

One of the sights of Scotland's metropolis is its grand old cathedral, with its relics of centuries gone by, and its wealth of stained glass, the production of the Royal Establishment of Glass Painting at Munich, the greatest of the continental schools. The architecture is said to be one of the finest specimens of the early Gothic style, while a peculiar interest attaches to the structure itself from its being one of the few ecclesiastical edifices that have come down to us in their original state. It was founded by St. Mungo, who was contemporary with St. Columba, and the two famous abbots are said to have had an interview on the banks of the Molendinar, then a romantic burn running past the site of the present cathedral. Part of the present edifice has been standing since 1197. Strange and interesting would be the story could its old walls speak. William Wallace met and overcame the forces of the English Percy by its side. In all probability Robert Bruce worshipped within its walls; his rival, Edward, certainly made offerings at the shrine of St. Mungo, as it was then called. John Knox, fearing not the face of man, made its arches ring with new and living truths, and to-day there stands on an eminence in the

necropolis, just across the Molendinar burn, a Doric column of chaste and massive construction, surmounted by a statue of the staunch reformer, a testimony of his country's gratitude. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of 1638 ratified the confession of faith, and confirmed the Covenant within it. After the battle of Dunbar, Cromwell with his soldiers went to the Cathedral to hear sermons. The minister, with that admirable fearlessness characteristic of the early reformers, denounced the Independents, though they were at the same time his hearers. Cromwell, instead of shooting him on the spot, asked him to sup with him. The minister accepted the invitation, and Cromwell, with a shrewdness and humor not always accredited to him, closed the evening's entertainment with a prayer of several hours' duration. The trick succeeded admirably—the Scottish divines were satisfied and gave out that he was surely one of the "elect." Could any man pray like that and his "effectual calling" be doubted?

It is not its history or associations, however, which at the present time calls our attention. Let us note the "monumental pile," and with that respect which is due to the sacred edifice, look about us. In the nave there is much of interest. Rent and tattered flags, telling of a nation's glory; golden deeds carved in marble, speaking of the heroism, the courage, the valor and the patriotism of one and another of Scotland's heroes. On an old memorial tablet on which is carved the coat-of-arms of one of Scotland's proud families, we read beneath the crest the family motto in Scottish vernacular, "Gang Forward!" What noble words! They bespeak

"The will to do, the soul to dare,"

and as sanguine youth enters upon another year with fond aspirations, bright hopes and good resolutions, I know of no more fitting motto to carve upon the tablet of the future than just "Gang Forward." Young men, has the past year been one of blessing to you? Have nobler aims inspired you? Have you felt within you a truer type of manhood? Have you struggled against

"The low desire, the base design;
The strife for triumph more than truth;
The hardening of the heart that brings
Irreverence for the dreams of youth?"

If you have, then in your strength, which is your glory, "Gang Forward"—press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling.

And you, my maidens, in all the glow of girlhood and early womanhood, have angel voices whispered to you of the fuller development of feminine virtues—amiability, industry, earnestness, thrift, and the crowning glory of woman, "chastity in thought, speech and behavior"? Has the thought come to you that a rightly-minded woman has within her the power to shape and mould character for eternity? Have you commenced to discover that you are thoughtless of others' comfort and regardless of others' feelings; selfish in things you never dreamed of before; envious at the prosperity of others; impatient where you might be patient, and frivolous where you might be earnest? If so, "Gang Forward," and may heaven bless your efforts, dear girls! I speak not idly, but sincerely.

And you, my brown-handed school-boys and rosy-cheeked school-girls—you who are the pride of our homes and the hope of our Canada—you in whom we see the men and women of twenty years hence—what shall I say to you? Have wonderful thoughts flashed across those busy little brains? In your fun and frolic have you stopped to think that you, too, can be workers in the vineyard? Have you wondered what little hands can do in the world's work? Have you resolved to study, not because teacher wishes you, not because your parents will be pleased, though that certainly is a commendable motive, but because by the acquirement of knowledge you can be more useful in the world? Have you thought that sometimes you might be more gentle at school, and kinder to your brothers and sisters at home? Have you thought or commenced to think of the many, many hours that are passing away unimproved? If so, with all my heart I bid you "Gang Forward," and then you will have what we wish to one and all, A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

How Should Farmers Spend their Evenings?

A wide field lies before me—wide, not only because of the many whom it concerns, but also because of the question having a direct bearing on the private weal and public good of all our farmers. I use the word "farmers" in its broadest sense, taking it to mean "farmer folk" in general—that is, farmers, their wives, sons and daughters.

It is admitted by all, that, taking the annual average, farmers have more leisure than those in other occupations. It is indeed true that farmers' hours, during the harvest season, are very long, and necessarily so. He is an unwise husbandman who leaves his valuable hay and golden sheaves to the caprice of the weather, and thus the intense physical exertion demanded during the day renders farmers incapable of any mental exertion during the short evenings; early retiring in the summer months, I do not think, could be materially improved upon so long as the present state of things exists. About eight or nine months out of the twelve, however, farmers should have considerable leisure in the evenings. I have no sympathy with that class of farmers, and the class is not small, who, summer and winter, daylight and dark, never find leisure. Bent only upon the accumulation of acres or dollars, they always find work to do, wholly neglectful of social or mental development. Who can blame a boy for disliking his father's profession if to him it means only unending toil? Can a workman be blamed if he seeks an employer in whose service he may have his evening hours to himself? In not a few farmers' homes the following winter routine may be found: Rising early, early enough to feed the cattle by lantern-light; breakfasting; working with teams all day; after supper, feeding the cattle again, with other "chores" to be attended to, after which it is time to go to bed. The mother is always wearied; the girls long for something, they "know not what;" the boys rebel, and the father wonders why his children take no interest in the farm. Who can tell him? With this class, however, I have not to deal, unless, indeed, I can lead them into other and higher paths. Hoping they will come with me, I will venture to suggest how farmers *should* spend their evenings.

Before doing so, however, I will take the liberty of peeping into the farmer's kitchen, which, I am sorry to say, in many homes, is the sitting-room as well. Through a sort of haze I see the good man, at ease with himself and all around him, seated at one side of the stove. He lazily puffs tobacco "reek," not always pleasing to the other inmates. On a lounge a sturdy youth is stretched; his whole attitude bespeaks listlessness, while at the other side of the stove, another olive branch, wholly indifferent to gracefulness of posture, reverses himself on a chair, and, with head resting on the back, indulges in alternate nods and yawns. The merry, mischievous face of a schoolboy is seen at the table. The frank, intelligent, expressive and bright eyes, indicate "hidden treasures" in that yet undeveloped mind. The mother, of course, is knitting or darning, with each stitch weaving cross-threads of a mother's unending care and unerring skill. One daughter, with deft fingers, is arranging one of the many little decorations that beautify home, while another pores over a book or paper.

Such is a picture of a farmer's home enjoyment—not, indeed, as it is always found, nor yet an ideal one; yet, albeit the apparent aimlessness of purpose, happy the home, comparatively speaking, where it is even generally found. By the home fireside a boy usually learns no evil. There are darker phases of the way in which farmers spend their evenings. Why does that moral plague spot, the village tavern, at times give forth sounds of profanity and brawling? Why do the as yet innocent boys draw near its door? Why is the village store or shop, evening after evening, crowded with representatives of every home in the neighborhood? Why, night after night, until well-nigh in the morning dawn, do the sons and daughters of country homes misspend their youthful hours and golden opportunities? Why is it that a mother's life is saddened and her life burdened because of the waywardness of some erring one? Why is it that the day of rest is a day of extreme weariness, if not altogether profaned by visiting or driving? Why? In answer, I would not lay the whole blame on misspent evenings; but I do claim, and I think justly so, that much of it may be attributed to the way in which farmers spend their evenings. Such being the case, the question comes most pointedly,

"How *should* farmers spend their evenings?" The question being so broad, and the space too limited to admit of details, I must for the present confine myself to general principles. We must bear in mind that there should be a due proportion of edification and recreation, for both are essential to physical, mental, and moral development of boys and girls on the verge of manhood and womanhood.

As a first means, then, to the proper spending of the evening hours, we would suggest *reading*. Any father and mother worthy of the name, cannot but be pleased to see their children in good company. In books we find the best embodiments of great men's thoughts. We mingle with their authors, loving them as familiar friends. Can better society be desired than Macaulay, Ruskin, Tennyson, Longfellow, Bryant, Browning, Pope, Bacon, Spencer, Miller, Chalmers, and many others? Dickens, with admirable portrayal of character, draws aside the curtain which shuts us out from our fellow-travelers, while Scott weaves such a web of history, romance and landscape, that the reader is entangled ere he is aware. Current periodicals can be obtained at a cost which would scarcely pay for a "fragrant" (?) cigar; works of popular authors, pure in tone, lofty in sentiment, and comprehensible by average minds, for recreative reading, are available in every farmer's home, while agricultural journals should receive the cordial and unanimous support of the class whose cause they espouse, and whose interests they defend. Not to patronize their advocate betrays short-sightedness on the part of the farmers. With all due deference to the intelligence of the yeomanry, I would suggest a "Manual of Common Politeness" as a further addition to a farmer's library. If a farmer's work is at times rough, that is no reason why his manner should be uncouth. It is painful at times to observe the lack of culture in a gathering of country youths. In intellectual endowment (lacking only in development), in kindness of heart, in nobleness of purpose, in purity of words, they can compare very favorably with their city cousins; but why this lack of minor attention to their mothers and sisters? Why those discolored, neglected teeth—those untrimmed nails, and coat inclined to a crescent shape from stooping shoulders? The result of habit

in many instances. But I digress, and saying that in all reading it is more profitable to read a few books well than many carelessly, I proceed to the second point.

Next to reading, and as an assistance to it, I would suggest *music.* Not so easily obtained as books, perhaps, yet quite obtainable in the ordinary farmer's home. The paper editions of standard literature are only equalled by the five-cent sheet music. When eyes have to be rubbed and the yawn becomes infectious, let books be laid aside and the evening enlivened by vocal and instrumental strains.

Long after the boys and girls of the old homestead have scattered, when their homes, if not their graves, shall be separated by "mountain, stream, and sea," tender will be the memories of those evening hours. The songs and hymns of early days link the heart to the home by a chain so strong, an influence so potent, that even in the ages to come, chord with chord will vibrate, and reunited families will remember with joy the music of other days.

If the youngsters at times grow uproarious, let them expend their buoyancy of spirit. Perfect development is attained, not by curbing, but by guiding; a good gardener will not cut away a vigorous shoot because it inclines to grow awry; he will train it while yet of tender growth.

As a third means to the pleasant and profitable spending of evenings I would suggest *social intercourse.* Interchange of ideas assist in the development of the mind, while that ease of manner and readiness of expression we admire in the cultured circles can only be obtained by contact with society. We farmers, as a class, are deplorably lacking in this respect. Who has not been at gatherings in the country, where the weather, the crops, and the local items, worn threadbare, the silence became first awkward, then embarrassing, and finally painful, the oppressive feeling in no degree lessened by the occasional whisper from those who, though rude, are often unconsciously so.

To obviate these difficulties, there are many games, requiring a moderate amount of mental ability or physical dexterity, which may profitably be introduced, while the reading and music before mentioned can be most happily utilized. Fair reading and recit-

ing, as well as music, is ever a source of pleasure. Short selections, however, are best for all, save professionals, in either art. Outdoor amusements, such as skating, coasting and ball playing, should be indulged in occasionally. There is a danger, however, of devoting too much time to these things. If physical or mental well-being demands much exercise, the time is not wasted when spent thus. If indulged in solely to pass the time, then that which is in itself innocent, becomes sinful. Is proof demanded? "Live redeeming the time." Each sunset that bathes the landscape in golden glories, and hallows the twilight hour, returns not again; the moments of this *one* life once gone are gone forever—*forever.*

A fourth means as to the manner in which farmers should spend their evenings I beg to suggest before I close. It differs materially from the others in one particular; while they can be laid down as a basis of general conduct, subject to occasional interruptions, it can and should be always observed. With such an inimitable description of the means referred to from pen of immortal fame, I would not mar the exquisite picture with untrained brush. Silently bowing "Good-Night," I leave a master hand to paint:

"The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-Bible, once his father's pride.
His bonnet reverently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets, wearing thin and bare,
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide;
He wales a portion with judicious care,
And 'Let us worship God' he says, with solemn air."

Family Government.

Family government—what is it? Without attempting a definition of what it is, we would say it is to the family what government is to the nation, and upon it the future usefulness, success and prosperity of a family, or the lack of these, largely depend.

We think parents should insist upon and receive obedience from the tenderest years—as soon as a child knows what wrong is, it can be taught to do right. Obedience to a parent's wish is better learned earlier than later in life. When we speak of parents demanding this obedience from their children, we do not mean that it can be exacted only by threats and punishment. Some children, of course, are more wayward than others, but at least nine out of ten children, *if properly taught from their earliest years*, will obey their parents from other motives than fear. In this matter of early training we think many parents err. How often the remark is heard, "Oh, I don't mind him now; when he gets older I shall correct him." If parents would sow seeds of future worry and discomfort, let them continue such a course with a child. When children reach the age of two or three years a mother can do more by guiding than forbidding. To illustrate: We know a mother, who, when her little one meddles with something it is in danger of spoiling, tells the child to move a chair, bring papa's slippers, lay away a knife, or some such simple little matter. The child's attention is thus drawn from its former occupation, and that without screaming or kicking. If the mother would indiscreetly shriek, "Come now, stop that!" the probable result would be a family fray, ending in either a whipping, or a corner behind the pantry door for the offender.

As children grow older and go to school, books and toys may be made a means of training. In the home, at school, on the streets, everywhere, idleness is ever the nurse of trouble and sin: therefore let children be kept busy. Let them, of course, have plenty of out-door exercise, but discriminate wisely between invigorating play and useless idleness. As in earlier years, insist upon prompt obedience. That parent who says "No" to a child, and then, because of its tears and sobs and ill-temper, allows the "No" to become "Yes," deserves to suffer the penalty which such inde-

cision justly entails. This is the parent of whom it is said, "She can do nothing with her children—they can neither be coaxed nor driven." Children properly taught know that a parent's "No" means "No," and that further entreaty is useless; therefore, when the parents of such children wish to go away, leaving their children at home, there is no need of the abominable deceit we have often seen practised by parents—must we say it?—by women called *mothers*, who send their children out of the way while they steal out of the back door to avoid the tempest of tears and anger which inevitably follows when the deceit is discovered by the child. In little matters, however, it is better to lead rather than thwart; request rather than command, and in every matter children should be encouraged to confide fully and freely in their parents. The latter we know is a difficult matter, but much rests with the parents. We know one mother who, when the children's bed-time comes, retires with them a few minutes to speak of the day's events. It is a commendable idea, but many mothers in the country who perform the combined duties of cook, dairy-maid, house-maid and seamstress, as well as general manager of the household, find it impossible to take the time. We would suggest, however, as a partial remedy for this lack of time, fewer ruffles on the little garments and plainer food for growing boys and girls. A few minutes each day taken with the children when young is surely rewarded a hundred-fold—nay, a hundred times an hundred-fold—when a family grows up, an honor to the community and a comfort to parents as the journey of life to them nears the western horizon.

We come now to speak, lastly, of the most important stage of family government, viz., that government which must be exercised with most judicious care when the children have attained to that period of life which immediately precedes manhood and womanhood. Their temporal and eternal welfare is based in a great measure on the physical, mental, moral and spiritual influences thrown around them at this critical age. We mention the physical because many boys and girls are shamefully negligent of that pearl of price—good health. It is such an important factor in the proper discharge of duty that we deem it worthy of special mention. Parents should teach children that it is positively sinful to

abuse the casket, the delicate construction and divine workmanship of which is both "fearful and wonderful." Plain diet, simple amusements, and a moderate amount of physical exercise, will, in all ordinary cases, result in a fair degree of good health. But even more important than the physical well-being is the formation of character, which, including mental, moral and spiritual development, renders this period of life an anxious one indeed to those parents who feel as they should the heavy responsibilities devolving upon them in the training of a family. Physical, mental, moral, spiritual —what intensity of purpose, what patient sowing of good seed, what deep thought must there be ere each growth of the tender plant receives even an approximation of due attention! Keener of observation now, the children—they are ever that to father and mother—notice quickly a parent's inconsistency, which may at this time result in the undoing of all previous training.

The last stage of family government, though difficult in many respects, has an advantage over the others, from the fact that at this time children can be reasoned with as well as advised—their common sense and knowledge of right and wrong can be appealed to. We have in our mind a most exemplary family, in whose training, advice and reasoning, with complete parental control, were the only elements. Scolding, threatening and lecturing were entirely dispensed with, and the children, now grown men and women, treat their parents with that love and respect which is too unfrequently met with in this fast young country of ours.

One has said:

> "The hand that rocks the cradle
> Is the hand that rules the world."

And when we consider how much a well-regulated home contributes to the public weal, and the direct bearing the government of the family has on the government of the nation, it should enhance to an intense degree the practical importance of good "family government."

CHAPTER XIII.

Letters * from * Scotland.

To her mother:

NEW YORK, July 10, 1886.

"Here I am, safe and sound in the famous city, and almost *oppressed* with kindness.

"The moment we crossed the Canadian boundary line I noticed a change, both in railway carriages and in the conduct of the officials. The courtesy of American railway men is most marked. Canadians might well take a lesson. On the first train we had a genuine Yankee for a companion. From Buffalo to Utica an engineer gave us all the information we wanted. Then a German, bound for the 'Vaterland,' tried to strike up a conversation, but he couldn't speak English much, and we couldn't speak German at all, so it was almost a failure. He was kind enough, however, to inform us that he would 'Threat us to mooch vine;' which offer we declined with thanks.

"It was about one o'clock that night before the god of sleep claimed all the passengers, and about three the first indications of daylight appeared, and one by one our fellow-travelers awakened. We skirted the Susquehanna River for many, many miles, and I don't wonder New Yorkers are proud of their State. Beautiful hills and valleys, little farm houses, peaceful-looking villages, quiet graveyards, and occasionally a country school—which would invariably recall my own boys and girls to mind—were the scenes we passed. From the buildings I would conclude, however, that it was not a very good farming country. They remind one very much of the French farms on the St. Lawrence River. Leaving the Susquehanna we came to the Delaware River—a wide, shallow stream it seemed to be—which we followed for about seventy miles. The railway must follow the rivers, it seems, because the hills could not be surmounted without great difficulty. Jersey State is much like New York, but the hills are higher; our 'mountain' at Hamilton is only a little hill compared with them. I saw wheat in shocks as we passed one hillside, and just above the field was a country graveyard, the white stones marking the sleeping places of the dead. The gathered harvest and the gathered sleepers blend-

ed in one thought as in the rosy dawning, we, full of life and clamor, dashed past Narrowsburg, where we got an excellent cup of tea ; Paterson, which is not by any means a pretty city ; Passaic, a long tunnel, Jersey City, Hudson River Ferry, and we are in New York."

To her mother :

"STEAMER CIRCASSIAN, July 17, 1886.

"When in New York, I was driven through Central Park. Such a labyrinth of roads—such a breathing space for the working thousands, such a sweet retreat in the very centre of the busiest city of America. Leaving the Park we reached the fashionable drive of the city. Such carriages and such fast riding I have never seen. The difference between employer and employed is hard to tell. As I returned home after a drive of twenty miles and saw the elevated railways, the houses towering eighteen stories above us ; hall after hall for various purposes, and the magnificent residences, I more fully realized the greatness of the pride of the Americans.

"Next morning found me on my way to the steamer Circassian, which we reached in due time, and got safely boarded—luggage and all. The farewell at the wharf was all I had dreamed, and more. As the vessel slowly made her way out a whole forest of hands and handkerchiefs, hats and flowers, waved to and fro—smiles and tears, farewells and good wishes were seen and heard on all sides. As far as we could see the pier, handkerchiefs were waving. We sailed down through the Sound, Long Island on our right and Staten Island on our left ; we could discern the wooded hills and handsome residences in the distance. The framework of the Statue of Liberty, with the hand pointing outward, is already placed. Towards evening we passed into the broad Atlantic, but so smoothly we floated, had no one told me, I should not have known. There are a great many nice people on board, and my 'Tam o' Shanter' has found me many Scotch friends. My state-room companion doesn't know why I should be lonely on a sea voyage, for I'm never at a loss for company. Our captain—who has just traveled across the Pacific from Yokahama—has taken me under his especial care, and promises me the pleasure of seeing a launch when we get to Glasgow.

"But I didn't tell you about the sea-sickness. I thought I was bad, but wasn't half so bad as some others, and am now all better, and have a prodigious appetite. We have breakfast at eight, lunch at one, dinner at five, and tea at eight. During the intervals we talk, laugh, read, and, best of all, walk on the hurricane deck. One old gentleman, who has left his professional dignity at home, with a merry twinkle in his eye, asks if I have provided myself with a good supply of shoes. As usual, I get along best with girls and boys in thei teens, and people much older than myself.

"The Atlantic is much like Lake Ontario, and very little rougher. The stereotyped and affected expressions, 'How lovely!' 'How grand!' 'Isn't it beautiful?' grate on the ear as an indelicate hand would spoil the effect of a fine drawing. A feeling of awe—a reverence for the Creator comes over me as I remember, 'He holds the waters in the hollow of His hand,' and the ever flowing, never quiet waters, reminds me of the incessant tide of passion which flows and ebbs in the best of human hearts. The voyage has been pleasant, but I shall be glad enough when we reach Glasgow; and when leaving time comes I shall be pleased enough to start home again. A great number of those on board are sight-seers—some going for pleasure and some for health. Many are going to the Highlands, and any to whom I have spoken are bound for the Trossachs.

"I am disgusted with the American accent. The 'waitah' is not infrequently reminded to do 'bettah,' while the 'buttah' never gives satisfaction. We have lots of youngsters on board, who find ample room on the Circassian to make a great noise. The gentlemen play shuffle board and quoits during the day when not smoking or eating."

To her mother:

"GLASGOW, July 22, 1886.

"You will not be looking for budget No. 3 already, but if I get behind with my news, I shall not catch up again.

"I finished the last as we were nearing the Irish coast, and I begin where I left off. We had an easterly storm which lasted two days; but apart from that we had very nice weather, at least, experienced sailors said so. The fitfulness of it drew my attention—a day of unclouded blue seems unknown on the Atlantic. As we neared land, but before it came in sight, I had another attack of sea-sickness, as well as one of home-sickness—not too bad, however, to come on deck when land appeared. Most welcome it was after ten days of sea and sky, for, notwithstanding the ever-changing aspect, it does grow monotonous. Tory Island first came in sight. We could see the lighthouse at a distance, then the outline of the mainland of Ireland stood in bold relief against the sky. The setting sun tinged the bare rocks with a golden glow, and soon we could discern the green grass on the shore. With the naked eye we could plainly see rows of vegetables—we supposed they were potatoes—in a garden on the coast, while an Irish goat industriously cropped the herbage on the rocky ascent. At ten p. m. the pilot came on board, and soon a smaller boat was sent from Moville, and about one hundred of our passengers, from cabin, intermediate and steerage, left us The farewell was quite interesting. Three ringing cheers were given for the vessel, the captain and others; in the dim moonlight handkerchiefs were waved, good-byes were said, and they were gone. After eleven we retired, knowing that when morning came old Scotland would be in view. I rose about 5.30, and looking out of the port, saw

what seemed to me a perpendicular rock—like a sugar-loaf—projecting out of the sea. That was Ailsa Craig. I stood and looked at it, and were it not for the painfully matter-of-fact state of affairs in my state-room, might probably have laughed or cried. As it was, I stood looking a moment in silence, then dressed hastily, packed my valise, and started for the upper deck. To my great astonishment, when I got there and looked at Ailsa Craig, then at the opposite side, the land was right at hand. We were about a quarter of a mile from Holy Island. The hills in the distance seemed to reach to the clouds, and sloping down to the sea were the peaceful farms and quiet farm-houses, the fields evenly and regularly divided by dykes and hedges. Then we came to Arran Island, and on the left we could see Ayrshire, with Largs, and in the distance the Duke of Hamilton's castle. The morning was magnificent, the air fresh but not too cool, the sky blue, and the clouds like foam. Soon we passed Bute, and after breakfast I could scarcely believe my eyes when a friend said, 'There are the hills of Argyle, and yonder is old Ben Lomond.' Towering to the skies I could see it, grim and hazy in the distance. On we go, however, and soon Greenock appears. We were all expected to land here, as the tide was out, and the Circassian could not go up till the afternoon, so we were transferred by first-class carriage to Glasgow. We were anchored about two hours in the Frith of Clyde, waiting for the customs officers, during which time we could take in all the surroundings. Looking out of the car window a young man remarked, 'Those houses look as if they had always been there,' and true enough he was. My first impressions of Glasgow, I must confess, are not pleasing. The eye wearies with slate-colored stone, rows upon rows, built of the same material and modelled after the same unpleasing fashion, while to my eye the 'pots' and 'old wives' on the chimneys are distressing. Grates instead of stoves are still used. If the draft is not right a chimney-pot is put at the top of a four or five-storied house. Perhaps the occupant of a next flat finds his fireplace smoking too,—up goes another chimney-pot beside the one there already, and care seems to be taken that they be *not* of the same size. The third flat occupant deems it advisable to have an 'old wife,' that is, some kind of black arrangement surmounting the chimney pot, and so the story runs. I have observed eight pots in a row, along one chimney, and though I am not certain, I think from the hideous appearance, there were eight respective lengths.

"Not a ludicrous but a sad sight, is men and women going along the streets, into the courts, singing hymns or songs to draw attention that they may ask charity. Just as I write a woman is passing—she is singing a Scottish air which I cannot catch—ragged and very dirty, she walks in the middle of the paved street, a poor miserable infant clinging to her neck, while another poor child goes into the houses as she passes. A man sang, preached, and I suppose, prayed in the court, this morning for charity. He sang 'To the work,' and truly it seemed a strange call from a strange messenger. I was lulled to sleep last night with the martial music of the bagpipes, and even as I write I hear faintly the distant sound.

"Perhaps you know what these large Glasgow tenements are; but my imagination never pictured them. Doubtless they are comfortable for those who know no other.

"Thousands of unemployed workmen are going about, while the lordlings roll in their carriages. On the Circassian I wondered the crew did not rebel. 'Tis too long a story though; let it suffice to say, that of all the working class I have had the opportunity of watching, sailors and boat-waiters have the hardest life. I fail to see the romance of it, and judging by the hardened countenances and the hardening influences of the nature of their employment, I should indeed be surprised to find one Christian out of one hundred of a crew. The estimate may be low—'tis simply my opinion. The people in the steerage fare but little better. I was privileged, with one or two others, to go down to see the machinery, and we passed through the steerage. Women and men were sitting on the deck, not a seat provided for them. Not infrequently a great wave would wash up, sending the salt water all over the deck. When on Sabbath morning we had service, I really wondered they had grace enough to come—I fear I should not. I really pitied them. With the hope of a better existence it would materially lessen the bitterness which an independent nature must feel when placed in such uncongenial surroundings."

To her sister:

"GLASGOW, July 27, 1886.

"I do not like Glasgow as a city. The streets are very dirty and the weather is never certain—not even for an hour. To go out without an umbrella and waterproof is simply an absurdity to me. All this has a corresponding effect on clothing. I noticed from the first the somewhat—not shabby, for the material is good, but mussy—that expresses it better than anything I know—appearance of the ordinary people on the street.

"Our friends here are so anxious for my enjoyment that there is something on the programme for almost every hour. I am too tired to be as enthusiastic as I otherwise would be. Rev. Mr. Douglas has kindly offered to take me to Glasgow University, to see the students take their degrees, on Thursday next. His only child would have graduated this year had he not been taken some months ago to a Higher School, and Mrs. Douglas cannot go under the circumstances. The thoughts of her own boy unnerve her, and so amid the joy there is hidden sorrow. On Sabbath morning I went to hear him preach. In the afternoon I went to St. Columba's (Established) Church—the second largest in the city—where the Rev. Laughlin McLaughlin holds forth. He being absent, his assistant preached an ordinarily good sermon. In the evening, being very tired, I went to a little 'Free' Kirk, where I heard Moody and Sankey's hymns and a somewhat stereotyped form of eloquence, in which the speaker made some allusion to the 'kerulean' arch above us. The nov-

elty of the pronunciation was slightly startling. So ended my first Scotch Sabbath. I thought very much about a class of earnest-faced maidens in a quiet country school-house, with a great longing that ere they mingle with the busy world around them, they may build on a sure foundation.

"Much of the sentiment I have had for 'Scotland and the Scotch' has been dispelled. In no place have I seen more pitiful or despicable objects. One cannot but notice the number of deformed children—'tis very sad indeed—probably owing to lack of care in infancy. I wonder if some of the streets are not noted for the number of souls to the square foot; anyway, it is certain I never saw so many children in one locality in any Canadian city. Women and girls walk bareheaded and barefooted on the street—children are shockingly dirty. As yet I have heard but little profanity, while the broadest Glasgow Scotch is heard on all sides. Vendors of coal, bread, fish and endless other things keep up such a din that the 'greeny' is annoyed for a day or two, but one soon gets accustomed to it.

"I was through the wholesale rooms of Messrs. Stuart & McDonald. They employ five hundred clerks in all. I could just stand and wonder at what seemed to me to be a fabulous amount of dress goods of every description. In the evening we went to the Botanic Gardens, which were very interesting; but there was so much—fuchsias trained to climb as our climbing roses do; ferns, fifteen feet high, from Mexico; and geraniums which we can easily surpass, were some of the plants I noticed. The promenade concert quite delighted me, though one special item of interest failed to appear—a band of pipers in Highland dress. The 'Royal Scots,' in tartan pants and red coats, made up the deficiency, and I never knew I had so much music within me until they played, without delay between selections, 'Ye Banks and Braes,' 'A Man's a Man for a' That,' 'Blue Bells of Scotland,' 'Annie Laurie,' 'Scots Wha Hae,' and 'All the Blue Bonnets are Over the Border.' The concert closed with 'God Save the Queen,' and at the first line every gentleman raised his hat—a proceeding which surprised rather than delighted me, considering Scottish affairs. When Gladstone was in Glasgow he addressed a meeting of some five or six thousand, and when he closed those hearty Scotch voices rang out, 'Scots Wha Hae wi' Wallace Bled.' The effect was beyond imagination, I am told.

"They say it's 'very hot,' but I fail to perceive the truthfulness of the remark. My feet and hands are both cold—indeed, I have felt the cold more or less since coming here, but I keep my counsel.

"There is so little in life that gives permanent pleasure, that I feel my work must be my pleasure. I never thought so much of its responsibilities, I never realized so much the invisible link that binds fellow-workers—co-laborers in the vineyard—together. Last Sunday morning, instead of going to church, I went to a meeting of what is called 'foundry boys.' Hundreds of young women were there—every one bare-headed. Some of them have been redeemed from the lowest slums of Glasgow. A goodly number of young men were pres-

ent and I was deeply touched by the earnestness and reverence manifested. In the afternoon I went to the children's free dinner. Hundreds of children were there, and the filth and poverty were all that could be imagined. The galleries were thronged with visitors, and I think the visitor who has not seen the dinner has not seen Glasgow."

To Miss Ann McKellar:

"LOCHGILPHEAD, July 29, 1886.

"MO CHALAC FH'EIN: According to promise I write you as we pass your father's birthplace. How I wish you were beside me, that I might see those Highland eyes of my girlie glow like stars, as the scene before me expands in beauty. The sky is as blue and the clouds as foamy as the heart of a Canadian could wish. The water is as smooth as our little burn at school, while the foliage on either side of the loch is all that nature could make it. In a crescent-shaped bay Lochgilphead lies. On the left is Ardrishaig, on the right is Kilmory Castle. I can see certain avenues of trees, which I suppose are the ones your father spoke to me about just before I left. The pretty tasteful houses line the shore, and among them I can distinguish a venerable church. Back of the houses, gently rising, is row upon row of Scotch fir, and behind these are the heather hills of Argyle (my Highland blood courses more quickly as I write), while the sky and clouds as far as eye can carry form a background for such a picture, as only the brush of a Divine artist could paint or the mind of Divinity conceive.

"We have sailed from Glasgow this morning, through the Clyde, thence between Bute and Arran by the Kyles of Bute, but the scene before me is only adding beauty to beauty. We have entered the Crinan canal; now Lochgilphead slowly fades away, and with the hope that her father's daughter may yet see her Highland home, I send her a kiss with some of the first heather my hand has touched on Scottish soil. At the first lock we landed, and Highland lassies carrying milk and heather crowded round us; and so the heather I send you is from or near Lochgilphead.

"As we go up the canal the scene grows more beautiful; on the left the perpendicular rocks, densely covered with foliage; Scotch fir and ferns are so close we may almost touch them; away to the right as far as the eye can reach are the lochs and glens, hills and valleys of Argyle. There being nine lochs in the space of one mile, we walk along the highway for some time. I almost wish I were alone, that I might view for the first time—without having to speak—the hills of my mother's home. On entering the canal we saw on the left the beautifully-wooded grounds and ivy-covered mansion house of Auchindarroch, and our first landing was at Cairrabaan, and then entered the vale of Dail. Altogether the whole is more lovely than I ever imagined a canal could be. Leaving it we sail up the Frith of Lorn, passing the islands

of Jura and Scarba, between which is the celebrated whirlpool of Corryvrechan. We soon reach Oban—a perfect dreamland—an ideal of loveliness ; then Appin, and my Highland uncle is there to convey me safely to Shian Ferry, where I now am."

To her mother :

"NORTH SHIAN, July 30, 1886.

"MO WHAITHAIR GHAOL : Yes, I'm here at last—at the very ferry which has been a childhood's dream—have just had tea, and it is now about five minutes to nine o'clock ; the rest are out walking, and I use the time before my ardor cools. My most vivid imagination of the heather hills has been fully realized—more than realized. No wonder some poet has said of Scotland, 'With all thy faults, I love thee still." We started this morning from Glasgow with the prospect of a rainy day. But it was inevitable—we had to come. Before going far our party was increased, and the prospect brightened. We were soon safely on board the 'Columba,' bound for Appin. We got on famously, passing many places of interest, Dunbarton rock and castle, the Kelvin (celebrated in Kelvin Grove), Greenock and Rothsay. As we entered the Kyles of Bute in the mountains, the clouds broke, and we were blessed with such a sky and sunshine as Scottish tourists seldom know.

"Truly glen and mountain, loch and stream, are alike beautiful. Every moment the scene changes, for the 'Columba' is going almost around Bute island, and her course is circular. We run up Lochfine, between the mainland of Argyle and the Mull of Cantire, and the beauty grows apace. Overlooking Tarbert is a fine old castle built by Robert Bruce, which I would fain visit, but we pass on. In a crescent-shaped bay before us is Lochgilphead—a most beautiful place. We leave the 'Columba' and take the Crinan canal boat ; the scene only grows more beautiful ; perpendicular hills, densely wooded, on one side of the canal ; on the other, as far as eye can reach, nothing but hill and valley, dotted with imposing castles and unpretentious farm houses. While the boat is getting through the locks of the canal we all get out to walk. We are no sooner landed than a host of little boys and girls meet us with 'Milk me'm? A penny a glass.' 'Heather, me'm?' The *heather* I can not resist. Its purple bloom so beautiful. I enclose some. The only regret I have is, that I did not pluck it with my own hand. As we near the last lock I am highly amused with a marked exhibition of honesty. A refreshment stand is erected as close as possible to the highway, beside it a cow—just like our own—an *honest* cow, stands, and beside the cow a stool. Would you like a glass of milk? You can have it proved to your satisfaction that there is no adulteration—'bossie' will patiently stand if you will patiently *wait* for your glass of genuine milk. Give Scotland the palm and three ringing cheers with a wreath of heather and gowans for the bonnie red heifer that quietly chews

her cud while the steamboat plys and the world wags. I feel strongly tempted to write an article for the *Canadian Live Stock Journal* on that cow—so home-like and contented she looked. Nine miles by canal, then change for the 'Chevalier,' which takes us to Appin. Sailing up the Frith of Lorn we pass many interesting places until we reach Oban. With ut exception Oban stands unrivalled in my estimation as a pleasure place. I shall never forget it. The buildings so tasteful, the hills so high and covered with terrace after terrace of Scotch fir—old Dunolly castle—once the chief stronghold of the Lords of Lorn, now all ivy-grown. You have seen it, I dare say. My pen would only mar the picture, it seems like dream-land. The old foundation and moat are still apparent. High up on the ruins groups of young people roam at will, while the Clack-non-con is plainly visible. No wonder Blackie said :

'For Oban is a dainty place,
In distant or in nigh lands;
No town delights the tourist race
Like Oban in the Highlands.'

And no wonder, either, that the talented professor has sought out for himself the beautiful residence of Altua Craig, 'picturesquely perched on a gray conglomerate cliff,' as a summer resort. We pass quickly on, having left many passengers, and soon we see Appin. I can scarcely believe my eyes. The very place where over thirty years ago you trod those hills, which now as then raise their hoar heads to heaven, and grow bright with the radiance of a setting sun. Foamy clouds, deeply fretted with golden edges, add to the sublimity of the scene ; and were I a man I should uncover my head.

"As we turn into the pier, Grace exclaims, 'I see my uncle!' and again, 'There's my aunt, too.' Sure enough, aunt Jessie is there—and 'tis a right hearty welcome we get. We step into the cart, which holds four, and the steady, sensible brown pony, goes off at an easy canter, winding through such a road that to tread on is to create poetic sentiment—hedged with all kinds of ferns and wild flowers. After tea I watch the tide going out, and enjoy the glories as the sun slowly dips behind the Morven Hills. I walk on the rocks and look at the sea-weed, fancying my day's trip but a dream. I am glad to leave the people and the steamers behind, and enjoy to its fullest extent the quiet and the country."

To her mother :

"PORT-NA-CROSH, SCOTLAND, August 4, 1886.

"Ever since Saturday afternoon I have been longing to get an opportunity to give vent to my pent-up feelings consequent upon viewing the home of your 'happy girlhood,' and only this evening do I find it. I left myself at Shian when I wrote last, and where have I not been since—that is, locally speaking? On Saturday afternoon uncle harnessed up his pony to the cart and away we

went on a quiet country road, winding round the hills, which skirt Loch Creran. The first object of interest were some roes quietly feeding in my respected uncle's oat-field. However, as they were the 'laird's'—Macfie of Airds—it was all right. Soon we came to a place the name of which means 'The field of the dogs,' which the Highlanders call 'Ach-us-gou,' but I won't vouch for the correct spelling; then to 'Tuircepie,' where the 'dominie,' a a frank half-old, half-young Scotchman named Campbell, came out and shook hands as though he knew me all my life. My arrival had been properly heralded, and I was recognized as soon as I put in an appearance. After a few minutes' 'crack' with uncle, 'whup' was the word, and our carriage rolled on to 'Kin-loch-laigh.' Then came 'A-hosrigan,' with the chapel where you used to worship, and the house of your life-esteemed friend and pastor was pointed out to me. And, too, the *tide* rolling in past Port-na-Crosh. I knew it at once. Nobody needed to tell me that that was the place you used to run across. We pass on through those magnificent old trees which line both sides of the road just after passing the Episcopal chapel, and I am told my grandfather's house is before me, with the high hills in front. I recognize at once Castle Stalker on its island in the sea—unchanged still—even the game-keeper's cottage with its rows of victims as a warning to evil-doers, which I remembered you had told us about, is there still. Up the hill, which passes the 'keep,' through rows of trees round a winding road, and lo! Appin House appears in view."

To her sister:

"NORTH SHIAN, August 9, 1886.

"Were I free from school duty I would not return for a month or two, there is so much to be seen in this grand old country. Not a strath or glen but has some old tradition or legend. There is something of interest from the laird to the peasant. I think in many respects the farmers here are as comfortable as the farmers in Canada, with the exception of the independence proprietorship brings. The 'crofters' are much better off, it seems to me, than the ordinary day laborer in Canada. Professional men apparently occupy as good a social position as there, and they certainly do monopolize the pretty terraces and crescents in the cities. It is most noticeable in Glasgow. In some crescents M. D. marks every alternate door."

"I think I have nearly 'done' Appin; as lovely a district as ever the sun shone on. Its lochs and glens, its little cottages and comfortable farmhouses, its hills and valleys, its sunsets and its showers, shall ever soften the background of earlier years, if I am permitted to descend the hill which is called life. The cordial welcomes, the Gaelic interpolations, the Highland handshaking, are congenial to a nature more Celtic than I ever imagined it to be. I have not been home-sick yet, but I do long sometimes for a day to 'straighten' myself. The whole programme is visit. The house isn't a minute's walk from

Loch Creran. To stay at Shian for some months, just to sit by the shore, to read, to idly dream, would be Arcadian bliss.

"I went to the parish school a few days ago and remained about two hours, being very much interested. The wee Highlanders—some still wearing kilts—with their Scotch faces and accents—the entirely different methods of instruction—the advanced education, including French, Latin and trigonometry, which a parish school gives, the wonderful progress which children from eight to twelve show, were food for many 'cuds' of reflection, if one could only chew them. I took notes which I shall endeavor to make of some practical use. The dominie, I fear, would suffer when compared with some of our teachers, as far as outward polish may be taken as the external indication of a man's heart. Many and strange to me were the ways in which the cherubs were brought to a knowledge of their wrong-doing. For all that, it could easily be seen his wrath was not greatly feared—the children all love their teacher and he is complete master. The same 'chappie' is quite a character, has an intuitive insight into human nature, a warm heart and a rough exterior, and a way of knowing every one's affairs. His father has taught *fifty-four* years—forty in one school. Mary and I went to Glencoe—just think of it! We saw the very house where the treacherous Bredalbanes were feasted—the rock from which the signal was given, and the lonely islet on which the massacred McDonalds were buried. The wilds of Glencoe are beyond description. I only hope you will see them very soon. I wished very much we could have walked together through the glen and at leisure view these everlasting hills. I got some heather there, a spray of which I enclose you.

"Were I to relate my adventures and my visits they would be as varied if not as wonderful as Sinbad the Sailor's, but necessity impels me to close.

"I have written to my fourth class. I do hope you will not feel school-work very awkward. If the older boys come, let them know you are interested. Letters received from my pupils the last night of school made me feel the profession was almost—nay, altogether—holy ground. I do not think I have forgotten them a day since leaving."

To her sister:

"GLASGOW, August 14, 1886.

"I am glad indeed to get a few minutes' quietness to write to you. I am nearly as busy as any one in Scotland, flying about from place to place. I left aunt Jessie's on Wednesday morning, coming to Oban by steamer, then by the Caledonian railway to Perth, where I met the heartiest of welcomes from our relatives there. I never received such kindness as I have since coming to Scotland, particularly in the Highlands. Canadians and Americans often come to the south, but as yet they are comparative strangers in the north. Two little chaps in Perth came in to see the Canadian, and to find out whether I was black or red, and were quite disappointed to find I was only brownish white.

Perth is the 'St. Johnstown's Bower' of song, and I passed 'Hunting Tower,' 'Leith,' 'Dunkeld,' and 'Blair-in-Athole,' on my way to Strowan, for I went there, even to the very school-house where I presume my father, and it may be my great-grandfather, went. It is now a dwelling-house, although the thatched roof is almost green. My head nearly touched the ceiling, which is a strange bluish color, and the stone floor is the same. We walked by the sides of the romantic Garry—the bed is one prolonged mass of broken rocks—till we reached the public road, then we walked to Blair Athole. We could have come up by train, but I wanted to see the Falls of Bruar, and the castle of the Duke of Athole.

"I left Perth yesterday, only regretting that I could not wait longer to visit Scone Palace—where the Scottish kings were crowned, only two miles distant—the scene of the 'Battle of the Clans,' and the house of the 'Fair maid of Perth.' The very soil is rich with historic interest, but, as is always the case, the inhabitants appreciate it but little.

"The Highlands are beyond description. No wonder the Highlanders hitherto have been a characteristic race—such glens, and rocks, lochs and heather!

"Much as I admire Scotland, I shall return home with a higher opinion of Canada than I left; and when I hear loyalists glorying in Canada's inter-ocean dominions, lauding her industry, praising her forests and fields, commending her government, I can truly respond, 'God bless Canada.' If Scotland had Canadian skies, a Scotch summer would be the ideal clime. As it is, however, it's decidedly too cold to meet with my approval. There has scarcely been a day on which I could not comfortably wear a wrap; and I didn't say 'yes' when the remark, 'It's *very* hot to-day,' was made, while I sat toasting my toes by the grateful heat of the coal fire."

To Miss Lizzie Dickson:

"GLASGOW, August 16, 1886.

"You will please prepare for lecture No. 2 of first series—any visitor welcome—admission gratis. As I cannot remember where lecture No. 1 finished, unlike those who 'resume the thread of their discourse,' I shall adopt the plan my good mother taught me years ago in winding yarn—hunt a new end and wind away until I come to a tangle, and then—snap goes the thread.

"After fully enjoying the Highlands of Argyleshire I started *en route* for Strowan, in Perthshire—my father's birthplace. On coming to the fair village of Oban, I stopped, and for an hour or two I rambled about. Of all the places I have ever seen, the view of Oban, sailing up the sound of Kerrara, is the most picturesque, so far as landscape makes a place beautiful. To attempt to describe it would be to spoil its beauty—my pen is not skilful enough. In a most romantic spot—perched on a boulder of rock, is Professor Blackie's sum-

mer residence. It seemed to me as though I were near a friend. His lofty conceptions of life ; his manly words, and his earnestness of purpose, as manifested in 'self-culture,' were nearer—if I coin a word it will express better what I mean and say—realizable. He is called the 'Grecian Gael,' because he is one of *the* Greek scholars of the age, and because he is a Gael, that is, a genuine Highlander, a descendant of the original inhabitants of the island. Our histories also call them Celts. When the Saxons took England these Celts, Gaels or Scots, retreated to their mountain fastnesses and were never conquered. The present Highlanders are the direct descendants of these, and though Gaelic is spoken much yet, English people and English ways are making great inroads. But I didn't mean to give an *historical* lecture, and begging your pardon for so doing, I shall ask you now to come with me from Oban to Callander via the Caledonian railroad. I have seen considerable scenery in Canada, a little in the States, and some of Scotland, but the scenery here surpasses everything. It is one panorama of loch, glen, river, hill, and ben—every moment new beauties are disclosed. But what is the use, I cannot describe it. Can you believe me when I tell you that at one point the loveliness was enough to make my eyes fill as I looked upon it—a new experience to me. As I think of it now it seems like a glorious dream—a vision of heavenly beauties. In some places, grand and majestic better convey the idea than beautiful. Added to the natural scenery there was much of historic interest —Cilchurn Castle, a ruin, which in days of Scottish trial, was a stronghold—the 'Braes of Balquidder,' where the famous Rob Roy was buried—the glen or Strath of 'Ire,' which Scott describes in the Lady of the Lake :

> 'Ben Ledi saw the cross of fire,
> It glanced like lightning up Strathyre.'

'Blair in Athole,' Scone Palace, where the Scottish kings were formerly crowned, where, had I my way, *Scottish* kings would be crowned still ; and the famous pass of Killicrankie. Leaving the train at Strowan, I visited the place where some fifty or sixty years ago, my father went to school in his plaid of Robertson tartan. The old school still stands, with its thatched roof and stone floor. I then walked nearly five miles past the 'Bruar' water, which Burns immortalized, to Blair-in-Athole station.

'At Stirling I visited the castle, walked through the rooms once tenanted by royalty, sat in Queen Mary's coronation chair ; saw John Knox's pulpit and communion table, as well as hundreds of other things. The most conspicuous object in the esplanade is a statue of Robert Bruce, looking toward the field of his glory—Bannockburn—about two miles distant. I walked out to see it. It is now a well-cultivated farm with the green grass waving over the once terrible scene—the place marked only by a high flag-staff. The very stone on which Bruce that day planted his standard still remains. Standing there alone, I felt all my Scotch sympathies aroused, and my Scotch blood coursing more quickly, and with Burns I could not help saying,

> 'Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled,' etc.

No wonder his patriotic spirit expressed itself in language so grand that it has been called the best ode, excepting those in the Bible, in the language. I make no pretensions to either rhyme or poetry, but Bannockburn was always from a child a name dear to me. I walked on past the scene of the battle till I came to the 'burn'—a beautiful little stream, rushing over stones. I went down the bank and took two or three with me. 'Tis well to have one's higher nature stirred at times, but underneath the sentiment there is sometimes a painfully practical view of the same subject, and I didn't enjoy half so well the weariness and blistered feet the following day. But then I had been to Bannockburn. I carried with me from Perth a little piece of stone out of one of the few pre-Reformation churches, which were allowed to stand under the severe rule of Cromwell, because they had been Papish places of worship. In this church *Robert Bruce* worshipped and *John Knox* preached. It is so large that three ministers preach and three congregations worship in it every Sabbath—as they would in three separate churches.

"On Saturday night last, with two of my friends to protect me, I went through one of the most wretched streets of Glasgow—the Salt Market. After the many strange, sad, and loathsome sights, I could not but wonder at the contrasts one meets. Truly, when one sees the two extremes of life—the very rich and the wretchedly poor, his faith needs to be strong to believe in a wise and just Creator, and yet the fulfilment to the letter of the Biblical description of them leaves no room for doubt. 'Who hath woe, who hath babbling, who hath sorrow, who hath contention? They that tarry long at the wine.' *Rum* plays a terrible part in the degradation of the poor. It's bad enough to see men drunk, but to see women, devoid of all feminine instincts, in scores, drinking at the bars of whiskey-shops, is to make a true woman blush for and yet pity her wretched sisters, for the highest of all authorities utters these words, 'Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?' How apt we are to forget that!

"My highest anticipations of Scotland are quite realized. May her grand old heather hills still send forth men of gigantic intellect as in the past! From ocean to ocean in boundless extent, to the frozen seas of the North, may the voices of Canadians ever re-echo, 'God bless Canada.'"

To her sister:

"GLASGOW, August 16, 1886.

"At times I almost hope all sentiment has been eradicated from a too impulsive nature, at other times I know the woman is much what the child was.

"Last week, when we came to Glen Ogle, I seemed to see before me an earthly representation of heavenly glories. I fancy few see it as I saw it—just enough of mist and sunshine to form in the background of

the picture a cloud gorgeous in rainbow tints, resting down upon Loch Tay. It is well a Scott was given a genius so divine that his pen could so worthily paint it. How strange it all seems! Like a panorama the places I have visited come before me—Stirling Castle, Scone Palace, 'Bruar' water, Pass of Killicrankie, Bannockburn. I wish I had time and genius to express my own feelings. My only regret in leaving Scotland is that I leave so much unvisited—for a future and 'convenient season,' which may never come.

"At present much of the sentiment I have had is passing away, but I have no doubt absence will restore it again. Scotland as it has been, however, would be my theme, not Scotland as it is or shall be. The everlasting hills must ever remain the same; the ocean waves shall ever ebb and flow on its coast—with these exceptions Scotland and the Scotch will change, at least such is my opinion. Even now the characteristic Highlander is seldom met with; the national costume is adopted as a fancy dress by English gentlemen more than by the native Highlanders. In school, though, there were several little fellows—'raggit weans,' too, with the kilts. 'Tis but a question of time until the land shall change hands, and, like other countries, the 'aristocracy' will be an aristocracy of wealth, rather than of blood or intellect. My radical sympathies are much less keen than when I came; however, I'd still vote for Scotch 'Home Rule.'"

To her brother:

"GLASGOW, Aug. 20, 1886.

"'After many days,' I take a few minutes to write to you. I have waited until I could write to you something of special interest, and now I think it has come. I am writing after a long day's travel, having started in the morning at 7.10, taking train via Caledonia Railway then coach to the famous Trossachs, boat down Loch Katrine to Strachaucharhar, coach again to Inversnaid, then boat to Balloch, and after a stop at Dunbarton Castle, back via the North British Railway to Glasgow. The first object of interest was the 'Uum-var,' where the stag led the Knight of Snowdon ('Lady of the Lake'); then 'Coil-antogle Ford,' where Rhoderick Dhu's hospitality ended with the words:

> 'And this is Coilan-togle ford,
> And thou must keep thee with thy sword.'

Soon we came to 'Lanrick mead,' where the clans gathered, then to the very rock against which Fitz-James leaned when he uttered the words:

> 'Come one, come all; this rock shall fly
> From its firm base as soon as I'—

containing a sentiment I have always admired. Farther on we passed the 'Brig O'Turk,' and soon the magnificent landscape described in the stanza;

> 'The western waves of ebbing day
> Rolled o'er the glen their level way'

opened out before us. Scott has pictured it none too highly—it's a glorious scene with mist, as I saw it, and in the western sunlight is beyond imagination. Passing through a deep defile we saw the spot where

'The gallant horse exhausted fell,'

and away up almost perpendicularly above our heads was a rock where the famous Rob-Roy found shelter, and which is yet locally famous for being one of the few places where white heather is found. We soon reached Loch Katrine—and such a loch! No genius less divine than Scott need attempt to describe it. The clouds parted and the sun shone brightly as we sailed down past 'Ellen's isle' and the 'silver strand.' The island is beautifully wooded, and now fragrant and purple with heather. As yet everything is left untouched —just as nature made it we yet find it. In fancy I could see the maiden in her shallop shooting out from the island as James saw her. I could write pages about it.

"Leaving Inversnaid we sailed down 'the queen of Scottish lakes—the fair Loch Lomond. Beautiful indeed, but more quiet and peaceful in its beauty than its little sister Katrine. It was perfectly calm, nestling in the green hills of Argyle which surround it, with but very few houses on the shore. Towards the south there are a few lovely green islets, reminding one very much of the "Lake of the Thousand Islands." Our very swift little steamer soon landed us safely at Balloch, and in a few minutes we were at Dunbarton—a castle and fort which formerly was considered the key of the Clyde. A most impregnable one it was, too—part of the castle walls are built into the very rock, and many of the 330 steps by which one has to ascend are hewn out of it. It was an island until modern improvements demanded a new dock should be built, and it is now like a peninsula—a rock rising out of the sea. The day not being favorable, we did not see it in its best aspect, but it commands a very fine landscape.

"In a room in the castle are some old curiosities, one of which I was proud to hold in my hand—the sword of William Wallace. There were also coats of mail, helmets, dirks and other things. It seems wonderfully strange that I have seen all these sights—sights I longed to see from a child. I hope you may some time see the same.

"Not a day has passed since I saw you that I did not think of you, and many a question have I answered about you all. I have come across the Atlantic to find out how little I know. I feel my own ignorance as never before; however, I manage tolerably well. I have been taken for English, Irish and Scotch alternately, but I do not fail to tell, because I am proud of it, that I'm a Canadian.

"The enclosed piece of heather was plucked from the nearest spot to which I could get to the famous rock I spoke of. If the little modest flowers bear over the ocean wave a message, who dare say it was 'born to blush unseen' or 'its sweetness wasted'?—that in all the great principles which contribute to make life what it should be, may you bravely say;

'Come one, come all; this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I,'

is the message I would have it bear.

"I cannot send my letter away without adding a word about the ship-building on the Clyde. You would be greatly interested, I am sure, knowing more about such work. While in Dunbarton I could hear the sharp ring of hundreds of hammers as they nailed the timbers together. I wondered where your hammer was ringing, and though thousands of miles away, in a flash I was beside you.

"I think tradesmen here have harder work than the same class in Canada. One whom I know starts for his work, which is over four miles away, about half past four every morning, takes a cold breakfast at nine and a cold dinner at one, and—what is remarkable—seems to think nothing of it.

To her sister:

"EDINBURGH, August 23, 1866.

"Though the clock almost points to the 'wee hour,' I feel a strong inclination to write a few words to you before retiring to my very cosy bed in 15 Gardner's Crescent. I can hardly realize that I am writing to you from this grand old city—replete with religious and historical associations. No one could help liking Edinburgh—for natural scenery and architectural beauty it surely can have no equal. Can you believe that I opened my eyes on Sunday morning to see the flag of the old castle floating before me, and to-day (Monday) I visited it, and of all its varied associations none interested me so much as the crown royal, the sceptre, and the jewels of Scotland. Here they remain only a name and emblem of by-gone splendor in the days of Scotland's troubled times. I visited Calton Hill and Arthur's Seat, and other places Sir Walter Scott has made famous.

"My visit to Scotland is nearly over, and I have enjoyed it very much on the whole—not perfect satisfaction, though why, one cannot explain, and for which one cannot account. In the mist and mud of Glasgow, in the lovely glens of Appin, in the fierce grandeur of Glencoe, the indescribable beauty of Katrine or the fair Loch Lomond, in historic Stirling, with Bannockburn close at hand, or in

'Edina, Scotia's darling seat,'

if I give myself time to think, the feeling is the same—I suppose it will always be so in this world.

"You were always loyal to the land of our birth—I never was until now. I am glad indeed, that traveling about as I am, does not make me reluctant to return to my work, and I am not very sorry the time draws near to leave. If there's anything to be seen—and here there's something of interest to be

seen everywhere—I must see it. My feeling is that it's only once in a lifetime, and why leave it to regret it? I can now fully appreciate the lines,

'There's no place like home.'

With love to all friends I close, wishing you 'Cead mille beamiach'—no less than a *hundred thousand blessings*.'"

To Mr. and Mrs. Robert McQueen:

"GLASGOW, August 26, 1886.

"Your letter has just reached me, and only giving myself a moment or two to meditate on the sad and glad news it contained—the taking away of the natural body, and the quickening of the spiritual—I proceed at once to reply.

"I can scarcely realize that the sweet maiden I left buoyant in spirit and light in step, is no more. I can see her yet, as with others she used her lips in praising God. I was not intimately acquainted, but yet well enough to miss her when I return. My heart goes out in sympathy to the bereaved parents—the loss of a child is ever grievous, but the stroke seems heavier when one just blossoming into womanhood is plucked. I would fain express my sympathy; sometimes, however,

"Common is the common place,
And vacant chaff well-meant for grain.'

It is a blessed thought indeed that she is 'with the Lord'—one tie less to earth, and one more to heaven.

"In regard to the other of whom you write, I can only say that more than ever I realize the need of obedience to Christ's words, 'What thou doest, do quickly.' For weeks before I came away I wished to see her. I did not, however, and now we must wait a reunion on the brighter shore. A little more effort on my part and I should not now have to regret that only in *intentions* was my sympathy expressed. For many months she has borne the weariness and pain of physical suffering. I believe she was mercifully spared that her children might be led to trust the Hand which directed the stroke. I doubt not that her prayers will be answered, and that in the 'ages to come' they shall dwell a family in heaven. With feelings of deep emotion I learn of her first-born's gathering to the fold. May his mother's God ever be his guide, and may that same God comfort each and all of them in this their hour of darkness.

"How can I thank you for your letter containing the glad tidings of young men and maidens looking to Jesus! I am ashamed of my weak faith. Surely He grants us 'exceeding abundantly above what we can ask or think.' On bended knees I have already thanked Him for the return of the wandering

ones. How marvellous the change since a year ago, particularly in *one* instance! To know that he whose steps had well-nigh slipped, who had almost become a prey to the evil one, is now at peace with God, is cause for exceeding joy. May he go forth consecrating his young life and energies to the Giver!

"I regret that you had not time to write more at length—'tis surely the joy which 'the world cannot give' to hear of the working of the Spirit amongst those dear young people. Little they think that the burnside, the glen, the galleries of art, the patriotic monument, the historical castle and the quaint old cathedral have been hallowed by prayer for them. But I must not mislead you: I have not always been faithful. The world and its pleasures have taken too much attention, and coldness of heart and purpose have followed. Waves of delight steal over my soul when I think of the revelations eternity will reveal—the influences which brought us to kneel at Jesus' feet, the various paths by which our steps were led to the heavenly Canaan.

"I thank you for your kind wishes—I have enjoyed my visit *exceedingly*. Ere this reaches you I shall have turned my face homewards, delighted indeed with the land of my fathers, but a loyal Canadian. Though I have gone by Loch Katrine shore, and sailed down the fair Loch Lomond, have grasped Sir William Wallace's sword, and stood on the proud field of Bannockburn, visited Holyrood and Edinburgh Castle, have seen the royal insignia of Scotland, worshipped in St. Giles, and have gazed with deepest interest on the original Covenant, with signatures in blood; have seen the house, church, pulpit, communion-table and resting place of the grand old Knox; though my Scottish blood has coursed quickly through my veins as I remembered the 'peculiar people' of the dark days, I return home *contented* that my work at present lies in a quiet little community in our beautiful Ontario. Amid all scenes one scene was ever-present, a quiet country school-house, groups of earnest faces listening to the sweet story of old—a voice fervently pleading for the descent of the Spirit. We belittle our work as teachers when we do not find in it, notwithstanding all its discouragements, a work which 'allures to brighter worlds and leads the way.'

"Enclosed please find a little spray of heather. May the sweet messenger convey to you over Atlantic billows, my grateful thanks for your kind remembrance, and my earnest wishes that you will continue in supplication for me and mine."

To her brother:

"GLASGOW, August 30, 1886.

"A week ago I sent a letter to you, but I cannot resist the inclination to write again. I have just returned from hearing Henry Ward Beecher lecture on "The Reign of the Comm n People," and a letter from home was never more welcome to an almost home-sick lassie. The lecture was eloquent in some parts,

humorous in others, patriotic at times, irreverent at intervals, sublime in a few sentences, and democratic all through, and I enjoyed it greatly; but the letter from home banished the lecture for a time.

"'Tis only right we should meet the world as it is—not as it ought to be. 'Tis not the bravest soldier that bears no marks of conflict; you will meet the good and ill, but we need not fear. I hope you may find such work as will enable you to use those talents of yours to best advantage.

"Since writing you I've been to Edinburgh—at least I think so; it all seems so like a dream—and of all the Exhibition nothing delighted or interested me so much as the machinery in motion. The day previous I had spent in admiring the works of the Creator in nature. I never before had such a reverence for the *creative* in art. What cannot man do or make except create breath? The weaving of cloth, the making of paper, the manufacture of biscuits, the cutting of glass, the ponderous machinery for heavy work, the engines running simultaneously for generating electric light, with many other things, were alike interesting. I was wishing all the time I was in the machinery courts that you could have been there too—I know you would have enjoyed it more than I. I have seen much more than I can remember. I was delighted with Edinburgh, its palaces and towers. Historically it's an interesting city, naturally a fine city, and architecturally a magnificent city—at least I think so. I went through the old castle, saw the crown jewels, sword and sceptre of Scotland, then through Holyrood, yet as it was in the sad days of Mary Stuart.

"I have enjoyed my visit to Scotland *very* much, but I return home contented that my lot for the present lies in a quiet little country neighborhood—that my field of action is no greater than a country school. It almost makes me homesick to think of September being here and I in Scotland still. Idleness is growing wearisome, and I shall be happy to resume duty once more. There is much I would like to see yet—much that I should certainly enjoy seeing, but my prolonged stay is telling on my enthusiasm; what first was very interesting is common-place now. I went last evening to hear the piper's band. They were dressed in full costume. I don't wonder the martial music of the pipes in Highland glens roused the spirit and patriotism of the old Celts. I enjoyed it, but could not help thinking what a miserable mimicry it was of Scotland's former power and greatness—as she *was*, she will live as a nation."

To her sister:

"GLASGOW, Sept. 2, 1886.

"Your letter was certainly as 'rivers of water to a thirsty soul.' By the time this reaches you I shall be homeward bound. Scotland as she was makes my blood thrill; Scotland as she is puts a damper on my enthusiasm—on many of her institutions may be written *Ichabod*.

"I went into the Presbyterian cathedral of St. Giles in Edinburgh—the very one where Jenny Geddes threw the stool at the priest. One assistant or curate read the lessons, a second read prayers out of a Presbyterian liturgy, and a third, by dint of scrupulous attention to his manuscript, favored his audience with what doubtless was a very fine piece of composition—owing to our position I could not distinguish one word in ten. Several thousand people were there. Some stood—we with many others had to take a footstool. A choir of several hundred voices, and a very magnificent organ, chanted 'Amen' to the prayers, and 'Gloria in Excelsis' was sung two or three times. Scotland may need another Reformation, though I do not doubt there are those still—thousands of them—who would die for Kirk and Covenant. I had all my blood quickened by seeing the original Covenant with its signatures in blood—faded and almost obliterated now. Edinburgh is still characteristic—to its glory be it said, not a street-car yet desecrates its streets on Sabbath, and efforts are being made to repress cab-driving.

"The grand old Castle stands firmly on the rock as in the troubled times, but many and great are the changes which it has seen. Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine still remain in almost original beauty; Ellen's Isle is untouched by vandallic hands; but there are certain indications that they, too, will be changed. With the scenery of Scotland I am always delighted, but with its people in general I am not—that is, the people as a whole.

"The power of liquor here in Glasgow is most distressing. Ministers are neither advocates of total abstinence nor practisers. In several church picnics and socials, dancing has been an authorized part of the programme. I am writing to you merely as I find the country, not to find fault. I love Scotland yet—her heather hills are very dear to me."

To her sister:

"GLASGOW, Sept. 9, 1886.

"It is nearly forty-eight hours—over forty at least—since I have slept, and yet I'm just foolish enough to sit here and answer your letter at once; not that it specially needs an answer—if the old ladies—h'm, excuse the blunder—*maiden* ladies are to be found—I'll find them—a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind you know: I'm travelling there myself.

"I'm literally bursting over with news, having just come from London—that modern Babylon—which accounts for my lack of sleep. I left at midnight for Liverpool, where I arrived at 6:30 in the morning to find the first train on the road I had to take would start at 9:40; thus leaving me time to have a walk along the famous docks of that city.

"Leaving London with its sights—the really overpowering St. Paul's, the historical Abbey, the Tower with the crown and jewels of the English nation,—a sight more dazzling is not to be seen on earth I know—the Strand, Piccadilly, Cheapside, Parliament buildings, the Colonial exhibition. Leaving Liverpool

with its massive buildings, and never-to-be-forgotten sea of vessels, let me take you up the sweet, peaceful valleys of Northumberland and Westmoreland, past Gretna Green, through the fertile and lovely Dumfries into the famous shire of Ayr. We find the town of Ayr very pretty and clean, but to our dismay, for our feet are already blistered and aching, and our *rebellious* stomach demanding better usage than we have been giving, we find no 'bus runs to the little white-washed house where lived the poet, who lived with nature. But the feet that were faithful for *Bannockburn* do not play us false now—'Wha wad be a coward?'—and off we go for a five mile walk—that is, before we reach the station again—and it is now 5 o'clock in the evening. Down a clean pleasant street lined on both sides with tasteful houses, meeting the descendants of those very men—I can tell by their faces—who were in Robbie's mind when he wrote:

'Then age and want—O, ill-matched pair!
Show, "Man was made to mourn"!'

and also those of whom he was thinking when he wrote:

'A man's a man for a' that.'

and mingling with these were some who treated these 'rustics' as their fathers did the ploughman poet—with disdain. I asked a young man in working clothes where the cottage was, and his answer was definite, prompt, and respectful. On one side the waves are rolling at a distance, and beyond are the Carrick Hills. At length we reach the cottage, passing many mansions on the way. The *cottage* lives, the mansions with their owners are in obscurity. Very cleanly kept it is, and the sign simply reads, 'The birth-place of the poet, Burns.' An admission fee of *2d.* is charged, and we find ourselves in the very room in which he was born, and the bed with its homely covers and curtains, still in the chimney lug. That's the *but* of the cottage—in the *ben* there are a few articles of furniture. Refreshments are kept for travellers, and for sixpence one can get the best bread and butter—and all he or she wants of it—ever a mortal tasted. Had we the shadow of the shade of Burns' inspiration, we would make a couplet at least about it. In the refreshment room, which is a modern addition, are a statue, photographs, handwriting and original MSS. of the poet. The thatch on the real house is nearly a foot thick.

"Leaving the cottage we go down the road, as he went we fancy, 'in chill November's surly blast,' and is it possible?—there stands Alloway Kirk—as interesting a ruin as one could look at. The roof is off, but the old bell hangs by its chain. All one gable is covered with most beautiful ivy. A few hours could be happily spent among the old stones. William Burns and his wife are both buried there. We go down the loveliest of country roads, and shunning the Burns Hotel, where the woodbine climbs, cross over the old brig which spans the banks o' Doon. Bonnie as an ideal scene, it deserves its immortalization—a broad, shallow burn running over stones, babbling as it runs; very high, partly wooded, the bridges which span it strongly crescent-shaped—such

are 'the banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,' described in one word. I know of no better or more delightful pleasure than just to have Burns' poems for a day in that most interesting glen. The monument must yet be visited, however. In it we find 'Jean's' wedding ring, the real Bible with his own handwriting which he gave to his Highland Mary, with a lock of her hair under his writing and several other little mementoes. One of the statues in the monument ground is 'Tam O'Shanter and Souter Johnnie' cut in freestone. It was not done by a 'prenticed' hand, and yet the expressions are really inimitable. We came back again, gave a long, lingering, last look at the brig, the kirk and the cottage, and then off for Glasgow, which we reach at 10.30 p.m. Has our childhood's dream been realized, or have we really seen the spot, sacred to his memory and hallowed by his genius, if at times marred by his imperfections?

"We will now go back to London. I had walked far and the fatigue of that, the monotony of being alone among the *tens of thousands*—that is no exaggeration—and the ever-present stomach (which is better now) had considerably weakened my energy, and I was sauntering somewhat aimlessly along through the exhibits, more and more admiring Canada, and feeling a thrill of pleasure as I heard the various remarks on it from the strangers around me. Suddenly I came to one of the exhibits which made me stand still in astonishment. There, in a page tacked open, lay the words *I* had penned very hastily one Friday night in Beverly. Two other agricultural journals lay beside it, and on turning the leaves I found another of my attempts—for they are only that—the latter with name and address. Like a flash it came to me, 'This writing is my work.' Unsolicited, unknown to me, undreamt of by any one, I met my own words. For a moment I didn't know whether to laugh or cry—felt like doing both; but the next was to leisurely survey the pages again to see that I was not dreaming. Little did the passers-by know why the somewhat travel-stained and uninteresting-looking 'individual' lingered there, nor what was the magnet that kept me for at least five minutes where other objects—save the educational court—got no more than a passing look. On the spur of the moment I felt like saying with Tennyson,

'Ancient founts of inspiration, well through all my fancy yet.'

Doubtless a cooler, less interested observer, would tell me to go even further with the same thought, and add,

'But I know my words are wild.'

Human nature is vain and little at best, and I suppose it was only natural that I should be pleased, but I think I can honestly say it was not the mere compliment that pleased me. The possibility of—through a yet undeveloped talent, even of questionable existence—radiating a wider circle of influence, and in that way to make life more noble and useful, is not, I think, to be classed with a mere ambition for a name in life.

"I fear, however, these thoughts will rise, beautiful as a morning cloud,

roseate with the dawn ; but, like it, to disappear when the sun in his strength shines forth, or be hid from the vision when the darker clouds intervene. One thing I am certain of—had I a *rigid* will, a more practical and systematic way of preparing for the every-day duties of life, complete authority over myself, that when I should say to myself, 'Do this,' it should be done—I could accomplish very much more than I do. I've not lost a train or boat since I came to Scotland. I have seen every place I had planned to see—save Rannoch—and a great many more. A loss of one glove covers my bill of carelessness in dress matters, and I have traveled with less expense than I anticipated, for I have some money left yet. Notwithstanding this seeming array of virtues, I have suffered much from my own carelessness—hours of worry, which a moment's thought would have saved—miles of feet-weariness, which a moment's brain-travel would prevent—troubling others for that which I could do myself—making promises which I found difficult to fulfil—all these leave me sadder, but, I fear not wiser. The self-abasement of the moment leaves no lasting impression ; the blunders which prevented ease of mind one day are repeated on the following day. *Complete self-control*, what a possession, and one which can be ours at any time by right of conquest ! Like Richard II said to *his* murderer, 'I am too weak and feeble to resist,' so almost say I to mine. I must leave now. Thank you for the mignonette—it brings sweet memories of 'home and mother.'

" Sept. 10th, S. S. Ethiopia, off Mobile.

" I tried hard to get this letter finished before leaving Glasgow, but it was impossible, and so off Ireland I finish it. The hills of Scotland faded from my sight in the moonlight last night, and I leave with varied feelings—glad, very glad, to turn my face westward and homeward—not a sigh of regret at leaving save when I remember all the things I said and did, which I ought not, and all the things which I might have said or done and did not. My visit is over and I have enjoyed it much. I found people extremely kind and agreeable wherever I went, but I come home glad that my work at present lies in a little country school. I see in it a scope for action and influence I never realized so fully before. I see it is when *young* the mind must be led to think of those things which alone make life worth living. The mingling with the world has a desolating effect on all the tenderer and reverent sensibilities. On all hands the harvest is great and the laborers are few.

" I feel in leaving, that much of the romance which, like a bright halo, surrounded Scotland before seeing it, has faded away. I trust, however, that separation will in part restore it—'tis well to preserve the ideals of childhood.

" I think as I leave how different the parting when years ago our mother left. Smiles and laughter now, tears and sadness then ; going home now, from home then ; comforts now, hardships then. Those who were young then, old now—a new generation, and yet how much the same !

" Glasgow skies 'wept copiously' as I left it. I have no wish to return until some of life's laurels are won ; how, when or where I do not know."

A paper written for the Wentworth teachers, when in convention, Oct., 1886 :

" In a lunch-room I asked the direction to Cheapside, a name familiar to me as one of the busy centres of London, but I was told that they did not know. This information gave me my first idea of the size of the city. I was a stranger in, and that, with the lengthening shadows and gas-light, warned me that it was time for a 'green' Canadian to seek a resting place ; so hailing a tiny carriage—the most comfortable imaginable—just large enough to hold one—I soon found myself very comfortably lodged in Williamson's hotel, Bow Lane, Cheapside ; not a fashionable hotel by any means, but a cosy, home-like place, where the guests were very nicely entertained at moderate charges—moderate for London, I mean. The waiters had attained to a very high pitch of politeness indeed—I was thanked if I gave my order for anything, and thanked equally if I declined, which proceeding I quite admired, but didn't thoroughly understand until I prepared to leave. It was just five minutes' walk from St. Paul's the magnificent, and about the same time, for a fee of a penny or 'tuppence' on the underground railway, would bring the visitor to the Tower, Westminster Abbey, St. Stephen's, and other places of absorbing interest. I went to the Tower on Saturday evening, and though open every day to the public for a small fee, the crowd was so great that policemen had to interfere. It was just like our cities when some very unusual event takes place. Of all the sights to be seen in the Tower of London, among which are the crown royal, jewels and plate, none interested me more than a coarse grey cloak, which looked as though a woman's hands had carded, spun and woven the wool out of which it was made—it was the cloak which had enshrouded the immortal Wolfe when he died fighting for his country's glory on the Plains of Abraham. As it is for the Colonial we are bound, we cannot linger among the dead—nay, living heroes of Westminster Abbey, nor sail down the Thames—we cannot pass through the subway with the river rushing over us, nor carefully pick our steps through Billingsgate ; we can, however, take time to walk past a door leading to the Parliamentary Halls of England, which we may not enter. That entrance is for the 'exclusive use of peers, peers' elder sons and foreign ambassadors. No, we may not enter, neither may William Ewart Gladstone. He is neither a peer, nor the eldest son of a peer. And yet we boast of our nineteenth century enlightenment.

" After hearing, seeing, and all but kneeling at Spurgeon's feet, on Sabbath morning, and worshipping in grand old St. Paul's in the evening, deeply impressed with its wealth of architecture and sculpture, the roll and peal of whose organ I can yet hear, I slept soundly, and started bright and early on Monday morning for the Colonial. Through Cheapside, Ludgate, the Strand, Piccadilly, past Trafalgar Square and Charing Cross—the busiest corner in the universe, it seemed to me—up Regent street to South Kensington, and then, 'This way for the Colonial.' I pay my shilling, the stiles are turned, I am in the Grand Hall. The first object of interest, to me at least, is a collec-

tion of very large pictures, representing many of the colonial cities and towns at different stages of their growth. With a passing glance at all save Canadian cities, I find Halifax, St. John, Quebec, Ottawa, London, Winnipeg, Victoria. But how is this? Where is Hamilton—the city I was proud to say I had sailed from—the name which had been duly registered with mine in my journey up? There must be some mistake. I walk around the Hall again—scan its walls up and down—there is nothing of Hamilton, 'the ambitious city,' on Burlington Bay—of Ontario cities *second* only to the 'Queen' city of the west, in size and importance. I turn away disappointed, and a wicked little elfin whispers in my ear, 'Hamilton—the unambitious city,' but for the sake of my country I wouldn't repeat the words on the *other* side of the Atlantic.

"Passing out of the hall I enter the Indian exhibit, varied beyond expression, gorgeous beyond description—no wonder 'the wealth of the Indies' has become proverbial. New South Wales, Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Fiji, and New Guinea vie with each other in the variety, display, and superiority of their respective exhibits. We step over to the Cape of Good Hope, West Africa and Natal, thence to Hong Kong, North Borneo, Straits Settlements, Islands of Africa, Cyprus, Malta, British Guinea, West Indies, and at last reach Canada. On the left of the door by which I entered was a representation of the ice palace in Montreal. At a window, above which was written 'Johnstone's Fluid Beef as it is sold in Canada,' two young women dressed in tobogganing costume, dispense 'Fluid Beef.' The exhibition visitors were sweltering with the excessive heat, but the girls in felt-like clothing, toques and all, still served steaming fluid beef. I overheard the following remark: 'Just look at those Canadian girls—how strangely they dress out there, don't they?' I thought it absurd at first sight that Canada should be so misrepresented, and my impression was deepened by the remark. I don't believe either that they were genuine Canadian girls. I supposed them to be foreigners to Canada, and, dressed in *August* in the tobogganing costume of our keen winter, were taken as representations of what we all are. The average Englishman has a sufficiently exaggerated idea of the coldness of our climate without strengthening erroneous ideas in that way. At the left of the ice-palace was a fine trophy of Canadian agricultural garden produce, including samples of grains, grasses and fruits, surrounded by a collection of canned provisions. Close to the trophy was a large collection of Canadian drugs. To the right of the ice-palace was a great collection of manufactured goods—furniture, sewing-machines, cotton and woollen goods, and a large number of pianos and organs; also a collection of New Brunswick timbers very nicely arranged. The most striking object in the Canadian court was a magnificent trophy of wild animals, including stuffed specimens of the Polar bear, seal, walrus, moose and many other animals, in front of which was a dog-sledge with its harness. The Hudson Bay Company showed a handsome collection of furs and skins—there was a carriage wrap

made of fifty sable skins. In cases adjoining the furs was a collection of curiosities and of articles of native Indian manufacture, and in the grounds were some Indian tents and a birch-bark canoe. Agricultural implements, machinery in motion, stoves and hardware, tools and implements, carriages and harness, tanning materials, school-furniture, models of boats, fishing tackle, mineral collections, photographic collections, and many, many other things, testified to the manufacturing power, material resources and artistic development of our prosperous young country.

"It was near the close of the day that I reached the educational court of Canada, quite too fatigued and ill to take anything more than a passing glance. I remember of noticing with pleasure busts of some of our prominent educationalists—the late Hon. E. Ryerson, the late Hon. Geo. Brown, and the late Minister of Education, the Hon. Adam Crooks, are all I remember now.

"I must tell you of one picture I saw there. It was lent by the Canadian Government. The painter of it knows something of 'school-marms.' It was entitled 'Talking them over.' Three country school-trustees—two in their shirt-sleeves sat beside the teacher's desk. One of them with love painted in his eyes was looking earnestly at her—a quiet, independent farmer he seemed to be. The second evidently was in favor of the teacher, and was listening attentively; the third had his doubts about what she was saying. The teacher—a pretty young girl—but little more than 'sweet sixteen,' with banged hair and white cuffs, was represented as standing at her desk. The light through the little window shone full upon her face, while the register falling over her desk, showed her name, 'Kate Henderson, Teacher.' The one nail for her hat, the chalk marks on the black-board, and all the surroundings were beautifully natural. It was surprising to find how much it was appreciated—no one passed it without standing to look at it, and though other spaces were vacant, that picture always had admirers. It was so true to life that had I read a familiar name I would not have been much surprised.

"I spent an afternoon in a Highland school and was intensely interested. The regulation for teachers' certificates and the system of classification being uniform throughout Scotland and England, I could get an idea of the general working of the board schools, which correspond to our public schools. All the school-houses I saw were substantial stone buildings with teacher's dwelling-house attached, as in our private seminaries and ladies' colleges. In the school I visited there were about eighty children, who were in a room smaller than our ordinary country schools, seated for about fifty. The children sat on long benches—seven or eight occupying one bench—in much the same style as that in vogue in our earliest school-days. The teacher was assisted by two of his pupils, who are termed pupil-teachers. They come at nine in the morning, and he teaches them until ten, when the rest of the scholars come and then they assist him. There was a class-room off the school-room proper, where the younger children went to recite. There was no bell of any description—the teacher whistled right shrilly to call school, while I sat wondering how on earth I would call

them if I had to do it. Prompt to obey the summons, those eighty young Highlanders came rushing in. The noise was appalling to me; the disorder seemed dreadful. Once seated, however, I could not but admire the many fine, frank, intelligent faces and bright eyes which looked wonderingly at the stranger. Some still wore the kilt, and in both boys and girls the national lineaments were discernible, while in reading, the Gaelic accent was very marked. In learning their lessons the children 'buzzed' with a distinctness that would drive me distracted, but it didn't seem to annoy their own teacher. Two gads of formidable length, sufficient to make the bravest-hearted offender quake, stood in a corner, but I think they were more for a warning than for practical use. The erring ones were reproved with a directness of language which might be called 'Truth straight from the shoulder.' 'Donald Drummond, hold your tongue.' 'Ah, ye stupid, your heid's made o' turnips, sir.' 'Now get your sums, will ye; ye'll be cornered if ye don't,' and similar expressions amused me and didn't seem to hurt the offenders in the least. Toward four o'clock a *very* precise lady came in and taught sewing to a class of girls; it was ordinary plain sewing, and the pupils seemed much interested. Though the order of the school seemed faulty the discipline was good; prompt obedience characterized the school. Though the teacher would shout in no gentle tone of voice, he was very kind to his pupils, and they all seemed to like him. A most marked feature of the school was the advancement of the pupils at an early age, and the advancement of the subjects taught. Boys who, according to appearance, would be in our second and third readers in Canada, could read with ease and intelligence in advanced classes. Latin, French, trigonometry, Euclid and algebra, were taught in addition to all ordinary English subjects. I understood why Scotland stands famous the world over for the intelligence of her masses, and why Edinburgh stands unsurpassed in her halls of learning. A good thorough education can be obtained without leaving the public school. Their schools are not as ours, to a great extent mere sources of supply for the higher schools. In the midst of such seeming confusion I understood how the children learned so well—girls of thirteen proficient in French, and boys of eleven in Latin declensions, and I solved the problem in the following way, whether correct or not, I must leave for others to judge. There is very little changing of teachers; the teacher of the school in question had been there ten years.

"I was in another school where the teacher had taught forty years, and he, too, had good Latin scholars. The children thus lose no time in adopting new ways and methods, but from term to term pass the required examinations, for the promotion examinations are a part of the system, and the government inspectors have to oversee the work of promoting from one standard to another. This solution involves another problem—How is it that the teachers change so little? I believe the strongest reason is that there are inducements to stay in the profession. If a teacher engage for a school he knows there is a home for him—a comfortable home, too. The houses are neatly built of

stone, and have pretty gardens attached. In Ontario, if a teacher marries, in nine cases out of ten he finds a difficulty in procuring a house to live in ; and if unmarried, he must run the risk of getting comfortable lodgings, and some of us know what a risk that is. There, whether married or single, the house goes with the school, and as long as a teacher does his work as he ought to do, he has a comfortable home. The salaries, I think, are about the same as in Ontario. Ere leaving the subject of education I would just say that I was more deeply impressed than ever with the responsibilities and possibilities of our work as teachers, both in the mental and moral aspect, but particularly in the latter. If noble aims are to be implanted, if worthy desires are to be cherished, if life is to be made 'one grand, sweet song,' the seeds must be dropped in the young mind. Contact with the busy world benumbs the sensibilities and renders the mind unimpressible. In Highland glen or on lovely loch, in old historic castle or busy centre, the children I now daily teach were with me ; in them I saw, as I never saw before, the men and women of the future, not merely minds to be expanded, but young immortals to start fairly on the ocean of life. Why is it we do not 'magnify our office'?

"After visiting the Canadian court, I must say that I came away proud that I was a Canadian. The exhibit was by common consent a splendid one —conceded by all to be the best of the colonies—on every hand I heard visitors expressing their admiration. Canada has, like Byron, awakened to find herself famous. We trust others are awakened also. In both England and Scotland, Canada has hitherto been considered a mere cipher. We are called Yankees and Americans—rarely Canadians. Even in going down to New York, a fellow-traveler whom I met—by no means an illiterate man—stoutly contended that Canada has only two provinces. We smile at and deplore his ignorance, but he may safely be taken as a representative of a large class of people. I can scarcely wonder at the ignorance in Scotland and England. In the Glasgow general post office the tablet on which the hours of arrival and departure of mails are placarded is strikingly misleading. The public are informed that on such a day and at such an hour mails will leave for Prince Edward, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Canada—indeed, I am not sure but it was *the Canadas*. Nearly twenty years since Confederation, and yet Canadians have to brook such insults ! I felt like giving vent to my indignation in some of the Glasgow dailies, but my own 'weeness' in the midst of a great city frightened me.

"My visit to the Canadian court of the Colonial Exhibition enabled me to realize, as never before, what a magnificent country we have. I went away a half-hearted, independent Canadian ; I returned, I trust, a thoroughly loyal one. We have all the advantages of a monarchical government without its corresponding disadvantages. We have the advantages of democratic government—government for the people by the people—without its disadvantages, and with a Governor-General who has sense enough to leave his aristocratic tendencies on the other side of the Atlantic, and who will enter heartily into

the spirit of Canadian enterprise, we have, in my humble opinion, a form of government unsurpassed on the earth. So long as three oceans wash the shores of our glorious Dominion ; so long as her luxuriant forests, fertile fields, beautiful hills and dales, rolling prairies and cloud-capped mountains, stretch between the blue Atlantic and the broad Pacific ; so long as her inland lakes pour their wealth of waters into the capacious Gulf which bears them oceanward ; so long as the maple reigns queen of the forest beauties, so long may each loyal heart say, *God bless Canada !*"

CHAPTER XIV.

Miscellaneous Letters.

To Miss Jennie Kelly :

"ABINGDON, April 23, 1879.

"My birthday was yesterday and yours is past. Does it not seem very old to be *twenty?* Our teens gone forever. God only knows, dear Jennie, where we will be ere another twenty have gone over our heads. If we live till then, silver threads will be making their appearance and school-girl life, with its pains and pleasures, will only live in the memory as a pleasant dream. I lay awake the other evening thinking over the days spent at the Ottawa Normal School, especially of the day when three of us had such a pleasant adventure. I can see *you* yet standing on the old pier, waving your handkerchief. I thought it would make a pretty picture.

'Break ! break ! break !
At the foot of thy crags, O sea !
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.'

Many of my acquaintances credit me or rather discredit me with wonderful levity of spirit, but really at times I do feel strongly and deeply.

"If I ever take to novel-writing, the groundwork of the first one will be the Ottawa Normal School ; the heroine, the 'lass with hazel e'en.' The moral I will attempt to teach the fair sex will be to always *scrunch* a cheeky fellow, and to the sterner to never propose to a lady until they are pretty sure of the answer. There ! Is not that a grand air-castle ?

"I fully understand your anxiety for your school, though a graded school is very different to one like this, where my forty pupils have one-eighth as many classes. These beautiful days are bringing back the little ones from their season of mental hybernation ; thoughts of Normal training, phonic method, phonetic method, and mental development, crowd my brain, but I sometimes wonder if they are an improvement on the good old-fashioned way : 'What's that round letter ?' 'O.' 'That crooked one ?' 'S.' 'That one with the tail on ?' 'Q.'

"You speak of euchre-playing and dancing. When I was about sixteen

years of age one of the aims of my life was to learn to dance. I was going to school at the time, and was not allowed to engage with my companions in such sports. Then when I got older and left home something always kept me from so doing for my scholars' sake; so I stayed away from parties from a sense of duty. I now stay away from inclination. Respecting euchre, I was never advised how to act—to play or not—but I have always shunned it, if not for my own sake, for my scholars'.

"I have been reading Burns and Milton, and reading politics. I do not see why I was not interested in the affairs of our own country long before this time."

To her sister:

"ABINGDON, Sept. 10, 1882.

"The only advice I can give you is not to speak cross. Daily I regret and daily I try to overcome that habit, with, I sometimes fear, but little success. Give the children good selections to memorize. Write the selections on the board, and if you can leave one on till it is learnt, do so. Try and get them to read useful books. I am afraid my first teaching years were sadly misspent. In the mornings open your school with some passage of scripture read in response. It is wonderful what a teacher can do. I have two or three children only six years old, who know the Commandments, and the older ones know *them*, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer.

"On Friday evening I draw a picture of some kind—appropriate of course—on the board, and endeavor to impress a spiritual and moral lesson. The first week I took 'Fruit-trees,' and brought out the idea of fruit-bearing by drawing a tree, putting leaves and fruit on, and having the children name in order the fruits of the spirit. It looks pretty on the board. At the close I had it read up one side and down the other, 'The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.' It was encouraging to find that a number had found where the words occur. A good exercise in composition and memory, is to have them try and remember the minister's text on Sabbath. I do not say they have to remember, but only ask them if they will not try. It is one of the ways of 'sowing beside all waters.' But you will be saying, 'I did not ask how to conduct a Sunday-school.' I admit it looks like it, but my experience is, that the day-school lessons do not suffer from it—but instead, it tends to make the pupils more intelligent. I take well-written articles, and get the older pupils to copy what they consider fine passages. It cultivates taste in reading. Of course those children who come not 'of a good kind in the flesh,' who have not the brain, must be occupied some other way. Children too often leave school literally crammed with facts, and in a year or two forget the altitude of Mt. Blanc, the location of Lake Titicaca, or the population of Dublin; but if they are taught a love of the beautiful either in Nature or Art, whether in the book of things created or in

the production of the press, the teacher's labor is not in vain. Weak, sometimes, the efforts; but even then, the seed may be germinating, who knows? I have found these things helpful and they are practical and original."

To her sister:

"ABINGDON, October 12, 1882.

"No one knows how much I regret that the first year I spent here my Bible was never opened in school. Now, each morning the children repeat verses from the Bible, of their own choosing. It has deeply moved me to see how appropriate the selections are at times. If they do not know them, I take particular pains *not to scold*—that would spoil all the good that might be done. Last week I left the picture of the tree which bore fruit, on the board, and beside it drew another without fruit. Underneath it I printed, 'Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.' My next is to be a palm tree. A sermon on it, heard over a year ago, suggested the subject. The verse taught with this object lesson will be, 'The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree.'

"I spend considerable time in teaching my pupils to read intelligently, to understand similies and metaphors, and to see the beauties of elegant diction. Thanks to Mr. Armstrong's teaching, I think I can myself appreciate beautiful poetry, and I try to have them do so too. The grammar for the senior class on Friday afternoons consists of a critical analysis of standard selections. Intelligent pupils like it very much. This is my own idea of teaching literature, rousing a strong love for it. Then in history I give questions which teach the children to *think*. Only this year I have learnt what that personification of reverence—Rev. Mr. McLean—meant when he used to tell us we came to school *to learn to think*."

To Miss Jennie E. Kelly:

"HAMILTON, June 8, 1883.

"As I write, a most magnificent picture is before me—the indescribable glories of sunset. Such harmony is apparent in the regular irregularity, such blending of color, such fretted work of crimson and gold, that I am led to exclaim:

'I feel myself immortal,
As in yon robe of light.
The glorious hills and vales of Heaven
Are drawing on my sight.
I seem to hear the murmur
Of some celestial stream,
And catch the glimmer of its course
Beneath the sacred beam.

And such methinks with rapture
Is my eternal home,
More lovely than the passing glimpse
Through which my footsteps roam.'

You may not be in a poetical mood. Allow me, however, to quote from Byron:

'When summer's twilight *weeps* itself away,
Who has not felt the sweetness of the hour
Steal on the heart *as dew along the flower*?

Is it not beautiful? Ere the vision fades away forever, I clasp my hands and implore the beneficent Father to restore to His child 'that peace which passeth understanding, that peace which this world can neither give nor take away,' and I know if I ask in faith I ask not in vain. O my dear girlie, I trust the time will yet come when words of Christian comfort from you will yet strengthen and encourage me in the (at times) weary struggle. Physical or mental affliction is good for me—although I'm very rebellious under it—because it shows me my utter dependence upon that Divinity whom I know guides my every footstep. He led me here, at present I do not know why. If time do not, eternity will reveal the reason.

"You're a brave little girl to overlook the disadvantages of your situation, and try to make friends with those whom you must necessarily meet. I love the country and often long for it. There is a beautiful view from the top of the mountain here. Several Sabbath mornings I have risen early and gone up to commune with God and nature. Jennie, ma chere, some Sabbath morning take your Bible, and on the wooded bank of the river you speak of, alone with God, read aloud the one hundred and fourth Psalm, and then tell me your impressions. To me it is most marvellous.

"P. S.—You say you would like to see me. Never mind, bonnie lassie, there may be in the sunshiny future a meeting of two silver-haired, black-robed, brow-furrowed, white-capped grandames, in whose lineaments may be traced the rosy-cheeks, hazel-eyes, brown hair, and in the homelier of the two, the freckled face—my own peculiar property—of Jennie E. Kelly and Jessie E. Robertson. As we stand then at 'life's west window,' may we look back over the sunshine and shades of our early life, with our hearts re-echoing the words, 'He hath done all things well.'

"It seems so hard, at times, to be a sunbeam—throwing light wherever we go. The feeling which the struggle for 'bread and butter' causes, inclines more to the cold, cloudy, bleak feeling, rather than to the sunshiny, and yet we are infinitely happier if we choose the sunbeam path."

To Mrs. E. Coatsworth :

"HAMILTON, Dec., 21, 1883.

"I have prayed that the God who seemed so near you in your quiet country home, in the holy calm of a Sabbath twilight, may seem as near in the crowded city where there is so much to distract attention. In your own sphere may you adorn the Christian church even more than in the past. On bended knees I have wafted a whisper heavenward that it may be so. It is one of the privileges of friendship, and as a sacred privilege I regard it. Those 'ministering spirits' bear the message mortal lip has uttered. The Great Father smiles upon them, and hark! the message re-borne. Throw aside your material nature, ascend the spiritual Pisgah, draw a veil over earthly scenes, and listen to the words as they are repeated :

"'My children : the eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.' Strains of melting music, glimpses of glory which 'eye hath not seen,' golden gates, palms of victory—lo! the vision passes away and we find imagination has been wandering, we trust not irreverently, into 'holy ground.'

"Allow me to extend sincere holiday greeting. I hear you are to have a family reunion in the old homestead. Please take my loving remembrances with you. Have you read Frances Ridley Havergal's 'Bells across the Snow'? Two lines of it haunt me sweetly, yet sadly :

'There's a spray of cypress twining
In the holly wreath to-night.'

"I rejoice with and for you. May your home happiness prove an avenue for sweetening the lives of others."

To Mrs. E. Coatsworth :

"HAMILTON, May 14, 1884.

"Mother still lives—that is all I can say—unless I add, and suffers. More than once we have thought her gone. More than one morning her prayer has been that Jesus would say to her, 'To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.' Still our mother prays and asks her children to pray for submission to God's will and time. As she approaches the Valley of Shadows her faith grows strong, and leaning on the arm of her Beloved she fears not to enter.

"Ever since I had to realize mother could not get better, I have been astonished at myself. Usually so emotional, I can speak of the future without a quiver ; usually rebellious, I find it comparatively easy to say, 'Thy will be done,' though it seems almost too much to bear the thought that never again will my dear mother's hand and lips bid me welcome home.

"My poor mother, weak as she is, rejoiced with and for my success, and it was the sweetest part of the pleasure to know that she enjoyed and appreci-

ated the winning of the prize. She has asked about you several times, and rest assured my mother's blessing rests on Jessie's dearest friend. O, Helen! the world would be dark to me now if I had no God from whom to seek consolation, and no friends to remember me in this hour of affliction.

"I know you are praying for me that His grace may be sufficient; were it otherwise I could not view the future as I do. Your friendship is dearer to me than ever before. With love to your husband and mother, believe me, my darling, as ever, your sincere friend."

To a young friend:

"STRABANE, Sept. 17, 1884.

"A few hours ago your letter reached me. Permit me to offer my heartiest congratulations for your success. It is always a source of pleasure to me to hear of boys and girls desiring more education, for if properly used it is a most potent lever in a person's life-work. It is true, at the same time, that the greater opportunity we have in this respect, the heavier is the responsibility.

"In regard to the temperance work referred to, I feel like saying with Talmage, 'Hallelujah! The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.' There is more triumph condensed in that one short sentence than in any other I ever read. I believe in total abstinence, and am a most enthusiastic admirer of temperance workers, but sometimes it seems to me that the temperance party hurt their cause by undue zeal—zeal without prudence. Allow me to say I am glad to find you enlisted in the good cause. In the name of the Captain, I give you my hand and bid you welcome to the ranks.

"With best wishes for your future welfare, believe me very sincerely yours."

To Mrs. E. Coatsworth:

"'HILLSIDE,' STRABANE, Sept. 18, 1884.

"It is late, but I cannot resist the wish to pen you a few lines on this the first anniversary of your marriage eve As to-morrow's sun rises, before the care and worry of another day begins, I will send to you on the 'wings of the morning,' my sincerest wishes for many happy returns of the anniversary of your wedding day. The year that has elapsed since you, my darling, as a gentle bride whispered adieu to your mountain home, has been an eventful one to us both, though in a widely different sense. To you a year of unalloyed bliss—'tis true there was sadness mingled with gladness, still I do not think the expression too strong—to me a year that my wilful, wayward, impatient spirit needed a year of chastening. I never knew until lately how much I needed to be disciplined.

"I know you can understand my feelings and that you will pray more earnestly for me that I may be patient. But I wanted to write about you, not about myself.

"In one short year a maiden, a wife and a mother! As the first I knew and loved you—a maiden for whose influence I shall be eternally grateful. As the second I rejoice with you—the happy wife of a happy husband is a position angels might envy. The third I pass over, only saying in Dr. Ormiston's words, 'Motherhood is the holiest state under Godhood.' To fill these three spheres well, can only find a fitting encomium in the words, 'She hath done what she could.' To fill them well I believe is the great end for which woman was created.

"You told me what you wished to do during this month. I can only sigh a sigh and groan a groan for my own indolence, and wish that *you*, my dear, may realize your expectations.

"Enclosed please find the first autumn leaves I have found. Let them whisper to you of wildwood walks and school-girl days—of the magnetic influence of your country home and one little word from a country friend.

"You will please extend your sympathy to me when I tell you that another weight has been added to my responsibility—a child who, if spared, is destined to call me 'auntie' has been launched on this ocean of humanity. It looks like all other such specimens of the race—a pink-faced, bald-headed, up-turned nosed, wide-mouthed, lusty-lunged little terrestrial (as opposed to celestial), and yet what force may exist in embryo there? My sister might not feel complimented with this description of her 'bairnie,' but you know one glorying in anticipation of a 'perpetual maidenhood' can look upon these things with adamantine eye—if your vivid imagination can conceive such a phenomenon.

"On looking over my diary of 1883 I find the following entry: 'My darling, a bride to-day, and never did a purer bride in every sense of the word grace a marriage altar. My whole heart goes out to her and the husband of her choice. May God bless them. Many and varied are the thoughts which cross my mind as I look at them. It will take all eternity to show the good the mother did who taught such a family.'"

To Mrs. E. Coatsworth:

"VALENS, Feb. 2, 1885.

"You will wonder where this flitting friend of yours is located now! You will doubtless be surprised to learn that I have resumed my work again, and once more pedagogic joys and sorrows are mine. The first week my experience was simply awful—it seemed to me I could not live a whole year—you know the feeling too well to describe it further. The second week prospects seemed to grow brighter; third week seemed much shorter than the others; fourth week I actually felt some enthusiasm, and this the beginning of the fifth week finds me longing for something I can not define—a desire as yet not formed

into words, but has in it something of the foreshadowing of the teacher in the moral and higher sense. My pupils are very good indeed—as yet that once very necessary appendage known as the 'tawse' has peacefully reposed *in the school ma'am's pocket.* I find that when the teacher is angular, the pupils are in precisely the same humor.

"However, 'the lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places,' and though my work is sometimes wearisome, it is counteracted by the kindness shown me. Please don't say that you must restrain the feelings which thoughts of the past arouse. Every emotion of yours touches a chord which vibrates only harmoniously. These are sacred recesses—the 'holy of holies' of one's being—but when read, realizing that we are standing on holy ground, the effect on the feelings and the tendency thereof is heavenward and Godward.

"Please give my love to your mother—truly a 'mother in Israel.' No wonder you think of her as you do. Few indeed are there whose old age is crowned with such laurels as her children and her grandchildren bring her. May God bless her with them!"

To Mrs. E. Coatsworth:

"BURNSIDE,' VALENS, Aug. 17, 1885.

"Observe the date—draw a long breath, then 'heave an offering' of thanksgiving that *Jessie,* not Helen, is the pedagogue once more. The first day's teaching is over and I feel almost as if I had not been away.

"I left home on Saturday evening, preferring to have the Sabbath rest preparatory to commencing the duties I almost dreaded, and reached my Valens home at dusk. The cordial welcome there was extremely pleasing. The arrangements awaiting me at school ought to make me feel forever ashamed of dreading to return. The first indication I had of anything unusual was an arch over the gate, but when I went in the school-room I was almost unnerved. In the windows boxes the whole length of the sill were placed, containing the most magnificent ferns—many of them reaching almost half the height of the window—with several pots of geraniums and other flowers. A table standing near my desk was all covered with moss, surmounting which was an arch containing the word 'Welcome' in large letters made from moss and berries. The moss was laid in mounds on which little shells and berries were scattered, while a beautiful little bird was perched underneath the arch, and just as one might see it in the woods—a black squirrel. A pair of closed scissors was drawn on the board, on which was written, 'We meet, August 17,' and below, a verse of ten lines—composed for the occasion—and commencing, 'Welcome, dear teacher.'

"You may be sure I was delighted as well as surprised, all the more so when I ascertained it was the young people attending the Bible class who did it. Outside the school-room was a wonderful transformation, but one purely of nature. The plants I left had grown and bloomed, and geraniums, bal-

sams, petunias, portulacas, sweet alyssum, and, above all, most luxurious mignonette, grow in sweet profusion. Of course no other eyes could see them so beautiful—I confess I am a partial admirer. The children's greeting was no less pleasing than the flowers, as they came to the door to meet me. Don't you think I ought to say truly, 'the lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places,' so far as school is concerned?

"I will close for to-night, only sending you ere I do so, a message by no less a messenger than fair Luna herself. You will see her smiling brightly upon you—and then veiling herself in maiden modesty will withdraw for a moment. Once again she smiles to you, and in tones so silvery soft that mortal ear thinks it is but the rustling of the leaves in the evening breeze, whispers 'Jessie's—love—to—Helen—and—Helen's.' The sound dies away, and in the flesh we think it was but a vision. Good night."

To Mr. C. Marshall:

"'BURNSIDE,' VALENS, Sept. 3, 1885.

"Allow me without any prefatory remarks to hasten to congratulate you upon recently acquired honors. I sincerely assure you it gives me great pleasure to learn that such is the case; first for your own sake, and secondly because you are a country boy, and thirdly because you are a farmer's son. Country boys for ever! May they ever bear the palm in whatever occupations in life they choose, never forgetting at the same time what they owe to their parents and the country. A city 'dude' born and bred is unbearable enough, but a country boy assuming city airs, and forgetting whence he came, makes me—well, a mild term does not adequately express my feelings!

"May I venture to suggest that the above peroration is not for your benefit? Writing, as I always do, on the spur of the moment, my mind reverted to some such youths, and ere my indolent powers could think a second time my indignation had flowed from my pen. And you will soon be, if not now, a teacher! Comfort yourself with the thought that the schoolroom and the teacher's responsibility combined has been a stepping-stone for not a few of our great names to positions of affluence and influence. Will you pardon one who has trodden the pedagogic path some years before you to proffer some advice? If there is one particular position which enlists my cordial sympathy more than another, 'tis that of a young teacher just starting in life. You are pleased to compliment me on my success in teaching. Gratefully acknowledging the same, I will tell you that years of experience have revealed to me the fact that my first efforts to teach were simply a groping in the dark. Indeed, it seems to me now that all my teaching in Abingdon was but that, though I think the last year my eyes were opening a little. There is too much—an unwholesome superfluity of 'cram'—in our public schools, and I have determined, let others do as they will, I will not 'cram' any more. Prof. Blackie, of Edin-

burgh University, says, '"Cram" is a process of which man as a reasoning animal ought to be ashamed.' But I have wandered from my subject—I started—or was about—to proffer some advice.

"If you intend to be a teacher, 'magnify your office.' Belittling of one's profession materially injures the belittler. Viewed in its broadest sense, teaching has within its compass opportunities of usefulness an angel might covet. Because our vision is dimmed by indolence, selfishness or irresponsibility, that by no means makes these opportunities less real. Besides, the concentration of one's energies to attain success in one calling in life paves the way for more intense concentration and redoubled success as life's battle grows more stern. There also comes from duty done a sense of gratification that no shirking of duty can ever give. Your innate modesty and bashfulness will, I trust, enable you to steer clear of feminine wiles until you have attained a maturity of years which will enable you to choose wisely that which should be the making—but not unfrequently is the marring—of a man's happiness, viz., an helpmeet. Are you laughing at me? Well, I don't mind, you may laugh—not too immoderately, however, for though the last piece of advice is jokingly written, I mean every word of it. I'm always sorry to see a young man bother his head about girls until he's five-and-twenty at least.

"You spoke of wishing a small school, that you might be able to continue your reading and studying. May I ask what object you have in view? I have one girl of marked ability at present attending school. Instead of the usual 'cram,' she reads a good deal. We are now reading together—she in school, I at night, Blackie's 'Self-culture.' In order to make our reading more beneficial, she makes notes and so do I. When we finish we compare notes. What do you think of the plan?"

To a young friend:

"'BURNSIDE,' VALENS, Sept. 14, 1885.

"You will understand why I thus immediately reply to your letter when I tell you it was not until it reached me that I knew of your mother's death. It seems almost cruel to write to you of so great a loss, but let me assure you I would desire to touch the wound with a tenderness that only brings healing, if it were possible. Let me, then, extend to you my deepest sympathy in your great bereavement. A year ago, when we thought our own dear mother was to leave us, it seemed as if a dark leaden cloud were rolling upon us, and I can more truly sympathize with you now. To express my sympathy in more than words I would say that if at any time you feel the need of a mother's advice or feel the lack of a mother's sympathy, I will be most glad (for I remember you have no elder sister) to supply in the slightest degree her vacant place. Whatever was noble, affectionate and unselfish in her, that tenderly cherish and imitate; to remember in all your hopes and fears through life that a

mother would rejoice to see you do well, is a motive to earnest work that even angels do not know. You are away from home and will not feel the loss even so keenly as those at home, therefore try to lift their burden—write frequently to them and try to guide the younger ones as she would have done, if spared."

To a young friend :

"'BURNSIDE,' VALENS, Nov. 18, 1885.

"There is a very great responsibility attached to him (or her) who has in his hands the shaping of character. My fullest sympathies go out to a *conscientious* teacher—I almost *scorn* one who enters the profession to belittle it. The more I see of teaching and teachers, the more convinced I am that the mere teaching of historical, grammatical, mathematical, geographical or orthographical facts, is by far the least in importance of the teacher's duties. If he can, by influence, example and precept stamp out

> 'The low desire, the base design,
> The strife for triumph more than truth,'

he does a work inconceivable in its influence on future lives.

"How little we can accomplish in life viewing it in one sense, and yet how much viewing it in another! I am very much troubled at present as to how far Christian people should indulge in ordinary amusement and recreations. Live 'redeeming the time' is the Divine command, and yet all have not the same faculties; and though I enjoy books and quiet evenings, is it right that I should wish others to do the same? 'Tis true, indeed, that it is painful to know how many young men waste hour after hour, night after night, week after week, still it seems to me we must not expect them to do exactly as we do. I am always glad when I see a boy studiously inclined, and by giving books and papers to my pupils I try to lead them to read. Still, in many cases, I find it somewhat discouraging. So few read from the *pure love* of reading, and less read systematically. Girls are the best readers.

"Have you ever seen Pryde's 'Highways of Literature'? If you have not, by all means get it. To one just starting life, as you are, it will be most valuable.

"I do wish farmers would abandon the idea that because a boy is going to be a farmer he does not require an education. An educated, thoroughly practical farmer is a power in a community. I could enlarge on this subject to a great extent, but for your comfort will forbear. In whatever line you are working be assured of my heartiest wishes for your success."

To a young friend :

" 'BURNSIDE,' VALENS, June 6, 1886.

" May I hope to be reinstated in your list of friends, if at this 'eleventh hour' I proceed to acknowledge your very welcome letter ? There is no reason save 'busyness' that I have not written sooner. Believe me I have often thought of you ; at the 'holy hour' your name has been breathed heavenward.

" Before proceeding to answer your letter proper, allow me to say there is no need for apologizing for writing either too soon or at length. Please write frankly, freely, familiarly as you please. I am interested in your success and glad to hear from you at any time. Were I not several years your senior I should be the one to have questionings as to the propriety of thus telling you to write in this manner, but under the circumstances I feel at perfect liberty. Your letter seemed like a voice from another orb—your description of school and teachers I enjoyed. It was a pleasure to turn from the monotony of school life to go with you in your buoyant hopes for the future.

" I would not like to see Canada annexed to the United States, because of the alarmingly loose moral principles which obtain in the Republic—the violation of marriage sanctity is something fearful to contemplate. I think a baptism of blood must be awaiting that nation. I admire the Americans for their pluck, shrewdness and 'goaheaditiveness,' but further than that I would not wish to see Canada imitate them. By assuming independence she subjects herself to conquest. Her geographical position must ever be an insurmountable disadvantage, unless the science of the future centuries shall project a plan whereby the 'frozen north' may be converted to the 'sunny south.' So at the present I see nothing for Canada but to remain as she is. We have all the advantages of a democracy without its corresponding disadvantages ; we have the advantages of a monarchical form of government with but few of its disadvantages. The brightest name in England to-day is William Ewart Gladstone. That grand old man with his weight of years upon him, guiding with firm hand the helm of State through the troubled waters of Irish discontent, royal dislike, and half-hearted supporters, is a picture only a gifted pen is worthy to describe.

" I am glad to know that you are neither a dancer nor card-player. I think the growing feeling among church-members is against them as savoring of conduct which is unbecoming to a Christian. The Church is greatly in need of a genuine class of young men and women, who have healthy views on these matters. Some there are who, though they may not indulge in these amusements, bring offence to the cause, because of their *cant*. I do love to see a stirring, active, lively young person, who is first in all innocent amusements, take a forward part in Christian work ; I think he can do a great deal more good than by withdrawing entirely from these sports, as many do, although it does require much grace to keep one from going too far.

" I quite agree with you in the opinion that a farmer's son should receive a liberal education. The way many of them live, with really no definite aim in

view, is enough to create a feeling of discontent. If a boy has been led to see a beauty in chemistry, science, botany, he can find in farming a pleasure of which he never dreamed. The great objection I would have to farm life is the extreme 'busyness,' during the most beautiful seasons. If farmers were sufficiently well-to-do to employ competent and efficient help, so that the hours might be shorter, there is no other occupation that seems to me would compare with it, taking all things together."

To a young friend :

"VALENS, Sept. 29, 1886.

"Your second letter to hand only to strike more deeply the arrows of a reproving conscience. I don't pretend to answer either of them now—I don't seem to have an idea in my brain to-night—but I will just let you know your letters reached me, the first one a short time before school closed in the summer. As you are probably aware, I went across the Atlantic, and all the way your letter went with me, I always intending to answer it and always delaying until I could write an interesting reply.

"Generally speaking, I found all classes and conditions of people much the same on both sides of the Atlantic. There as well as here,

'Every door is barred with gold,
And opens but to golden keys.'

Towards the last I was very busy, and thought I would write you a good long letter on the return trip. Alas for expectation! A storm off the Irish coast completely upset my cranky stomachic organization, and I was sick the whole way across. Not dangerous, you know—no one ever died of sea-sickness or indigestion, and more than that, no one suffering with these dire diseases ever gets much sympathy. Need I say my good intentions were not put in force—I wrote to no one.

"I realized when away that if ever a boy or girl is to make a good man or woman, he or she must lay the foundation in early life. I realized as never before the responsibility of the position I occupy, but Giant Despair almost has possession of me now. My school is very large and I have much yet to learn in order to manage a school well. That I work, I admit, but my work is frequently of no avail.

"It is over a year since your mother left you—just for a short time. The reunion will be a joyous one when life's work has been well done. Though I did not write to you, let me assure you that Highland glen and old castle—lovely loch and heather hill can bear testimony to the fact that I did not forget you. When friends are separated a common Father rejoices in the petitions offered, each on the other's behalf.

"Just here let me ask you why it is you do not expect to enter the legal profession when you like it so much? If lawyers are corrupt, and they certainly are proverbially, all the more reason that one should let the light of

honor and honesty shine in the profession. I can see nothing wrong in your attending revival services and judicial assizes if you have time—not until we have learnt to bring our religion to bear upon *everything*, are we, in my estimation, living up to either our duty or our privileges. From what you say of your teacher I think he realizes, as all thoughtful people must, that by far the most important element in teaching is its moral and religious aspect. The longer I teach, the more I can see how a teacher by judiciously exercising his influence may indeed form character that will last throughout eternity. I can assure you I have but little confidence in my own abilities as a teacher.

"This year has been one of much anxiety to me in my school-work, yet I can truly say, it has been a most satisfactory one. Less than a year ago I had a fourth class of some ten or twelve pupils whose ages ranged from fourteen to twenty. Four of them have since then been led to the 'green pastures and still waters' of peace with God—three of them have publicly professed their faith in Christ, and are now co-workers in the same church as myself. Much is due, under God, to the earnest prayers and *consistent life* of one of the best Bible-class teachers ever scholars were blessed with. As followers of the same Master, there is much in common between teacher and pupils, lightening each day's labor and making duty a pleasure. It is only at opportune times and occasional intervals that I speak to my pupils on these gravest of all matters, yet I think much can be done by a teacher in leading children's thoughts heavenward. I have learned that if I *do my duty* and trust the rest, all will be well. I have taught seven years and a half, and during all those years I have found that the pathway to success in temporal matters is found by asking Divine guidance. I have made many failures; indeed, on looking back it seems to me nearly all failure on my part; but whatever I have accomplished has been in the strength given when sought aright. So far as I know I could meet each and every pupil I ever taught with a smiling face, with perhaps one exception, and that has been through a misunderstanding. I never had a 'scene' in school; that is, a pupil refusing to comply with my requests; and I number amongst my most congenial companions those whom I have taught or am teaching. Before dropping the subject let me just tell you that as the days of 1887 glide quickly by, and I kneel in my quiet, cosy little school-room, asking a blessing on the day's labor, I shall also commend to our common Father him who will be taking his first lessons in that profession which is second only to that one which

'Allures to brighter worlds and leads the way.'

"You seem to think you will not like teaching. I think you are taking the best possible way to like it, viz., taking an interest in it. And now we shall let the school subject drop until I hear from you."

CHAPTER XV.

Extracts of Letters.

"I had a dream about you one night last week which has just occurred to me. I dreamt I saw you lying very still and pale on a bed, and I heard a faint, soft sound, which as it rose louder I could understand—it was, 'Tired! Tired!' As the volume of sound swelled, you seemed to rise higher, until you came to heaven's gate. The doors opened, and I heard such music as I never heard on earth, and the refrain always was 'Tired! Tired!'"

"I think it requires more grace to perform Christian duties cheerfully and patiently than it does to convert the heathen."

"It is a constant struggle with me to keep out of the sloughs of gossip, ignorance and indolence which beset me, and very often it is not I who comes off conqueror. You say, 'If you were not weak, you would not confess such things.' To do so is, in my opinion, infinitely better than to succumb to them and drift with the tide. I despise living with no higher aspiration than to 'eat, drink and be merry.' It is a sure sign of a sinking mind."

"We can only struggle on, trusting, hoping, praying, that our efforts may be blessed."

"The children who have loved the Lord
Shall hail their teachers there,
And teachers reap the *rich reward*
Of all their toil and care."

"I do not wonder that you find but little time for letter writing—three little bodies, with three little immortal souls, seems to me no circumscribed sphere."

"You have voluntarily, thoughtfully and calmly fulfilled the last request of our Saviour. I trust and pray you may be a faithful standard-bearer. May we ever 'Onward, yet upward, still buoyantly climb.'"

"I have had quite a number of juveniles this week who really don't know much. Their mental dormancy is as remarkably painful as their physical and labial capacities are active. However, as Miss Bertha Sims says:

'The pen of the author and statesman,
The good and the wise of our land,
The sword, the chisel and palette,
Shall be held by the little brown hand.'

"I must not despair."

"At present I have a multitude of little folks—there were sixty-one to-day. Don't they come in all stages of ignorance though? But I like the little ones very much, and often have to regret impatient words. I don't have to resort to severe whipping only once in a long time. I have punished more for bad language than for all other things put together. I am more thoroughly convinced than ever that by far the most important element in a teacher's work is the moral influence; for, after all, if we educate boys and girls, we thus will give them a wider influence either for good or evil; and if along with the intellectual training, moral training is not imparted, what are we doing? I grow weary and discouraged when I think of all that might be done and of how little is actually done, and often forget to 'weary not in well-doing.'"

"People tell us it is easy to be a Christian. That has not been my experience; pride, self-will, a pharisaical, indolent and man-fearing spirit, a trifling disposition, a heart and mind too much devoted to 'the world, the flesh, and the devil,' and a natural inclination to doubt, has had to be struggled with from the beginning. At times I feel ready to give up."

"A teacher's influence, how far reaching it is! Fifteen years ago, a young man of nineteen entered on a very unpromising field as a teacher, yet for years, and some for life, his influence was felt among the young men of that neighborhood."

"These Sabbath evening lessons at home tell on after life, and for that reason I regret Sabbath evening church. I tremble to think of the temptations thrown in a young person's way on leaving home, and a boy more especially, I think. Anything that will help to make a *true* man should be willingly done. If in after years his mind incline in the right way, he will have more ballast to steer his course. Unbounded success in one's early life sometimes upsets the equilibrium. Wherever a young man goes it is well to have a master who will deserve prompt and ready obedience and who will exact it from him."

"My pupils have done splendidly for the Bible Society; over twenty names have been given me, and their little cramped printing is prettier to me than a picture. But oh! how I dread asking the older people! However, I must try and remember to give my services as well as my money, 'not grudgingly or of necessity.'"

"Do not stop going to church. Nothing could justify you in that course. Christian never got out of the Slough of Despond by neglecting good advice. And you must remember he did get up the hill Difficulty and into the land of Beulah, yes, beyond that, to the land where sorrow and sadness are unknown."

"Why do we turn the tangled side of life to view, regardless of the woven beauties on the other?"

"I trust my darling girlie finds her labors sweetened at times by seeing her children developing those higher, nobler, truer qualities, which should be a true teacher's delight, and with which her children's teacher is so largely endowed. Go out in the moonlight to-night. Do you not see in its mystic halo a peculiar brightness visible only to privileged eyes? Would you know its meaning? Attune your ears, sweet maiden, for moonbeams whisper with heavenly softness. Throw aside that veil of flesh which fetters you; draw the curtain of sentiment, which shuts out the cold world and then listen: 'We—reflect—the—bright—blessings—showered—upon—you—by—your—loving—friend—Jessie.'"

"God created Eve to be an helpmeet for Adam. I believe that to their descendants he extends the same fatherly care. I think we ought to ask, seek and look for guidance in this of all matters on which so much depends."

"I thank God that He has led you through the dark waters. I was very much concerned about you, not that you would embrace an atheistic belief to all time; I felt sure He who had led your steps in early years would claim His own, but lest you might be enveloped in such clouds of darkness as might have an ill effect on yourself and your influence."

"Though your heart sank when you discovered your whereabouts, I firmly believe your steps were guided thither, and these experiences of quiet country life will have their effect on all your future. Remember, though the diction and manners of those about you may not be quite as refined as you would like, often good, true, honest hearts are covered by a somewhat rude exterior. I'm quite expecting to hear soon that your philanthropic self has found someone to interest her, be it little child or gray-headed grandsire."

"I think the bliss of Heaven will be that congenial spirits will meet."

"In going to Montreal we went down the Rapids, and, my dear girl, I'll do without other than necessary clothing, but I will see more of God's creation."

"Sometimes I feel perfectly exultant in the thought of meeting friends in Heaven. With no cares to worry, no tears to fall, what unspeakable bliss awaits us!"

"At noon the children went to the woods and brought such beautiful branches, and I now have a palace emblazoned with the handiwork of the great Creator of the universe."

"It is the 'gloamin' hour and a scene has just been enacted in my little world which makes me forget for the time unappreciated labors. A pupil has just left weeping—leaving a teacher, if not weeping, with tear-bedimmed eyes.

This evening I spoke a word or two about my satisfaction with her conduct, and she burst into tears. She could not tell me why, but I know it is nothing but the strivings of the Spirit. With my arm around the dear girl I offered up an audible prayer that God would keep her 'unspotted from the world.' Surely my faith should not grow weak, nor should I 'weary in well doing,' for God has indeed strengthened me in the past. These things only tend to that full—the perfect—peace which 'passeth all understanding.'"

"The sun had just sunk beneath the horizon, and its last rays seemed to pronounce a holy benediction. Then came the last words, 'Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life.' I mentally responded, 'Amen.'"

"I hope your little girl may retain in some degree her present modesty and shyness—the precocious, petted, pampered children I am forced to see are a very trying test to my low state of grace. Give me quiet, bashful, country children any time in preference to these forward ones, who seem to know more than the accumulated knowledge of their ancestors for three or four generations could ever hope to amount to. May the sacred cords which bind you together be woven more firmly by the warp and woof of mutual thought for each other's welfare.

"It is hard to realize we are *living* now, at least to me it is—the future always appears bright. A procrastinating imagination would fondly say '*live*' then, your surroundings will be more propitious, but I know it's a delusion—a mirage. Cares increase with years. In the moral as in the religious life, *now* is the accepted time.

"It is a night in which aspirations and hopes of earlier days are vividly recalled, friends gone and scattered live again in memory, and a feeling, not sad yet akin to sadness, steals over one. Longfellow must have had a glimpse of this when he wrote words so happily expressive as,

'A feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
Which the soul cannot resist;
A feeling of sadness and longing,
Which is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.'"

"To one who loves teaching, a quiet rural school is a sort of Paradise.

"A woman is fulfilling the end for which she was created, when she is 'an helpmeet' to man, and training her children to carry on the cause of truth and right when she shall have passed away.

"They were not uneventful years, nor do I regret staying in Abingdon. Life's lessons have to be learned in one school if not in another.

"I feel I have a work to do here—what it is I do not yet know—and when that is done I can give up.

'Be the day weary or be the day long,
At length it ringeth to evensong.'"

"Genius, like fragrant flowers in decay, grows offensive when not properly utilized."

"I would seek to feel in an intenser degree the responsibility resting upon me. I often grow discouraged. I am so wayward and fear I may not commend to my pupils the Christ whom I profess to serve.

"I do wonder how any one can get through life without a God on whom to cast her daily burden of care, for even with that I find it difficult at times to get through the day.

"Our superintendent is a most consistent Christian. Last night in his prayer he made me feel it was a privilege to teach. He prayed so earnestly that we might be teachers all through the week, by example, that I felt I was not alone—prayer like that must be answered. Do pray that I may be guided and led aright and that I may perform faithfully and well the duties that fall to my hand."

"I meet many people but few friends in the truer, deeper sense of the word."

"What false ideas exist about things! The ordinary farmer looks at the neat dress and business air of the professional or commercial man, and thinks what an easy time he has, and how pleasant his life must be, totally ignorant of the care, worry and anxiety consequent upon his success in the struggle. The ordinary citizen, meanwhile, regards the tiller of the soil with a sort of pitying contempt, considering the term 'farmer' as synonymous with rudeness, ignorance and vulgarity."

"No one but your mother knows the pang it costs to leave the homestead; bound to her heart by ties strong, deep and tender—the home where in the days gone by childish voices rang, and where one by one her boys and girls left her to enter upon life in a new sphere, and where that event transpired which even yet causes her to wear the habiliments of widowhood."

"This morning Rev. R. J. Laidlaw's subject was 'The use of Sacred Song,' and as he preached, I thought of you and how often you had taught to Christ's little ones in song, 'The Matchless Story.' As if he read my thoughts at times, he frequently refers to the verse, 'Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you,' and so strengthened I go on my way."

"At each sunset hour, when the western glories whisper of heaven, home and happiness unmarred by sorrow, I take with me a few chosen friends and after 'holding sweet converse' waft a prayer heavenward for them. With intensified earnestness I have asked that your joy may be full and that in the midst of the world you may be enabled to 'walk worthy' of your vocation; also that with all your home felicity you may ever be given grace to avoid a very subtle form of selfishness, which the luxury of thoughtful attention from others sometimes produces."

"I have discovered that my motives in all my work are not without alloy. Will you ask our Father for me to give me *purity of motive* and a *contented* spirit? Discontent is my besetting sin.

"It has often comforted me to read the words, 'And there was leaning upon his bosom the disciple whom Jesus loved.' He, too—the God-man—knows the sacred ties of sincere friendship, and surely wills that His followers may enjoy the same privilege—one which lessens at times earth's weariness and intensifies glowing anticipations of the wondrous beauty and joy which shall be ours in those 'Halls of Zion.'"

"Why are these differences? Ah, well, we do not know.

'In the hereafter angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away.'

I firmly believe that no one else can fill our positions in life; we are placed in our own peculiar lot, to do what no one else can do."

"To a young man, blessed with good health and ordinary mental ability, nothing is impossible in the way of securing such an education as he may desire. A will, indomitable, as far as difficulties are concerned, honest principle and faithful concentration, and application to work, break down apparently insurmountable barriers. Let 'present duty' be your motto."

"I was *touched* at the manner in which you wrote of the good wishes sent you. I am repaid 'an hundred fold' by the words: 'It will ever be an inspiring thought that some one has cared and does care for my success in life.' My whole heart goes out to boys beginning life's battle."

"It is a strange evening. A sad, weird wind is rustling the leaves, whose mournful cadences call back the departed years. Some lines of Longfellow haunt me. I take the liberty of writing them:

'They come, the shapes of joy and woe,
The airy crowds of long ago,
The dreams and fancies known of yore,
That have been, and shall be no more.
They change the cloisters of the night
Into a garden of delight.

'A breath from the far-distant shore
Comes freshening ever more and more,
And wafts o'er intervening seas
Sweet odors from the Hesperides!
A wind, that through the corridor
Just stirs the curtain and no more,
And, touching the Æolian strings,
Faints with the burden that it brings!

'I would not sleep! I love to be
Again in their fair company.
But ere my lips can bid them stay,
They pass and vanish quite away.'"

"How do you like 'Faith a Factor in History?' Manifest Destiny is the last subject the youthful writer has measured his length with. I could not express one thought upon either subject; it is not in my style. I could better write a fairy tale, or make a violet tell the wondrous story of its birth. A place for each is in the world, however, and it is well that so it is."

"Surely I should consider it a privilege, not a task, to mould character for Him who has promised the 'well done.' By conscious effort and unconscious influence ever impressing the necessity of earnest living, may God enable me to say, 'Such as I have give I thee.'"

"I was more than interested in Mr. McQueen's touching, earnest and eloquent appeal to the people, so gentle, yet so manfully done. He makes me feel it a privilege to give."

"More impressed than ever with the necessity of *personal dealing* in spiritual matters."

"I do pray God for wisdom and prudence to be guided aright, that I may lead others to think of Jesus."

"This evening marks one of the holy hours of earth. Two scholars with fair young faces, solemn and reverent, stepped forward to take upon them the vows of loyalty to God. My whole heart went out to them. No wonder the angels in Heaven rejoice."

"I feel I have not yet but a glimmering of what the Christian life might be."

"School is mere play now, at least compared with some days I have spent teaching. Every thing goes on harmoniously. The little ripples on the surface pass away in the ringing of the dismissal bell."

"My last day of teaching is over. Can I ever forget the children gathered around me? They tried to sing 'Sweet By and By,' but we had to stop at the second verse. I knelt with my dear, dear girls and commended them to God."

"I shall never forget where I taught my girls. As I turned the key in the door it seemed to me I was leaving the grave of some one I loved. Farewell, farewell, dear, dear Valens schoolhouse!"

CHAPTER XVI.

Letters by "Uncle Tom."

THE following letters were published monthly, and were addressed to the young readers of an agricultural journal, over the signature of "Uncle Tom":

MY DEAR NIECES AND NEPHEWS: Another month has all too quickly passed away, and again we find ourselves surrounded by the gorgeous tints of autumn, which in the press of October work we are apt to leave unappreciated. There are great patches of potatoes to be picked, acres of turnips and carrots to be gathered in, and bushels of rosy-cheeked apples to be stored away and marketed. I hope, however, you will find time to have a day's nutting—beside the famous fun of the day, you can lay up a store of nuts for winter, and many pleasant memories for the years to come. When the happy Christmas-tide comes you can crack the nuts, and with merry song and laugh add your share to Christmas cheer. Those of you whose privilege it is to go to school, I trust have resumed work in right good earnest, when spring's sleepiness and summer's heat are over. Do not, as hundreds of others have done, waste the hours of school. Are you not the hope of this fair Dominion of yours? The boys and girls of to-day, you know, are the men and women of twenty years hence. Statistics from colleges prove that a great percentage of the most successful students have been boys trained in country homes and in country schools, being inured from childhood to rugged habits of life. The other day we heard a young lady (?) whose papa evidently had more money than she had brains, make the following remark: "Oh! Dr. —— is very nice, but his people are *just* farmers." Just farmers, forsooth! Don't you feel like resenting the insult? And yet we know that the opinion is one that obtains largely with a certain class of people. *Just* farmers, indeed! Farmers and farmers' sons fill positions of trust to-day which that insipid young woman's brothers (if they are like her) would be proud to hold. But position, desirable as it may be because of the influence it gives, is not the true aim in life.

"To live well is to live nobly," and we can live well by doing those duties which fall to our hand at the present time.

"True worth is in being, not seeming,
In doing each day that goes by
Some little good, not in the dreaming
Of great things to do by and by."

MY DEAR NIECES AND NEPHEWS: November has come with its cold rains and dull days. Our rambles in October woods are over. I must tell you about a nice walk I had, and the mysterious voices which whispered to me, teaching me wondrous lessons. Do you remember one holy, calm day in the month just passed away? Well, that day, as I rambled leisurely through the woods, I picked up several beautifully painted leaves. Oh, how lovely they were! The tints of crimson and green were so delicately blended, the shape so graceful, and the millions of tinted veins so perfect, that I repeated aloud the words of a poet who has written one of the most musical poems in our language. I would tell you his name, but I want you to have the pleasure of finding it out for yourselves:

"Full many a flower (leaf) is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

As I uttered these words the little leaves trembled, and then I heard a strange murmuring sound above me as of far-away music, which, when you grow older, will make you think of the happy days of childhood—those sweet, careless days when you as merry boys and girls played together in the dear old homestead.

The murmuring sound grew louder, and I heard a chorus of tiny voices say: "We have heard your words, and we are sorry for your ignorance. We have much work to do. The first and earliest work our Father gives us is to make the world beautiful. Would you not miss the tender green of May, the richer verdure of the summer months, and the gorgeous tints of autumn? But we are useful as well as beautiful; we provide shade for man and beast; hundreds of little birds find their homes in our bowers; troops of merry girls carry us to their pleasant homes to make them even more beautiful; artists try in vain to paint our glowing colors. Even in death we are useful; we enrich the earth which gives us a grave, and out of our ashes spring the sweet violets. O blind mortal! do you still say we blush unseen and that our sweetness is wasted?" I opened my lips to answer, "No, a thousand times, no." The voices died away, and I found myself lying on the ground, looking up at the beautiful blue sky which I could see through the trees above me. People may say I dreamt it, but I shall always believe that I found "tongues in trees." The poet who studied nature in every aspect most, said there were tongues in trees; indeed, the lines are so beautiful I think I must give you them:

"Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks :
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

"And now, my dear boys and girls, can you not find out for me who wrote the beautiful words I have quoted? If you begin now to learn the noble thoughts of others, you will find in them much that will give you pure and true pleasure, and make you better boys and girls, nobler men and women. You will find voices in the woods you never dreamt were there, and every one of these will speak to you of the work of your Heavenly Father's hand, and of His love for you.

MY DEAR NIECES AND NEPHEWS: November has passed away, and the merry yule month is ushered in. How many memories come with the Christmas-tide to us whose locks are becoming "powdered with the frosts of years," and as I look upon you, bounding in your merry play, with rosy cheeks and sparkling eyes, I half wish I were a boy again, back in the dear old homestead. I have had much to be thankful for; I have enjoyed many blessings, but in my heart there is a tender spot which sometimes likes to dream of the past, and, in so doing, longingly turns to the home of my boyhood days. I remember the little unpainted, unshod sled father made for us, which you of the present day would scarcely think worthy a glance; but to us it was "a thing of beauty" so long as frost, ice and snow lasted. And then what famous fun we had in the lofts sliding down the sides of great mows of hay and straw. I hope my little nieces have not altogether given up this sport—our sisters always came with us, and I am sure the good angels watched over us, or we would certainly have been killed. Once I remember of getting badly hurt turning a somersault on the hay, and falling over a part where the hay had been cut away. I saw stars, and thought my neck was broken. I had enough of somersaulting for that day; and I learned a lesson. Would you learn it? *When you have to go down a step, do it in a proper way.* There's more in that, boys and girls, than you think.

But all these days of light-hearted fun and merriment passed away. I found that to accomplish anything, however small, work had to be done. I learned from observation and books that men who were successful worked hard for their success, no matter what position in life they had to fill. Dickens, a famous writer, whose acquaintance I hope you will some day make, if you have not done so already, has a character in one of his books called Wilkins Micawber, who is always waiting for something to "turn up," and not until he "turned up" something for himself did the good luck come. Perhaps you are longing for some opportunity to improve yourselves, and Micawber-like, waiting for that opportunity to come. Listen to these words: "That you make the most of present opportunities is the surest test that you would use well greater ones if you had them." In your quiet homes on the farm, where you can spend evening after evening without interruption, do you know, my dear

boys and girls, you have an opportunity for self-improvement that but few save farmers' sons and daughters know. I beseech of you, as one who is interested in your truest welfare, do not waste these precious evenings. William Ewart Gladstone, than whom probably lives not a busier man, says: "Believe me when I tell you that thrift of time will repay you beyond your most sanguine hopes, and that the waste of it will cause you to dwindle alike in intellectual and moral stature." And an infinitely higher authority than his bids us to live "redeeming the time." Don't neglect the cultivation of the busy brain; it will make you a more useful man—a truer woman. I would like to take each one of you by the hand and bid you God-speed.

And now, a farewell word for 1886. We have had many pleasant hours together, and we shall ever cherish its memory. It has served its purpose well, and we would not bid it stay as it rushes on to the limitless gulf of the past. Ere it closes, we wish you, heartily and sincerely, *a merry Xmas*, and let me here whisper to you one more word. In your gifts remember those whom other people are likely to overlook. A little card, any small present which you can purchase by means of self-denial, sent to one who does not often receive such things, will make, for the giver and receiver, a truly happy Christmas, and will usher in a glad new year.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: "Time rolls his ceaseless course," and again we are permitted to enter upon another year. As I sit by the cosy fire watching the shadows flitting to and fro, my heart grows tender with the recollections of by-gone years.

> "When life was young, and hope was strong,
> And minutes sang a siren's song."

You are now young, full of buoyant spirits, bright hopes, and laudable ambitions, and it could not be expected that you would sit and dream with Uncle Tom over the memories of early days, but would it interest you if he were to draw aside the curtain of his studio and show you one or two of the pictures he looks tenderly upon in the weird light and shadow of the Old Year embers? He will turn his thoughts from his own early days to those bright happy ones of the present which his nieces and nephews so heartily enjoy. The pictures I am about to show you have been suggested by one I saw recently in a Canadian art exhibit. Some of you have seen the picture, and wherein I do not describe accurately, I trust you will pardon me, as I write only from memory. With hundreds of others I was moving slowly on, taking a passing glance at each display of artistic power, when I came to one picture which made me stand and gaze. I walked away from it, then back again, to make a more careful study of it. Would you like to know what interested me so much? Well, listen. A happy-looking, rosy-faced boy was lying in a

most natural position—face downward—his feet represented as playing in the air. Where he lay seemed to be a beach, and with his wee fat forefinger the little man had drawn on the sand the outline of a ship. The artist with beautiful appropriateness had named it "The Dawn of Genius." Now come with me and you will find out why I told you about that picture before you entered my "holy place." See before you a picture. What! You say you see nothing but an indistinct outline—a shadowy something—you cannot tell what. Look closely and tell me if you do not see a face appearing before you—earnest, thoughtful, yet merry withal—a book—another hand—a softer face—a laughing countenance—blue eyes—golden curls—closely cropped little heads—why there are two or three faces—many faces—the whole picture is full of faces! How strange! The picture seems as if not on canvas—away back as far as you can see, face appears behind face—hand clasps hand—open pages are being scanned—little lips move as if asking strange questions—those active brains are busy in thought. You want to know the name of the picture—the artist—and whose are the interested faces. Oh, little self-flatterers, do ye not know yourselves? Don't you see it's a magic scene, for Uncle Tom always likes fun at the gleeful New Year's time? *You* are represented in the mirror of his studio, and below it we shall write in letters of gold, "The Dawn of Thought—1887." My dear boys and girls, don't you know

"Those who toil bravely are strongest,
The humble and poor become great,
And from these brown-handed children
Shall grow mighty rulers of State.
The pen of the author and statesman,
The noble and wise of our land,
The sword, the chisel, the palette,
Shall be held by the little brown hand."

And how are you to be prepared to act your part well, whether on the farm or in the workshop—at the anvil or in the pulpit—at the bench or in the laboratory—behind the counter or in the school-room, if you don't *think*, think of what you ought to do, and what you might do, aye, and of much you might leave undone; think of the misspent moments of 1886 and resolve to *think* and *pray* and *act* in the Happy New Year just ushered in?

Do your eyes turn wonderingly to that white-draped picture beside you—I shall draw the curtain some time, but not now. There are the bells ringing—ringing out the old—ringing in the new, and I must go. That the bells may ring in for my dear boys and girls one of peace and joy and gladness is my sincere wish.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: With what a wintry greeting has 1887 come to us! For weeks the snow-blockade has been "boycotting" the farmers; only the bravest of lads and pluckiest of lasses dare brave the storm-king and venture to school. I hope my boys and girls were not easily daunted in this respect. When I was young our teacher used to say it was an indication of character to brave the storms—that it made one stronger in the determination to overcome obstacles and conquer difficulties in life. Experience has taught me that our wise old master was right. A boy or girl who is afraid of a little extra exertion to get to school need not hope to accomplish much as a scholar. A man or woman who fears any extra exertion in the work of life must be content to remain at the foot of the hill while his or her more energetic fellow-travelers reach the top. You remember how a few months ago, when the autumn leaves—beautiful, even though that beauty meant decay—dropped from the parent-tree, carpeting the earth below, Uncle Tom found "tongues in trees." Since then other wonderful little voices have whispered to him and bidden him tell their message to the nephews and nieces he loves so well. I think we shall have to name our little messengers, "Whispers from Whirls," for it was when passing a huge drift of snow, *whirled* there by the east wind, that I heard the wee wintry voices. I am sure you must have observed the chaste sculpture in the curved and fretted banks, spotless in their purity and defying imitation of design. As I looked upon this workmanship of the Divine artist upon marble created by the northern frosts with chisel of eastern blasts, the setting sun gilded the fretted work with a golden roseate hue which a Raphael might strive in vain to paint, so delicate were the tints. Although the frost-elfin pinched my cheeks and ears, I lingered to gaze upon the picture, giving audible expression to my thoughts in the following words:

"How the winters are drifting like flakes of snow,
And the summers like birds between,
And the years in the sheaf how they come and they go
On the river's brink with its ebb and flow,
As it glides in the shadow and sheen."

And then, more softly, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." I turned to go, but a strange impulse made me stand and gaze again, and then it was that the voices in tones as soft as the falling of a snow-flake, spoke to me: "We have heard thy words, O mortal! we have seen how thou hast admired our marvellous purity, and we would tell to thee the story of our wonderful birth and mission here. We are pure because we come from God—hast thou not read 'He giveth snow like wool, and scattereth hoar-frost as ashes?' We know not of sorrow or sin. The Almighty breathed and behold we were. He wanted a mantle to wrap the earth He loves so well. We flew to do His bidding—thus it is we have come to thee. Learn for thyself and tell to others—to those whom thou lovest. If thou wouldst be pure, live near to God; if thou wouldst be useful, do his bidding." A merry peal of silvery bells, a fleet horse, a kindly hand, and I am soon borne away. As I got the message, earnestly do I give it: "If thou wouldst be pure, live near to God; if thou wouldst be useful, do His bidding."

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: Another month has rolled away, and again Uncle Tom greets his boys and girls. I hope you who have the privilege of attending school, have put in a month of solid work, improving and developing those faculties given to you by a generous Hand. As I look upon boys and girls now, I think what a pity it is we who are older did not realize in earlier years of life how much we lost by idle habits. One of the painful remembrances of the past is the thought of many misspent hours, and thus it is that I would speak to you in all earnestness on this subject. As most of you are in all probability school-boys and school-girls—in your "teens," at least—let me give you what authors call "a leaf from my journal."

'Tis many years now since I, a freckle-faced farmer-boy with wilful hair which never allowed people to know that I had a forehead, went to the dear old country school. Though I liked books well enough and cannot remember of going a day unwillingly to school, I liked mischief a great deal better, and "Thomas!" in tones of reproof was a well-known sound. "Thomas, stand here in the corner," was not unfamiliar, while "Thomas, hold out your hand, sir," was by no means a dream of the imagination in which silvery cadences chorded with the music of lute or harp. One day I had been unusually perverse—I had stood in the corner and held out my hand, too—I know now that I was just the most provoking of "towzie"-haired boys, but at that time I thought I was shamefully used, and unjustly concluded, as all pupils of that stamp will do, that the teacher had a "spite" at me. I harbored this thought all afternoon, at least all the time I was not busied in devising how I could in some way torment and annoy him. When school was dismissed the teacher said he wished me to remain for a few minutes as he would like to speak to me. With a very ill grace I obeyed—I didn't want him to speak to me alone. I well remember, however, how kindly, yet firmly, he spoke to me—showing me that I was not only wasting my own time, but influencing others in the same direction. Here was a new phase of the question to me—I had never thought that I was the means of leading others to waste their time. I had not then learned the great truth that no one can live unto himself—that a most potent influence is unconscious influence. I had not then read "Tom Brown's School-days" to learn that "in no place in the world has individual character more weight that at a public school." Perhaps some of my nieces and nephews have not thought of this before either. May I ask has it ever occurred to you that your influence may be made to tell in a public school, and that most forcibly? Diligence on your part may be an incentive to diligence on the part of another. Prompt obedience on your part may, more than you ever dream of, tend to the maintenance of good order in the school. If I could only speak to you as earnestly and kindly as did my teacher on that evening—if I could only convince you, as he convinced me, that idleness injures not only yourselves, but others, I should rest satisfied that one grand lesson had been learned in the month of March. I have spoken of "Tom Brown's School-

days." I wish you could all read it. You can get it, in paper binding, at any bookstore for the price you would pay for a few candies or nuts, and how infinitely more satisfactory would be the return for your money! I shall just close my letter with the full quotation, as I remember it, and next month we may perhaps see what opportunities there are at home and school to apply the words, "In no place in the world has individual character more weight than at a public school; then quit yourselves like men; speak up and strike out for whatever is manly and true and honest, and lovely and of good report."

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: The softening air, the waters a-glitter in the sunshine, the chirp of the robin and the caw of the crow, remind me that April has come, and that I promised last month to speak to you of the weight of individual character. *The weight of individual character*—what does that mean? It just means this, my dear nephews and nieces, that none of you can or do live without exercising a greater or lesser influence upon those with whom you come in contact. In my last letter I referred to your influence in school especially, because I presumed that most of you were going to school during the winter months. Now, although considerable depends upon the teacher of the school, much is in your power to make your school marked for the courtesy and good behavior of its pupils. A word for the maintenance of good order from an older pupil may nip in the bud a petty insurrection; kindly advice from one's superior in *height* and knowledge is not often taken amiss by the average twelve-year-old, although he may give no apparent heed at the time. I don't know whether schools now-a-days have scenes like the following, but in those days when "Thomas, hold out your hand, sir," was as familiar as "Thomas, please rock the cradle, if it won't disturb you in your writing," is now, they were of frequent occurrence; seven-year-old and eight-year-old have been playing, and have fallen out. Seven-year-old shows his spurs and boldly announces the fact that he can "lick" eight-year-old; eight-year-old, of course, would like to see him try it, and the fun commences. A blow or two, and the combatants have an admiring crowd of spectators. "Pitch into him, youngster; that's it." Oh, you're no good." "I'll bet on the small boy." "I'll bet on you, spider." "Go for him now." "Good boy." "Don't give up." "You're the stuff." "Lots of sand there," is the orchestra accompaniment to the performance. (For the credit of my nieces, I must say that in the olden days, if the girls interfered at all, it was to attempt to make peace; not unfrequently Johnnie's sister was crying in one corner, and Tommy's three sisters in another. The fight over, the pugilists, neck by neck, run to the pump before the teacher comes.

Now, if such scenes occur, I think older ones can do much to inaugurate a better state of things. A word to each, and, in many instances the threaten-

ing parties will run off good-naturedly to play, and if you want to be useful in a quiet way, show the wee would-be Sullivans that it often requires more courage *not* to fight than to fight. He is not the coward who dares to do right. Do not think, however, that I am taking the position that a boy should never use the weapon nature gave him. I think there are times when a man or boy is justified in using his fists, and that right manfully. Suppose a great bully of a boy takes delight in teasing and abusing one who is not able to resist him. A good sound threshing is what he wants, and honor to the one that gives it to him. Some mean specimen of human nature, which for convenience sake is called a man, speaks rudely to a lady on the street, or annoys her with impertinence; where is the brother or friend who would calmly permit such to be continued? In ordinary circumstances, however, I think, in nine cases out of ten, it is more manly to leave fighting to those animals for whom it is intended. The following I consider good advice on the question of fighting: "As to fighting, keep out of it if you can, by all means. When the time comes, if it ever should, that you have to refuse or accept a challenge to fight, say "No." It's a proof of the highest courage, if done from true Christian motives. It's quite right and justifiable, if done from a simple aversion to physical pain or danger. But don't say "No" because you fear a *licking*, and then say it is because you fear God, for that's neither Christian nor honest."

Well, well, I've filled my page and but little said, except about fighting. I would fain speak of *honor* and *honesty* and *truthfulness* and kindred qualities in your dealings with your teacher and with one another, for these, my dear boys and girls, are the only things that will last. You will forget when the school door closes upon you, the tributaries of the Amazon, and the height of the Himalayas, but the *principles* fixed at school will abide a life time. Ever stand, then, upon the platform of Right, contend manfully for the truth, and make your school and your country better because of your presence in them.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES:

"March winds and April showers
Bring May flowers."

So May, with its beauty and its blossoms, has come to us again. You barefooted youngsters, rambling in the woods, gathering bouquets of wild flowers, how I envy you at times. There is no enjoyment of childhood which I remember with more pleasure than the gathering of "sweet violets," and sometimes when I read any sentiment delicately expressed and beautiful in conception, in imagination I find stealing over me the sweet, faint fragrance of the flowers we used to gather when children. Some one has called them "thoughts of God," while Longfellow calls them "stars of earth." I was just thinking how much some flowers are like some of the nieces and nephews with whom I am personally acquainted. I know a maiden who is always smiling and ready

to do a good turn for everybody. She rocks the cradle to keep baby sleeping; she is very kind to her other brothers and sisters, and when asked to run on a message neither frowns nor pouts, but cheerfully and willingly gets ready. You have seen those pretty blue violets, so innocent and so bright looking—I used to find them in some sheltered nook under the pines—well, she just reminds me of one of them, and if her name wasn't Aggie, I think her friends might call her Violet. She does not know Uncle Tom has been watching her so closely, and, if she reads this, it would not occur to her that she was the niece I meant, for, like a violet, she is very modest. Then I know some girls who are lilies—lilies in the beautiful sense of the word; girls whose lips are never soiled by an impure word, and whose influence makes life purer and better; girls who teach boys respect for their sex, and who give abundant promise of developing into chaste and holy womanhood. There are pansies, too. Girls who are always merry, and bright and blooming, and who, gayer than the lily, are needed to relieve the fascinating bouquets of girlhood. And roses; who does not know one or two, whose faces are lovely to look at, and whose lives emanate the fragrant perfume of genuine worth? In some quiet nook almost unseen, and very retiring, I know some blossoms of sweet alyssum; one is apt to pass over this unassuming flower, but once known we would miss its presence.

It is an old saying that every rose has its thorn, and so even in flower-gathering there are unpleasant experiences. I know a girl who reminds me of the flower-gathering of my barefooted days in the following respect: You know spring flowers are generally found with a broad, spotted, green leaf—I don't know the proper name of the leaf, but we used to call the leaves I mean "adder-tongues." Well, when we saw these "adder-tongues" we were pretty sure of finding flowers, but it sometimes happened that what we thought were flower-leaflets turned out to be *leeks*, and you know how disagreeable they are. Well, this girl I know reminds me of a *leek*. Poor girl! I feel sorry for her, and I wouldn't tell you her name lest she should read those columns and get in a rage, for she would be sure to say that Uncle Tom had a "spite" at her. She is as good-looking as other girls; at first glance you cannot tell the "adder-tongue" from the leek, and you think you are going to get a flower, but no flower is there, unless we say, significantly, "She's a daisy," and I would not like to do that, because slang is one of the modern accomplishments in which Uncle Tom hopes his nieces and nephews are not educated. This poor girl is always being insulted, others are always treating her "real mean;" her friends prove faithless, and her enemies are always telling things about her. If you know of any such girl, whisper in her ear for me, "I always find others just the same to me as I am to them."

I think I hear some of my boys say in disgust, "Ugh! Uncle Tom is writing all about girls; that has nothing to do with us." Hasn't it, you young rogues? When you come to be four or five and twenty, you just take care you don't get a *leek*. Let me tell you, if there's one thing more than another of human agency that "shapes the destiny" of the average man, it's the wife he

gets. So, my boy, it's pretty serious business. Perhaps, sometime, you may hear more of this matter.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: If my letter to you in the month of roses savors more of dreamy sentiment than of earnest action, you must pardon one whose thoughts turn tenderly to the olden days, when, a barefooted boy, he rambled through the green fields of the old farm at home. Which of you has not yielded to the subtle influences of gentle May winds, and have rolled on the green grass with the blossom leaves gently fluttering down upon you—snowflakes of a cloudless sky? Have you not heard mysterious voices in your soul speaking to you of a life nobler, purer and infinitely higher than this one? Have not unsatisfied longings, ungratified aspirations filled your mind as you looked upward to the blue arch above you, and in this delicious state of "dreamful ease" have forgotten for the time the many and irksome duties which render spring-time anything but a delight? In the great temple of nature have not your hearts worshipped, and through nature you have been led to think of nature's God, who "hath made everything beautiful in its season"? Has not the foliage day by day, clothing the forest in deeper tints of green, seemed more beautiful than ever before; the waves on the little brook which you know so well, do they not sparkle in the sunshine with unwonted sheen and ripple? Do the evenings seem more tempting than any spring before, and do you long for some congenial spirit, whose whole nature will chord in sympathy with yours, to go with you to partake of this feast of the gods? The sunsets are so gorgeous—surely a hand divine upon canvas of vapor would teach us by that exquisite coloring and shading that it is the touch of One who is the perfection of beauty as well as the infinitude of love!

If such thoughts have come to you, rejoice that it is so—cherish and strengthen them, though much of your duty lies where such thoughts seem not to harmonize. He who gives you them will in his own good time give you opportunity to bring them to glad fruition. Oh, you boys and girls of the farm, how little you appreciate your privileges! You youths and maidens, how near you are to God, and yet you know it not! In every city there are thousands who in over-crowded rooms know little of the enjoyment of your free life in the country. It is true indeed, many of them would not trade places with you; they think life in the country is a sort of living deadness, but they know not of its purer pleasures, its trees and blossoms, its quiet nooks and lovely walks. They know not that,

> "Earth's crammed with heaven
> And every common bush afire with God."

And do *you*, my dear boys and girls, learn that

> "Only he who *sees* takes off his shoes;
> The others sit round it, and pluck blackberries."

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: The lovely month of roses is in the "perfection of its beauty," as I pen these words to you, and my thoughts again involuntarily turn to an old farm house. I can see it yet as I could in the long ago, when a soft west wind was blowing, showing the silvery side of the leaves, and making the forest musical with the "murmuring of pines, and old oaks and hemlocks." I used to lie in the dell, a happy careless urchin, and watch the fields of headed grain bending in the summer wind. "Billowy bays of grass, ever rolling in shadow and sunshine;" while the clover fields were one expanse of bloom and fragrance. The thoughts of these early days are so pleasant to me now that I would devote the following suggestion to you, dear boys and girls of the farm: Endeavor to associate with the home of your childhood beautiful ideas and lofty aspirations. If you have the *will* to do this, it is wonderful how you may find the way. I know many of you are busy, but there is time at your own disposal; I know it, and why not use that in reading? When I was about ten or twelve years old it fell to my lot to be the "herd-laddie." We had a field in which there was grain and grass, and my duty was to keep the cattle where they ought to be—in the pasture. While doing so I read for the first time a whole book of poetry, and memorized some of the most beautiful lines. Would you like to know the name of the author? I shall let you have the pleasure of finding that out for yourselves, after I tell you some of his words. It was he who said:

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man 's the gowd for a' that."

And in his tenderer moments wrote:

"Ayr, gurgling, kissed the pebbled shore,
Or hung with wild woods thickening green
The fragrant buds, and hawthorn hoar
Twined anxious round the raptured scene.
The flowers sprang wanton to be pressed,
The birds sang love on every spray,
Till soon, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of winged day.
Still, o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care.
Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear."

I was a harum-scarum laddie, too, at the time of which I speak, generally in disgrace at school, so I know if you were once interested you would learn to love what is beautiful in literature, as well as what is beautiful in nature. In meeting with country girls and boys, and I know many of them, it is very unusual to find those who have read the most beautiful selections of our standard writers. I believe it is not because you lack appreciation of these things, but because you have never read anything of the kind I have referred to. There may be many reasons why you have not read them—you may not have them to read, or, having them, you may think you have not time. You may assign

a third and fourth reason—you may say you have no taste for such reading, and you may ask what good will the reading of them do you?

I will take these objections, one by one, commencing with the last, and let us see if we cannot find some way of satisfactorily removing all of them. First, then, the good the reading of the thoughts of great men will do you. You have seen a fine piece of ground unsown and neglected, and what is the result? A crop of weeds. What is true in the natural world is true in the moral and spiritual. The rich soil of your young minds is lying fallow—you keep the weeds down because you have been taught right from wrong; but what are you doing that it may bring forth abundantly? Germs of thought from the weekly newspaper, or the ordinary story book, do not give promise of a bountiful harvest. Thoughts of great men, uttered in simple or sublime language, will not unfit you for present duty, but in the doing of it will lift you above those of your fellows who have not learned the secret. Tell me a better sentiment for the boys and girls of the homestead than that contained in the couplet:

"Honor and fame from no condition rise,
Act well your part—there all true honor lies"?

Or a more practical one than that contained in the following advice:

"Gather gear by every wile
That's justified by honor;
Not for to hide it in a hedge,
Nor for a train attendant;
But for the glorious privilege
Of being independent."

What good will such reading do you? Let me answer further. If read with the right motive, you will see a grandeur in nature you never saw before, and you will wonder why it was the world seemed so commonplace—the fields and the forest, the birds and the brooks, will speak to your hearts of God, the Creator of all.

In regard to the third objection, let me assure you a taste for this kind of reading can be cultivated. At first it may seem dry and uninteresting, but I speak from experience and observation when I tell you that if you have a taste for sensible reading of any kind, the love for higher literature can be greatly developed. If any of my nephews and nieces find themselves in a state of unrest and impatience until the next chapter of some "love and wonder" story arrives, I cannot give you much encouragement in this matter. I can tell you, however, that when the cares of manhood and womanhood come upon you, and you find how unreal are the pictures of life such stories give, and how low the ideal of true living, you will as many others before you have done, repent that you did not better redeem the time in the halcyon days of buoyant youth. I write earnestly to you on this matter—do not waste your young lives n that which is worse than idleness.

Two objections still remain, and as my letter is already long, I will leave them until the next, hoping that with your picnics and excursions, and general merry-making, you may find golden store to the treasure of your minds.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: Since I last wrote to you, you have, no doubt, had a very busy time. The "billowy bays of grass" and "seas of golden waves" have disappeared, and already the landscape whispers of autumn. As you have gathered the sheaves, have thoughts of another great and glorious harvest come to you—a harvest of which earth is the sowing-time and eternity the reaping-time—a harvest when the wheat shall be separated from the tares by the great Husbandman?

In my last letter to you I promised to speak of the objections that are raised —or rather the reasons that are given by boys and girls of the farm for not reading more. The second reason we often hear is that boys and girls are so busy that they have no time. My nieces and nephews, really have you not time? Be honest with yourselves in answering my question. Does not the time that you fritter away in a week in idle conversation or careless lounging amount to *hours*? I would not deny you healthful exercise. I am speaking now of hours spent carelessly and aimlessly by boys and girls who are endowed with soul-faculties which should lead them to higher things. Some of my boys spend their leisure hours at the "corner"—some of my girls in idle gossip. There is, indeed, a class of people who never rise above the dead level of living to "eat, drink and be merry;" honest enough in their way, and good enough neighbors, whose intellectual palates feast sumptuously on the "commonplace of common things," and who never have a longing—never an aspiration for higher pleasures; but to those of you who are interested in these pages, such a life leaves an unrest, a disquietude, an unsatisfied feeling in regard to the way in which you spend your time. You know you could build better if you only would. My dear boys and girls, will you not "act in the living present"?

The first objection, I think, could be easily overcome. I know in comparatively few farmers' homes is there a good supply of reading matter, and more particularly is the lack noticeable in just such works as I spoke of before—the best works of standard authors. There are but few boys and girls who by self-denial of some pleasure, or some article of dress, may not secure enough money to buy, from time to time, a paper edition of some good work. I know a well bound book is more desirable, still the paper edition answers the purpose well enough. If, however, your parents are neither able nor willing to help you in this matter, ask the teacher in your section or the minister in your neighborhood for the loan of books. If you are in earnest, either of these worthy the name of *teacher* or *minister* will be glad to assist you. If you are willing to improve, you will be surprised to find how many hands will be stretched out to help you. There can be no sweeter consciousness than to know that one has

been helpful to another in the onward, upward struggle; the knowledge is, indeed, in itself an exceeding great reward. I wonder sometimes that some of those who have the spiritual or intellectual oversight of young lives can be so careless of, and unsympathetic with, the aspirations of unfolding minds.

In order that the sentiment I have written may bear practical fruit, will my nieces and nephews act on the following suggestion: I would ask you during the month of August to read Longfellow's "Evangeline," and as you read it make quotations. I shall read it, too, and in September we shall compare quotations. Who will join our reading circle and study the masterpiece of America's greatest poet?

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: August has come and gone, and again the moon of changing leaves throws her soft light over the autumnal landscape. The harvest is securely garnered, and, as the evenings have lengthened, you have I trust, found time to read the sweet, sad story of "Evangeline,"—taking from the jewel its brightest flashes, plucking from the parent stem its fairest blossoms. I am sorry there is no convenient arrangement at present whereby I might have the pleasure of reading the quotations of each of my nephews and nieces, but I shall tell you mine, and you can each compare your own with those I have made. I shall take them mainly in the order as I have taken them in the course of reading the "Tale of Acadie," and if there seems to be a want of proper connection in the thoughts it is easily accounted for. As I was reading I could not but hope there were many of my nephews of whom it may be said, when they pass into the beyond, that they were

> "Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,
> Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of heaven."

And that some, nay, many of my nieces may so live that they may teach others,

> "To believe in affection that hopes and endures and is patient,
> To believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion."

In the old farm house, amid the many country homes, surely there are some of whom it may be said,

> "He was a valiant youth, and his face like the face of morning,
> Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into action."

Who does not remember days of the long ago, when

> "Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light, and the landscape
> Lay as if new created in all the freshness of childhood."

To remember that

> "Man is unjust, but God is just; and finally justice triumphs,"

will nerve our weakening faith, and cheer in the hour of weakness. I have read many beautiful allusions to the stars, but none surpasses the two following;

"Silently, one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels."

"Over the head the stars, the thoughts of God in the heavens."

The storm in its fury need cause no dread when viewed in the spirit of the poet,

"Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven and governed the world He created."

Where is the thoughtful maiden whose heart does not understand these words?

"Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, unfinished."

"Feeling is deep and still; and the word that floats on the surface
Is as the tossing buoy that betrays where the anchor is hidden."

My nieces and nephews, would you gaze upon a picture of marvellous beauty? If so, come with me and we shall behold it:

"Sky and water and forest
Seemed all on fire, and melted and mingled together,
Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver,
Floated the boat with its dripping oars, on the motionless water."

A new thought comes to us as we view the blue arch above us, when we read:

"And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them."

Only those who have experienced, in some measure, the heart-sickness which hope deferred brings, can know the depth of meaning, the intensity of sadness, in the following lines:

"So came the autumn and passed, and the winter—yet Gabriel came not;
Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the robin and blue-bird
Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood—yet Gabriel came not."

One of the truest lessons of the whole poem is summed up in these words:

"Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her."

One more quotation and we shall close the book. How soon shall it be true of us—the now earnest, active, busied, worried ones, or the thoughtless, careless, aimless ones:

"Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest forever;
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy;
Thousand of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from their labors;
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed the journey"?

And now, fellow-members of our reading circle, for the present, adieu!

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: Though the present month, with its wealth of wondrously tinted landscape, is suggestive of sentimental thoughts, it is my intention to write to you concerning matters of a homely, practical nature. I have no doubt many of you visited one or more of our leading fairs, and may, therefore, be interested when I tell you some of the lessons I have learned at fairs. You probably did not think, among the thousands you were seeing, that Uncle Tom might be passing close beside you. His heart warms to country boys and girls wherever he sees them, because he fully believes that these brown-handed children of the field are the hope of Canada, and if he speaks plainly in this letter, do not think he is scolding—it is because he longs to see you following in the footsteps of Him of whom it is written: "He increased in wisdom and stature, and grew in favor with both God and man."

I learn that many of my nephews and some of my nieces are quite too negligent of their personal appearance and well-being. I do not mean when I say that, that I would like to see you dudishly inclined—there is a happy medium in all things. As groups of twos, threes, or fours, and more passed, and the frank faces saw something that amused them, the consequent smile or laugh showed teeth that had not made the acquaintance of a brush. Yellow and discolored; instead of being a pleasing feature, they were unsightly. I don't care how brown the hands may be—if browned in honest toil, or merry sport when work was done, 'tis something to be proud of—but is there any good reason why a fair sample of the soil of the farm should remain under the nails when the youthful farmers are out for a day's pleasure? Now, boys and girls, I know all about this neglect—I've graduated, taking the full course—and I speak whereof I know. Some of you would like to keep your teeth clean, but there are several reasons why you do not. You may not have a brush, and it may be you are afraid that some—who ought to have better sense—will laugh at you, and say you are getting "toney." Let them laugh—"he laughs best who laughs last," the old proverb says, and some day you may have a quiet chuckle to yourself, to see them getting "toney" too. If you have not a brush, use a soft cloth until you get one, and keep your teeth white and clean. Don't forget your finger-nails, either; and it is just wonderful how much carefully combed and brushed hair will improve one's appearance. Attention to these little matters adds to one's self-respect, and anything that does that is worth cultivating.

I learned also, that some of my nephews show a tendency to talk "horse" too much of the time, while some of my older nieces allow a dashing horse and shining top-buggy to carry more weight with them than a good, staunch character and fixed principles. Remember, I'm not speaking disparagingly of a good horse and shining buggy, nor of the skill of managing a horse well. I know young men who, in conquering an impatient animal show so much knowledge that I marvel they have never learned to master themselves. But these matters are of *secondary* consideration.

The third lesson I learned bears more strongly on the fathers than on the sons, but in an incredibly short space of time it will be in the sons' hands. It

is this—allow me to emphasize it. *If farmers would but lay aside party prejudice and political bias, no class in the country could be so influential—the power is in their own hands, if they would but use it.* Now, is not that a glorious privilege, and why not use it? Just think, ours is the power to make laws that will relieve the oppressed instead of crushing the burdened. Did but our hearts and hands unite—the foul fiend—the destroyer of the happiness of many a home—ALCOHOL—could be banished from our land, while another evil—the name of which shall not pollute our pages—should be so legislated for that the villain who would ruthlessly spoil the fair name and wreck the happiness of another, should suffer as he would deserve to—even as a *criminal.* You may think my statements ungrounded. Facts bear me out—the greater number of the electors in Canada are farmers—rural constituencies could "carry the House" if the farmers said it should be so.

Such are a few of the lessons that were learned by Uncle Tom.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: This month—the dreary harbinger of winter—has its pleasures as well as all the others if we will but seek aright. What though "chill November's surly blast" moans and sighs without, and the leaden sky is a fitting canopy for nature's doleful mood, let us draw the curtains closer, add more fuel to the fire to make better cheer, and in our cosy sitting-room sit down to enjoy a chat together. Let us sit for a while in the weird play of the firelight shadows. I never see them but a softened feeling steals over me, and I want to muse a while on the olden days—the days of the long ago—while the quaint refrain of an old song comes to me:

"When I was playing wid my brudder,
Happy was I;
Oh take me to my kind old mudder,
Dere let me lib and die."

I love to watch the lights and shadows playing on your faces, and I wonder what tale the years will tell. Thoughtful eldest sister, why do those kind eyes shine so tenderly at times, while you seem unconscious of our presence? Sturdy son of the farm—your father's right hand—what lessons do you read in the flickering firelight? Growing maiden, with face and figure promising a radiant womanhood, are you too "dipping into the future, far as human eye can see"? But it is time to light the lamp; father is getting impatient for his evening paper; mother thinks it is a shame for so many to sit with idle hands, and that rosy-faced young rogue, with "school-boy" written in every movement, is getting into mischief—he needs to start his lessons. Why, how is this, Harry? Are you going to sit down beside us in this cosy room with your jacket indicating the color of the horses in your father's stable, and your boots too strongly suggestive of the barn yard? And those hands! an application of soap and water would be a decided improvement. I am glad to have an

opportunity to speak to you of these matters. I have long been wishing to do so, and the opportunity has now come. I have at times referred to the lack of intellectual culture amongst our sons and daughters of the farm, and let me assure you this lack of social culture is in some measure keeping our farmers from taking the place they might occupy, and deserve to have. Do you think, now, there really is any virtue in being boorish—pardon me, if I speak frankly? To people of refined tastes the things I have referred to are offensive, and there is no good reason why you should sit a whole evening in the clothing which is right and proper you should wear for work. It takes but a few minutes to wash your face, comb your hair, change your clothing, and put on your slippers, or a pair of half-worn shoes will answer the purpose equally well if you have not slippers. Now, Harry, boy, don't you think if you did this you would be a more fitting companion for those lady-like girls across the table, with their dainty white collars and cuffs? Remember, sir, there are some fellows who have not such sisters, and who, to use your own phraseology, would be "mighty" glad to steal yours from you, so appreciate them while you have them. And one thing more I would add. When you have occasion to take your sisters any place, do try so to look and act that they may be proud of you. I have known brothers, and good brothers they were too, who were so very careless of their personal appearance that a sister could hardly be blamed if she felt a secret longing to get away from the farm. Faces with the unshaven growth of several days, minus collar and tie, a coat which had long since seen its best days, with hat to match, and a certain amount of boots quite conspicuous, make a picture which I am sure you must recognize. I am not speaking slightingly or contemptuously when I talk like this; nor do I mean that all, or even the majority of our boys, are guilty in this respect; but I know there are young men with noble traits of character who act just in this way from lack of thought. There are times when work demands coarse clothing, but I have reference to those times when brothers might be as neatly and tastefully dressed as their sisters.

Well, as usual, I have talked a long time, longer than I intended, but ere we say good-night I have a favor to ask. For some days the gem of the "ploughman poet"—the immortal Burns—has been haunting me, and I can suggest no better way of finishing our evening than for that restless young rogue, who is tired of listening to me, and who wants to talk himself, to read aloud to us "The Cotter's Saturday Night." With such a programme, who shall say November evenings are dreary?

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: Yet once again we are spared to see the last month of another year—1887, with its record, will soon be laid away with the past. Christmas cheer is already in the air. The coming of the absent ones is fondly looked forward to. Not a few grey-haired "boys and girls" are anticipating a happy, yet sad, review in the old homestead—happy because

of the joyful occasion, sad because of the vacant chairs; while our native evergreens wait to grace the Canadian yule-tide, even as the holly and mistletoe proffer their garniture to the homes of "Merrie England." Each day will seem to pass with increasing swiftness; yet if we are so inclined, there is still left some time for improvement, as one-twelfth of the year still is ours. The present is peculiarly a month of privilege. It is a month when, according to tradition, the angels brought to earth a message of "peace and good-will to men." Would it not be profitable, then, to scan the work of the past eleven months, and, ere the year closes, do what we can to add to what has been good, and also endeavor to leave an unsullied page upon which to enter 1888? Much that is beautiful in sentiment and ideal in aspiration might be indulged in at this season, but I would seek to make the work which may yet be done of an intensely practical nature.

First, then, my nephews and nieces, are your names on some one's credit account for items of personal expenditure? I know, and am sorry to know it, that a bad habit of getting things on credit is obtaining largely—much more largely than it formerly did throughout the country. So far as my experience goes, I think my nephews are more guilty in this respect than my nieces, still I know even some of them cannot plead "not guilty." The sum may be trifling, or it may be considerable. I beg of you not to enter upon a new year with that blot to mar its pages. Make all possible effort to have it wiped out, and henceforth take for your motto in these matters, "Pay as you go." You will find it a good friend, blessing you with the virtue of self-control, and leaving, as tangible evidence of good fellowship, money in your pocket.

Then again, and I fancy my nieces are the more wayward ones here—are there those between yourself and whom has sprung up a decidedly frigid atmosphere, there being no good reason why such a state of things should exist? One misunderstanding may have led to another, a kindly word of explanation might have remedied the trouble, but wilful neglect or thoughtless words have only festered the sore, and with unkind feelings are you going to enter upon 1888? Rather, in this season of "peace and good-will," invite those whose feelings have been hurt, to your home, dispel the coldness by cordial hospitality, and rejoice that ere 1887 passed away you were enabled to add one more pleasant memory to its store, and leave no shadows to darken the hopeful New Year.

Again, during the last few months we have been reading some together, and this month, with all its preparation, gives grateful opportunity to enrich the mind and ennoble the thought by reading selections appropriate to the season. When gathered around the fireside in family reunion, is there anything more pleasant and profitable than the reading of such selections as tenderly touch the emotions, and make the heart's fire glow with a brighter flame? I know a home where for many years, on New Year's eve, Tennyson's "May Queen" has been read, and most appropriate it is; part of the same author's 'In Memoriam" is also very beautiful. Then there are always holiday num-

bers of periodicals, pure in thought and chaste in language, from which to select, and we would not forget, above all, the "old, old story," recorded so beautifully and simply in the second chapter of Luke's Gospel. I know my nephews and nieces will be more than satisfied if they try the experiment.

We have already planned much work for the last month, but would we not be selfish if we stopped there? It is said, and truly said, that the short cut to happiness lies in making others happy. So, in the midst of home comforts, we should not forget those who, though they see plenty on all sides, know what it is to want even the necessities of life. There are many around us, even in the country, to whose homes comes but little of the Christmas cheer. There are those who, with hearts longing for sympathy, in the dainty Christmas greetings, will be overlooked; to such as these will not my nephews and nieces be—even as the angels of the olden times—bearers of peace and goodwill? Then, indeed, will your Christmas be a happy one, even as I wish it to be, and in the New Year awaiting you I bid you, with all my heart, God speed!

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: It is just a year ago since I sat in my studio, with the twilight shadows gathering about me, as the last hours of 1886 ebbed solemnly into the "irrevocable past." A year, with its indelible and eternal record has been added to the beyond—its trials and its triumphs, its good and its ill, its hours of weakness and its moments of "overcoming," its days of gladness and sadness are forever gone—the last sunset has faded from our vision, and with subdued thought we come to welcome the roseate dawn of the Happy New Year. In the midnight hour, when men are sleeping and good angels hover near, we would again draw aside the curtain which a year ago dropped over our picture, "The Dawn of Thought." Behind it the work has been going silently on—an unseen hand has been deepening the tints—bringing some phases of the picture out in bold relief, softening others, and throwing over the whole the impress of a master brush. I gaze upon it, and again, face after face appears before me. I recognize many of them—the fine forehead, the bright eye, the curling hair are to me familiar, while here and there a new face appears. The longer I look the more plainly I can read the faces before me. Here is one, more thoughtful than in the last picture; there is less of the mischievous school-boy and more of the earnest student in that face poring over his books. The curly-headed young rogue there, who is not often head of his class, but who is the first to find anything that is lost on the farm, and who even now is capable of taking charge of some portion of the farm work, gives greater promise than ever of being one of the sturdiest, staunchest, tidiest yeomen of his community. The next one there, with frank face and honest eyes, with knife in hand, looking for "something to make something of," is the coming carpenter. And let me tell you, honest eyes, as I heartily wish you success in the calling you have chosen, that, looking at you, these words come to my mind, "Is not this the carpenter, the son

of Joseph?" As you work at the bench, with saw and plane, will you not in all your life-work, follow in the footsteps of Him who was in very deed a carpenter, and the Son of the lowly Joseph? Yes, my boy, it was *His* calling — then it is no mean one. I look again, and think that in that calm, resolute noble face before me, I can look into the future, and see a man standing, even though it be alone, yet standing bravely, independently, fighting the battle of progress, around him fields of golden grain, waving in the sunlight, and meadows rich with greenest verdure, his flocks and herds testifying to the almost unlimited possibilities of what one man's work may be. Beside the boyish yet manly form, is a sweet girlish face and figure. She, too, like her brother, aspires to noble things, and in her we can see the foreshadowing of a woman who would be fulfilling part of her mission in the world were she to find herself "absolute monarch" of a school of rollicking children. That maiden beside her will yet shine forth, the star of home, the attractive daughter, the kindest of elder sisters, while we can almost see a third, with thoughtful, serious face, carrying in her hand the missionary's Bible. Thus the faces throng about. Dimly I can see, as away through the years, one pleading at the bar, another relieving suffering humanity, another telling the "old, old story"—each and all earnest in the work he or she has chosen. The old clock above the mantel-piece is about to strike; with the stroke of the clock the curtain must fall, and it is with a feeling of sadness I gaze upon the picture again; for do I not see some faces which promised well last year, away in the background now, weak and indistinct?—the pure, sweet faces of some of my girls are scarcely recognizable in the pert face and curling lip which now meets my eyes. The honest faces of some of my boys have been supplanted by faces whose expression means, "I shall do as I please, and no one has any right to interfere with me." My boys and girls, before angel hands draw the curtain—the first chime of the midnight bell has rung, and soon you will pass from my vision—let me plead with you to come back to your ranks, and fighting bravely for the right, earn the highest reward that lips divine ever uttered, "She hath done what she could." I said the midnight bell rang one—it rings again—again—four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve. The curtain has been drawn, and we leave our picture, "The Progress of Thought," to the silent working of the unseen Hand for another year, while the bells merrily ring "A Happy New Year, a Happy New Year.—Farewell, 1887; welcome, 1888?"

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: In my last letter I drew aside the curtain of my studio and showed you a picture, which I trust you have looked upon with some degree of interest and pleasure, and hoping that you may again have leisure to bear me company, I would show you other pictures in this novel gallery of mine.

As I have often spoken to you of the wasting of the moments, and as I wish to deeply impress on your minds the loss any one sustains in so doing, we

will draw the curtain and look first at the picture here on the right. Like the other pictures we have looked upon, the more you study it, the more you can see in it. Your first impression is that the picture before you is simply a portrait, evidently some shrewd professional friend of mine, you say; you can read that in the whole bearing of the man. You are right, so far, my nieces and nephews, but you are only beginning to see the picture. Ah, your eyes brighten, my nieces. They are sharper than your brothers'; you see more now. Yes, that is my friend's home in the background—a home of luxury and culture and refinement, a home where the worrying cares of business being laid aside, he can enjoy real and true domestic happiness, a home from which he can go each morning fortified for his day's work, because he knows he has the most cordial sympathy of her who makes his home a relic of the Eden we have lost. His is the conscious and blessed knowledge that as he goes down to the battle she that tarries at home is praying for his success. My nieces, can you point the moral contained in my last sentence? It is neither the luxury nor the culture, neither is it the refinement that makes such a home, though all those add their quota. It is the loving, faithful discharge of duty by her who rules queen of the household that makes that home what it is. Remember, girls, it will soon be yours to fill such a place. If our picture will enable you in any way to realize the power that lies in your hands, we have not looked upon it in vain.

All the while I have been talking I have noticed my nephews have been drawing nearer. They, too, have discovered that the picture is more than a portrait. You want to know the interpretation of the next object in the background. That, my boys, is my friend at work; it is the interior of his office. It is somewhat indistinct at first, but if you study it carefully it will come out in bold relief. Do you notice the business-like manner, the concentration of attention upon the work in hand, the diligent use of every means within his reach to perfect himself in his profession? Every engagement is punctually kept, his work is planned and systematized. Work which can be done in half an hour takes just thirty minutes, and no longer. Not five minutes during his working hours but are made to count for something. He has learned what many of you, my boys and girls, have need to learn, that *time* is valuable, exceedingly precious, if we would but use it aright. It is not genius, not "good luck," that he is indebted to for his comfortable, even luxurious home, and influential position; it is the diligent use of his time and talents—nothing else—my boys and girls, that has brought to him these blessings. I am showing you no picture wrought of artistic conception. It is a picture drawn from life as I know it. The friend whose portrait you look upon started in life with nothing save an ordinarily vigorous intellect and good health. He used these diligently, and he is to-day a power for good in the community where he is known, because he has not forgotten that he is but a steward of the Lord of the vineyard, and that where much is given much is required. His success is not exceptional (although I must admit his faithfulness to the Giver of it is, for often as men grow in temporal prosperity they decline in that which is of infinitely greater value, their

welfare in those matters of eternal moment). He has done only what scores of others have done, and what hundreds may do if they will only apply the same principles of diligence, honesty, and clear-sightedness. Lest you should misinterpret my statements, let me tell you that I have not shown you this picture to allure you from the farm. No, no, my boys and girls, too much of the intellectual cream of our country homes is being sent into the city, and it is telling most unmistakably on the social and material welfare of our farmers. I firmly believe that on the farm homestead a man can live more independently, with more freedom and less worry, and withal nearer to God than in any other calling in life, provided he will apply himself during his working hours as diligently as does an ordinarily successful professional or business man, and use his head as well as his hands in his work. Unless you have been "behind the scenes" you have no idea of the intense application of men who succeed in the professional and mercantile world. See the luxurious homes, the rich dress, the costly equipage, and all the exterior glitter, that is, without a doubt, dazzling to the eye, and calculated to make wrong impressions, but let me tell you that evening after evening when others are enjoying the comforts of home, or seeking recreation in one of the many forms which life in a city offers, these men are poring over their books, or studying out the best way to make an investment pay a handsome per cent. My object in showing you the picture is to enable you to see more clearly the elements essential to success in any calling in life, and the results which naturally enough "do either accompany or flow from" (if I may be permitted to use the "form of sound words" in this connection) the diligent use of these elements. In contrast to keen business life, but with all kindness, I wish to call your attention to the way some of our farmers do business. I have heard the editor of an agricultural publication say that it took some farmers from one to two hours to subscribe for a paper, and from my own experience I can testify to the truth of his statement. A farmer comes into an office; he knows the editor, and on the strength of that acquaintance he has to relate his experience at the market that day, to dwell on the poor crops and general lowness of prices. Not unfrequently he has to bemoan the deplorable state of the politics of the country, which has brought such a state of affairs, and to denounce emphatically certain legislators upon whom, in his eyes, rests the blame of these poor returns to the farmer, quite overlooking the fact that were he and his brothers in his calling to unite, every legislator in the country could be made to bow the knee to them. Oh, farmers and farmers' sons! why will you keep your eyes closed to the fact that the land is yours, if ye will but go up and possess it? I wax warm as I think of your privilege yet unused. But I must come back to the farmer who has not yet subscribed for his paper. As he rises to go he remembers he came to pay his subscription, and with the remark that if times got any harder he must give up his paper, he pays the proverbial "dollar," shakes hands with the editor, and his business then being done, takes his departure. I write thus frankly because I want to see my nephews and nieces, when they become the

farmers and farmers' wives of our country, take their places socially and intellectually with their professional brothers and sisters, and this they will not do in the present state of things. I apply to you, my nephews and nieces, and ask you to take observations and say if I have not written facts as we generally find them. There are, indeed, some exceptions. If people engaged in professional or mercantile life did their work as many of our farmers do, they would literally starve. Mother Earth will yield enough to even the most indifferent of her workmen to provide food and clothing at least, a thing which can be said of no other calling. I have said that farmers in general waste time regardlessly, and in proof of my statement I refer you to every-day life around you. How is a rainy day generally spent on a farm? What is done during many of the short days and long evenings of winter? Let the "corner store" or the blacksmith shop answer; and let me tell you all these things count on the debit side of the farmer's cash account.

I would fain write more on this all-important subject, but the letter is already very long. If I find you are still interested in my gallery, we shall again gather in my studio to draw the curtain from another and have a friendly chat.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: As I have reason to think you were interested in your last visit to my studio, according to promise I again invite you to come with me and spend another evening in my picture gallery. Since last we met I trust you have enjoyed the pleasant evenings of this really beautiful winter (beautiful in Ontario, at least), and that much goodly knowledge and many pleasant memories have been laid in store during the month that has just passed away.

But you wish to turn to the pictures—the language of those eyes is, "Please draw the curtain aside." Gladly, my boys and girls, for your will is my pleasure, now that I am host. You recognize the centre picture—it was the first we studied this year; to the right is the next we examined, while to the left here is the one to which I would call your attention. You will notice it is much the same in style as the one to the right; the most prominent feature in the picture is a portrait of a gentleman. Scenes illustrative of his life form the background. It is worth your while to study that face—it is not a common one. Those drawn brows, that thoughtful, pre-occupied look bespeak an earnest, busy life—a life that is not being frittered away. Were I to tell you the name of the gentleman represented in the portrait, you would recognize it at once as one of the leading names in one of the strongest religious denominations in Canada, and pastor of a large and flourishing congregation in one of our cities. We shall return to the leading figure again, and now for the scenes in the background. It will take some study to read their interpretation.

You wonder what interpretation can possibly be read from a somewhat dilapidated building to the left of the background, and an apparently tasteful,

commodious structure to the right. That is all you see in the first glance—look again—if the picture be a true one it will bear study. Ah! you are beginning to "interpret." You see, there is a view of the inside as well as of the outside. In the building to the left a few faithful workers—the "remnant" which is found everywhere where once Gospel privileges have been enjoyed—are striving to keep the church afloat—nothing more. You can see the listless attitude of the sparse number of worshippers; you can almost hear the dragging, discordant notes of that part of worship which is called praise. It is no untrue representation the artist has depicted on canvas. All over this Christian land of ours are to be found just such places and phases of worship.

Now turn with me to the inside view of the structure on the right. Our eyes are gladdened to see the large number of earnest, young faces—just such faces as I imagine my nieces and nephews have. A band of busy workers they—ready and glad to second and assist any movement that will be to the edifying of either mind or heart. The surroundings suggest comfort and convenience without idle extravagance—just as our homes should be. Having thus studied the picture, do you ask for the interpretation? The first is a church whose pastor is indolent, careless, unfit indeed to be a "watchman"—the second shows the transformation which an earnest, faithful pastor may accomplish, and which time and again has been the result of the labors of him whose portrait you see. But I see you are wearying somewhat with my story, and you want to know what all this has to do with you, girls and boys of our country homes. Let the portrait speak thus to you:—"People often say to me: 'I don't see how you accomplish so much. Where do you get the time to do the work you do?' but I can only tell them that all I have ever accomplished has not been owing to favorable circumstances, 'good luck,' so called, but to hard work—*hard work*. I commenced life for myself when I was seventeen, since when I have not had a dollar from any one to help me. Perhaps my life has been, comparatively speaking, a busy one, for if I wish to accomplish anything I find I must be busy. I never read a novel in my life, simply because I never had time to do so." Add to this his wife's testimony, and then I leave you to apply the lesson I have sought to teach: "My husband is always working. If he undertakes anything and fails to accomplish it in one way, he works at it until he gains his end in some other way. He never gives up. He plans out all his work, systematizes it, and has particular hours for doing each part of it. When we commenced life together we were in debt. I remember, for a time we cooked our potatoes in a dipper. I can only testify, as he has done, that all he accomplishes is the result of *hard work*."

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: April has come again to find many of you leaving the schoolroom with books and slates, for spring is indeed here, and boys and girls are needed to help at home. Perhaps you have good intentions to keep up some favorite branch of study, but when the body is wearied with physical exertion the mind sympathizes with it, consequently books and slates are generally left on the shelf. Now I wish to suggest a plan whereby the mind may still be occupied without any undue strain, while the hands are busy at work. During the winter months, when my older nephews and nieces had leisure I took you into my picture gallery, but now we must draw the curtain for a time and close the door, and when we have leisure again, months after this, I may again invite you into my studio to see what silent influences have been at work in the interval. If, however, the artist did not diligently use easel and brush himself, it would be but little profit to him to study the work of others, so I want my amateur artists to set to work. And what work do you suppose that I want you to do? Why, I want you to show me the pictures in your studio. "Oh, Uncle Tom, we have no pictures to show you," I hear you say. Yes, you have, my boys and girls, magnificent pictures—grander than you yourselves realize—perfect in grouping, color and harmony. We here in Ontario live in one of the fairest provinces of God's creation. Did you know that the very name Ontario signifies "beautiful"? There is old Quebec to the east of us, so rich with historic association; and eastward still our three sisters by the sea. Westward we turn and kindly clasp hands with our little sister of Indian name. Then across the Rockies to hear the splash and roar of the majestic Pacific. In all this magnificent Dominion do you say there are no pictures? Across the ocean we have our nephews and nieces, and who does not gladly welcome pictures from over the sea? Under the Stars and Stripes, too, are your cousins; from the New England States, from the Gulf States, from the prairies of the West we would gladly see pictures. Few, if any, of us have the leisure or the means to go and see these pictures I speak of, so we must arrange an "art exhibition," to which all are invited to contribute. And where shall that art exhibition be? Why, right here in these pages. Have you caught the idea? I want pen pictures of your own homes and neighborhoods. Now, as you are busy in field and garden, will you not look around you, and at your leisure write an accurate description of your surroundings? By so doing you will not only benefit yourselves, but give pleasure to others—two very important factors in life. As April is generally a very busy month—"house-cleaning" for my nieces and "seeding" for my nephews, do not bespeak much leisure—and as May is the month of beauty, when inspirations seem to re-create the whole being, we shall not hold our exhibition until June. That is, in plain English, I would like to have letters from my nieces and nephews containing the pen pictures I so eagerly wait to see.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: As I have asked you to give me a description of your homes and surroundings, that you may understand more fully what I want, I will give you a pen-etching of an old farm homestead I once knew—one with which is linked many sacred and happy memories of the early days when, as yet, none of the fledglings had left the nest. A quiet, peaceful place was that old farm home—at least so it seems now as I look back upon it through the vista of memory—nestling in the shelter of the hills, which completely shut it out from the highway. Those hills! Who that knew and loved them could ever forget them, when the standing grain bended to and fro upon them in great waves of gold before the summer wind, while the sunshine and shadow quickly chased each other over them. Behind the house and but a few minutes' run for the brown, tan feet of blithe, happy youngsters were the woods, beautiful as nature left them. "The bush" was ever a favorite resort, and amid the whirl of social demands and business pressure one can scarcely repress a sigh for the days that are gone; when freedom from work being granted, to chase chipmunks and gather the first wild flowers gave true unmingled pleasure, and was all the recreation that was sought, when, even to childish ears the sough of the pines had a strange, sad music. Not often now do I visit the old haunts; yet, when the pleasure is mine, many a tree and stump and stone recalls a tale of "ye olden tyme." The unpretentious house was situated on a gentle rising; two poplars, planted by a mother's hands years before, stood as sentinels in front, while in the old-fashioned garden bloomed roses, whose parent-stems had been taken across the Atlantic, transplanted from the heather-knolls of old Scotland to flourish in the virgin-soil of Canada. Right in front of the kitchen door, and but a short distance from it, babbled one of the brightest, clearest, most musical "burnies" that ever bare-headed, bare-footed, brown-handed girls and boys paddled in. I can see it yet with the water dammed up at a place just where it ought not to be, with a very ingenious, if a very crude, attempt at a water-wheel, placed there by the mechanic of the family. Away down through the meadow it wended its way, with many a graceful curve and turn, and then its waters mingled with those of a larger stream, in boyish vernacular, the "big creek," which ran at the base of the hills before mentioned. As the waters danced and flashed in the April sunlight, each sun-crested wave seemed radiant with burnished silver. Strange fates could the burnie tell if mortals could but read "the books in the running brooks." Beyond the stream were the pioneer buildings—relics of the days of hardship and privations—and the old orchard grown from seeds planted over thirty years before. Before we leave the old homestead we must go "up the lane," a part of the farm associated with loggings, fires, fallows and sore backs, for the wild-flower days did not last long and roots had to be picked. To this day the smell of field-fires and burning stumps brings back those days on the farm, and I would fain throw myself on the green grass and look up to the soft clouds and blue sky with the trust and faith of the early days. The hills, the woods, and the horizon seemed

to shut us in, for there was not a neighbor's house in sight, yet, happy indeed was the childhood of our little world. But with all else of the things of time, changes must needs come to the old farm. As we knew it, we know it no more—my picture of it is one which hangs on memory's wall; then farewell to its quiet nooks, and pleasant walks, farewell to its fields and flowers, farewell to the burnie and the birds, a tender farewell to one spot, sacred as the last earthly resting-place of little feet that never grew tired in treading the weary pathway of life—farewell, old farm home!

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: I think when you glance at the signature appended you will grant me the privilege of thus addressing you, for isn't your uncle's wife your respected "auntie?"—and you certainly are your "auntie's" nephews and nieces. Now, we often hear those superior (?) beings called men talk a great deal about "logical arguments and deductions therefrom," and we challenge them to find one flaw in the above reasoning, and therefore you just are my dear nephews and nieces. I must start my letter proper, however, and first I will tell you why it is Uncle Tom has employed his private secretary to write to you this month. Well, the fact of the matter is he is off a-merry-making. Where he was and how he employed himself he probably will tell you himself sometime. I can assure you of one thing, I know wherever he was he did not forget his nephews and nieces. As was the case with "Josiah Allen's wife," it will not do for Uncle Tom's wife to say too much regarding her "Josiah," but this she can say, that she knows full well his nephews and nieces always have a claim on his interest and attention. If some of you only knew how deeply he is interested in the welfare of these boys and girls of his, you would be surprised. His are not idle words when he tells you that his earnest wish is to see you developing into intelligent, manly, virtuous, honorable young men and pure womanly maidens. I read with surprising interest your letters describing your homes and their surroundings. Some of you certainly have beautiful and happy homes. I can only say to you to tenderly cherish your love for them, and to do what each one can to add to their adornment, and should you leave the old home, as most of you probably will, do not forget those you leave in it. A periodical or magazine, an interesting book, and above all a letter more or less frequently, will do much to keep warm the memory of home ties. There are many of your homes I would like to visit, and none more than the home of the winsome lassie down by the sea, where are the roses whose ancestors came from bonnie Scotland. I should not be at all surprised that those same roses could claim kinship with those in the old farm-garden that Uncle Tom knew so well. Be that as it may, the thought is a very pretty one, and this conception of a girlish mind has woven a thread infinitely fine and silken in the magic web called *life*. In a certain mystical sense that thread—so fine the angels cannot see it—connects

two hearts hitherto unknown each to the other—one in Ontario the beautiful, the other in New Brunswick by the sea—because it bespeaks congeniality of thought.

All of your letters, or nearly all, breathed a love of the beautiful—a phrase I was much pleased to observe. Many of them described scenes familiar to the writer. I know the home near Niagara is situated in a lovely spot, and in a part of Ontario rich with historic association. I know of no pleasanter trip on a fair summer day than from old Fort Niagara to Queenston. I have often admired the view from the mountain above Dundas that my niece from Ancaster described, and just let me tell her that view is considered one of the finest in Ontario. I think that my niece, whose home is on the bank of the mighty St. Lawrence, has just cause to be proud of her surroundings. There are few more enjoyable trips than "shooting the rapids" of that river that drains half of this magnificent Dominion of ours. Very vividly, indeed, do I remember the old pilot, Jean Baptiste, as he shot out from Caughnawauga in his canoe, and boldly took the wheel to bring us safely through the roaring waters of Lachine. The river below Brockville seemed a perfect fairy land with its green islets studding the blue waters. I could tell some interesting personal stories of a district north of my little Muskoka niece's home, and in the years gone by, with a merry party, one of whose number has since passed "through the waters" into the beyond, I have gathered shells and paddled with my bare feet on "mighty Huron's sunlit breast."

The letter from Michigan described a part of America I know nothing about, but you see it is this interchange of thought that helps us—we all know something about it now—nor have I yet had the pleasure that nephews and nieces in the North-west have had of seeing the snow-capped Rockies—that may be a treat in store, who knows? I have seen other mountains though, which made me feel the majesty of the Creator, as I stood awed and silenced, the grandest conception of His sublimity and omnipotence we have in written language—even by the "rapt Isaiah"—came to mind: "Who hath comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance."

I fear by this time some of you will have concluded that Uncle Tom's wife has done but little else save to travel about; but will it change your opinion any if I tell you that the hand that holds the pen as I write is all discolored by squeezing a jelly-bag for nearly two hours this morning, and then I almost broiled myself over the stove lest that same jelly should burn, for if that calamity should occur I knew the sparkling ruby-light that makes red currant jelly just one of the daintiest dishes a housekeeper can set on her table would be a-wanting—the jelly would be "muddy" and would therefore be just a vexation of the flesh. Then, after the jelly was done, my hands got a deeper dye, for black raspberry jam was the next on hand.

Since writing the last few lines, I have had occasion to go to the pantry, so I took a look at my jelly and jam; when I held the jelly up in the sunlight

the portion of it which had cooled and thickened looked like rubies in solution—my jam like the little bear's soup in the story of "Silver Locks" is "just right," so a contented housekeeper am I, as I sit here all cool and nice in my white dress, quite enjoying my privilege of writing to you.

I had ever so much more to tell you, but my letter is already very long, so I must close, hoping you will accept this from Uncle Tom's wife.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: As you have already been informed that my reason for not writing to you last month was pressure of work resulting from some days' play, I shall, without any reference at present to my substitute for August, proceed at once to tell you of some things which interested me in my hours of recreation.

It is now some years since I met two young lads—brothers they were and country boys—the youngest of whom at an early age showed unmistakable evidence of the capacity of profound thought, the other was a rollicking, "jolly good fellow," neither duller nor cleverer than the ordinary genus schoolboy, with a heap of mischief hidden underneath his wilful black hair. They were boys who had the advantage of a very superior home-training, but further than that they had to a great extent to make their own way after arriving at the age of fifteen or sixteen. The years have passed; scarce without us knowing it the rounded cheeks of boyhood have become the rougher faces of manhood, and the seeing of these two nephews of mine (for Uncle Tom claims kinship to all boys and girls who are struggling to make the most of life) graduate with the degree of B. A., was one very interesting feature of my trip. Owing to circumstances their parents left Canada, though *Canadians* true and loyal they still are, so it was one of the colleges of the neighboring Republic that "mothered" (in a literary sense) my boys. A lady who was present among the throng of commencement visitors thus describes the scene:

"The commencement exercises of Westminster college were indeed most interesting. The weather being favorable, they were conducted in the open air. The college campus—with its old trees planted by the graduates of the years gone by, for each graduate honored his *alma mater* by planting a tree in her grounds, until the trees became so dense that it was necessary to desist—was a most fiting place for the class of '88 to read their last essays, to deliver their last orations and to sing their last songs as students. The rostrum, decorated with evergreens, was reserved for the professors and faculty of the college, and for the class of '88. As one by one the members of the graduating class appeared before the audience, the earnest, manly faces of the majority of the boys appearing in striking yet pleasing contrast to those of the blooming girl graduates in their simple, airy, white dresses—the blue sky their canopy, the soft white clouds their curtain, the rustling of the leaves in the dreamy June wind sweet accompaniment to their young voices—my eyes filled and my heart was lifted

in silent prayer that they might, indeed, go forth in the strength of their great Exemplar to honor their class motto, 'A clean record.'"

I could add much more to the lady's description but space will not permit, as it is my object in this letter to draw some practical lessons from the pleasing scene. I will say, however, that as I looked upon the class my thoughts went away back to the early days, before I left the old homestead, with its roses, when one great longing of my life was to be a college boy; then to later ones, when I was just entering upon manhood, when, life all before me, with the buoyancy of youth I cherished high hopes of what the future would unfold to me. The "graver noon of manhood" has come, however, and with it the realization that college life with all its pleasures is far from being the "one thing needful," that neither are the ideals of youth, even were they realized, the needful thing to make life "one grand sweet song."

And now for our lessons. The first I would suggest is the important one of having some definite aim in view. For four years that class of students had before them a special object, which had in its turn, I trust, a further object, viz., to use their privilege so that the world might be better by reason of their living in it. Four years' steady application to their studies, with a greater or less degree of earnestness, was the "purchase money" of the desired manuscript which would bear testimony to their faithfulness. My nephews and nieces, have *you* an object or are you aimlessly drifting? Farmers' boys are not limited in option, for though no department of the farm should be overlooked, I think it is well to specialize. It would intensify your interest in a marked degree to know that your Clydes or Clevelands, Percheron-Normans or Shires, your Ayrshires or Jerseys, Shorthorns or Herefords, Holstein-Friesians or Polled-Angus, your Leicesters or Southdowns, Shropshires or Cotswolds, Lincolns or Oxford-downs, your Suffolks or Berkshires, your Brahmas or Hamburghs, Wyandottes or Plymouth Rocks, Spanish or Polish, Houdans or Langshans, your Pekin ducks or bronze turkeys, were the best of their kind and most marketable article you would find many of them to be, more especially if the owner was well reputed as an honest and honorable dealer. To my nieces I would say that a most worthy aim, one which every girl should have, is to become perfect in the science of housekeeping and the art of homekeeping, to do which requires concentrated effort. If it is your privilege to receive some of the higher branches of education you will find in your aim ample scope for utilizing them.

Another lesson we might learn is the value of education to farmers' sons and daughters. How in the future are you going to cope successfully, intellectually, politically with young men and maidens who can creditably discuss such topics as "The Anglo-Saxon's Mission," "The Highway of Life," "The Tendency of Scientific Investigation," "Liberty Over-much," "The Philosophy of Politics," "The Ministry of Suffering," "Principle vs. Policy," etc., unless you appreciate your privileges? And now, while you have the opportunities peculiar to youth alone, take advantage of every way of improving

your mind. I know some of you are ready to say, "Oh, it is all very well to talk, but those college boys and girls have their way made for them." Will you allow me to tell you what I know to be *facts* concerning some of our best college graduates? One, now a Q. C., originally a country boy and a farmer's son, says, had it not been for his sister's good, stout, home-made socks, his bare toe would have been visible as he went to receive his degree. Another was a machinist by trade; when he reached manhood, he realized the lack of an education; so, working at his trade in vacations, and living a life of rigid economy, he educated himself—indebted to no one for material help. A brave girl I know wore a dress three successive summers, hat ditto, that she might attend school; and if Uncle Tom is any judge of feminine self-sacrifice, that is a striking instance.

I have missed my aim if the foregoing remarks lead you to think I would like you to leave the farm to engage in some other occupation. Not by any means; those of you who are going to remain on the farm are the very ones I want to talk to. When I insist on an education, it is not to leave the farm, but to stay on the homestead and use your education there. I am not sure that a full classical or scientific college course would be the best for a farmer, though it would certainly be no disadvantage to have it. I think a good agricultural and literary course would be more to the purpose, and that course has this great advantage, where boys could not be spared from home, they could take in a good measure by reading it up at home. Now to apply this, can you not, before this year closes, begin such a course—the study of one book or subject would be a good beginning? I would be the last to disparage the elevating influence of a good girl's company, far be it from me to draw rigid lines concerning a moderate degree of innocent and healthful recreation; but will you not for your own good—for the immortality within you—give up those frothy, if not sinful pleasures which pass away with the moment, and which not unfrequently sap the foundations of vigorous health? Not a few I have known whose moral welfare was seriously impaired by partaking of these so-called pleasures; and now, while youth is yours, lay a solid foundation on which to build all your after life.

I would conclude my letter to you by giving from memory the closing words of the valedictorian of commencement day. The nephew, by the way, of whom I spoke in the beginning of my letter as early giving evidence of unusual intellectual capacity, has carried his reputation through college; he was the "first" of the '88 class, indeed of all the classes, for his record is unprecedented in the history of the college, his standing being an average of 98 per cent. for his four college years. As he stood before an audience composed of hundreds of people, from noisy school-girls to gray-headed grandsires, but little more than a school-boy himself, in the name of his class bidding farewell to the professors, the faculty, class-mates and friends, I thought of my other boys and girls, wishing they were around me, that together we might hear this earnest voice saying, "In bidding farewell to my classmates, I know of no better

human exemplar than the greatest of the apostles, to commend to you as well as myself. His earnestness of purpose, his lofty aims, his unswerving faithfulness in duty, his liberality of mind, and, above all, his loyalty to Him whom he professed to follow, make his a life thrice worthy of imitation."

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: October, strikingly suggestive of the possibility of growing old gracefully, in a moral sense, is here yet once again. The forest trees so beautiful in decay, always typify to me of what advancing life may be to those whose spring and summer have been lived under the refreshing and invigorating influences of Divine leading, and are nature's commentary on that scripture which says, "the hoary head is a crown of glory." Without indulging further, however, in prefatory remarks, I shall at once proceed to give my nephews and nieces some thoughts over which I have been ruminating for the last few days.

Fairs—International, Industrial, Provincial, Western and Central—have been thronged with visitors since I wrote to you, but I fancy by far the larger percentage of my nephews and nieces have not attended any of these—their day, that of the annual township show, being still in reserve. Now it is about this wonderful day that I want to talk. There is a saying that where bees find honey, spiders suck poison; and I think we can apply this to the township or any other show. You see Uncle Tom does not forget what a day that was in the history of his youth, and can speak from experience. The first great big penny he ever remembers spending, or in fact of owning (for in his young days the "weans" did not have money to spend uselessly, and a wise plan it was), was given him on a "show day," and it was exchanged for about a dozen hard looking specimens of "mixed candies." But let us see about this honey and poison. To begin then, one of the treats of the day is some pocket-money, "all for myself, just to do what I like with it." Now this doing as one likes with money, with those whose ages range from five to fifteen, is one of the most probable ways in which to find poison instead of honey, and let me just tell you that many older people who ought to know better, get the poison, too. There is a wheel-of-fortune vagrant—how he does pursue his trade! Just five, or ten, or twenty-five cents to try, and you have a chance of making ten times the amount spent. Now, my boys, there is the poison; supposing you did win, the money would be "ill-gotten gains," obtained by *gambling*—nothing more or less, call it by what name you may. Turn away from it then, not only for your own sake now, but with the resolve that when you are men and directors of such institutions, no such vagrants shall be allowed on or near the grounds to tempt those who are young and unsuspecting. Boys like to try "just for the fun of the thing," you know—but let my nephews be true to their colors and boldly stamp on all such dishonest ways and means.

No sooner is the wheel-of-fortune out of sight than the cheap counter of some publican, who wants to palm off his poisons—literal poison this time—as

respectable drinks, stands in the way. Now if there is a good refreshment stand provided by some reliable parties, I have not a word to say against you refreshing yourselves, but do not, for the sake of a good cause, spend even the smallest amount to countenance that which leads men to be the slaves of self —in plain words do not spend your money at the counter, where, in addition to so-called "temperance drinks," is sold beer, wine, brandy or any other intoxicating liquors. Seek the honey, my boys, shun the poison, be men every inch of you, and boldly "keep to the right," as true Canadians should. To both my nieces and nephews I would say, leave untouched the poison that lurks around cheap jewelry stands and others of that class. 'Tis only throwing away money which might be used to better purposes. I cannot turn to the "honey" side of the question without a word of warning to my nieces. I was at a picnic not long ago, at which two maidens, really bright, clever and in some ways attractive girls, of the respective ages of fourteen and fifteen, drew my attention. Instead of behaving as two sensible school-girls should, they assumed all that a not very modest young lady of twenty might—the great aim and object of each apparently being to have a "fellow" (I use their phraseology) for the day. Now, Uncle Tom is willing to allow a great deal for the waywardness of little maidens, especially those from thirteen to seventeen, for his heart, fatherly, turns to them—after that they are young ladies and lose much of the beauty of the unfolding bud; but just why mothers should sit and look with undisturbed mind at their blooming daughters developing into pert, precocious, "young ladyfied" specimens of their sex is more than he can understand. Now, to apply this. The annual township show is just the place for maidens, whose ages range from thirteen to sixteen or seventeen, to show their good sense by not going around hunting beaux. I tell you, my nieces, by such conduct as is described above you lose in the estimation of all right-minded people—then keep your maiden modesty, not of course to a prudish extent; just be free, and natural, and do not, I beg of you, let your conduct savor of poison rather than honey.

And now for the honey side of the question. Boys, go around among the sheep, cattle, horses, pigs, poultry and implements, everything in your line of work. Seek to ascertain why such an animal or bird is superior to others of its class. If you ask questions respectfully, you will usually get a civil answer. Then go home with the resolve that some day your stock, or poultry, or fruit, will stand second to none in the particular line of farming your inclination leads you. As for you, girls, it is a worthy aim to seek to be extra good butter-makers, or bread-bakers, to pickle most tempting vegetables, or can fruit in such a way that the mouth waters to taste it; to use skilfully the brush of the amateur artist, or manufacture some of those (to me) wondrous combinations known as "fancy work" for home adornment; therefore, it is worth your while to take careful notice of your special department.

And now, my bees, with the honey collected you may start homeward, adding at the last your purest, sweetest drop—even that distilled of unselfishness—

n the form of some of the finest peaches, pears, grapes, or similar dainties you can find, for the mother, sister, brother, or aged grand-parent, who has stayed at home that all the rest might go and enjoy themselves.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES: If the dreary month that has just merged from the present to the past did not suggest to you the comfort, nay, the luxury, which is yours in being inmates of warm, pleasant, cheerful homes, then I think you have yet to learn a most useful lesson. There is much to admire in a home of culture and refinement—'tis only the coarser clay that sees no beauty in the delicately-shaded landscape, or hears no voice bidding the thoughts rise heavenward as deft fingers strike lightly and skilfully the chords which "doth produce a concord of sweet sounds," yet, to me, there is no place so suggestive of cosy comfort as the spacious farm sitting-room, with its carpet of domestic manufacture, the cheerful wood fire throwing its weird twilight shadows on the wall, to bring back tender memories of the long ago. The organ stands waiting for the touch of fingers that have many, many duties to perform (for the daughters of the farm, as I have known them, have not been been butterflies of life. In addition to the weekly washing, baking, churning, and very much more every week, grown-up sisters have to provide a goodly supply of pies, cakes and tarts, for brothers who seem to have extraordinary capacities for making away with such dainties—no one but the sisters who do it know how hard some of these same young gentlemen are to please in the matter of their linen. School boys and girls want "sister" to hear them their lessons, there are letters to write to the college boy, there are duties for father and mother to perform, and yet amid all these, girls often do more in the way of music to make home pleasant than half-a-dozen city misses, on whose musical education a little dowry has been spent). The lounge in the warm nook by the fire—flowers and books bespeak refined tastes—and more than all the rest, the boys and girls of the family at home spending evening after evening together.

I am going to tell you something now that may seem to you exaggeration, but my word of honor for it, so far as I have been able to ascertain, I give you facts. I have enquired again and again, and I have yet to find the first growing family in city or town with whom it is not a very rare thing to be all gathered by the "hame fireside" in the evening. Business, amusements, dissipation, something, I am sorry to say, to break up those home pleasures which farmers' families only know. In a country home, where I was once, I saw these words worked in a rug or "mat": "There is nae place sae sweet as my ain fireside." I admired the sentiment. I believe the mother of that home as long as she was spared in it, endeavored to make her fireside the best of all places to her husband and children, but to too many homes such words have no meaning. Only a few days ago, a mother said to me: "I tell my children

that home is nothing but a place where they eat and sleep." Now, I have told you all this in the hope that some of my nephews and nieces who are commencing to think their home a cage—

The sentence was never finished. The letter for November was never sent. While her loved "nieces and nephews" were reading what was attributed to "Uncle Tom," she lay unconscious to all of earth. The hand turned to clay, and the pen which had written so often dropped from the nerveless grasp. The eyes closed; the brain was still. She had lain her quietly down for her last long sleep, and her spirit had returned to God who gave it.

CHAPTER XVII.

Passing Away.

ANOTHER page in life's history is closed. Childhood and girlhood she left with feelings that were ever sacred, and the teacher's life upon which she entered eleven years before, had just closed. Only a few months had elapsed ere that life, comparatively young, and so useful, with all its lofty aspirations, holy influences and heavenward aims, had passed from earth forever.

After leaving Valens, she returned to her early home in Strabane, overtaxed in strength, mentally and physically. Once free from past surroundings and the routine of school duty, a reaction came, resulting in a return of her old enemy—dyspepsia, which through all her teaching years, and even before, had been "the thorn in the flesh." During the following months she suffered much, causing often a depression of spirits, and clouding, at times, the otherwise naturally cheerful disposition. In her suffering she revealed, to an intense degree, that deeper under-current of her nature which in early years "no one gave her credit for," and in later life was concealed usually by the gayer and the sunnier side, but expressively portrayed by her own pen in the following extracts, with a peculiar pathos and deeply touching tenderness, characteristic of herself as she longingly lingered over the memories and associations of the buried past, and anxiously looked into the untried future as she stood on the threshold between the maiden and the wife.

Oppressed by her own trouble, a mother's lingering illness, beginning in early May, lifted no cloud from the already bur-

dened spirit. A favorite quotation from Rutherford's last words, often repeated, seemed indeed to aptly express her feelings now :

" As flowers need night's cool darkness,
The sunlight and the dew ;
So Christ from one who loved it
His shining oft withdrew.
And then for cause of absence
My troubled soul I scanned ;
But glory shadeless shineth—
In Immanuel's land.

" But Christ—He is the fountain,
The deep, sweet well of love :
The streams on earth I've tasted,
More deep I'll drink above.
There to an ocean fulness
His mercy doth expand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land."

As gleaming sunlight, through rifting clouds, reveals the glory that lies behind, so returning health brought brighter days, and with all her girlish hopes and fancies she arranged for her wedding day in early June. These extracts indicate the clouds and shadows that gathered and crossed her sky, and dimmed the brightness of the promised sunshine, though viewing them in the light of the circumstances that followed, they seem but the precursory shadows of the sad realities that pursued so quickly.

In a letter to Mrs. Valens, dated January 10th, 1888, she writes :

" Yesterday morning I came up stairs at a quarter to nine, and sat thinking until the bell rung the old hour for school. I felt it more than I ever thought I should. All unconsciously my thoughts turn longingly to them all at Valens, and to the associations there."

. . . . . .

" Ere I close let me tell you that the last thing I did before leaving your home, which had been my home for three years, was to kneel in my dear little room, and ask God to bless you both, with your children—that you might bring them up as you promised to do, God, angels and men being the witnesses, " in the nurture, fear, and admonition of the Lord," and when they

leave home, to make their own way in the world, as I have done, they might find others as kind to them as you have been to me."

Extracts from a letter dated Jan. 11, 1888:

"My fancy work of the past year lies in a few letters in my possession, written in school-boy and school-girl hand, and though I do not disparage the beautifying of a home, I feel that my treasure has been laid up where 'neither moth nor rust will corrupt,'—wherein it was done in the right spirit—it will not perish with the using." . . . . . .

"Up in room 'E' of the 'Arcade,' Yonge St., a tired-faced man sits plodding away, like the coral insect building day by day, when men know it not. Earnest in purpose as ever, unswerving in determination, without much sympathy he plods away, and surely his life is the nobler life [comparing this with the society life, an evening of which she had just described]. He is fighting still—when he ceases that, he will die."

In other letters she writes as follows:

"My Dear Sister: I have not enjoyed for years anything like I did the communion service in old St. Andrew's two weeks ago. I had heard Dr. Kellogg, the first Sunday morning I was there, and though I was interested, was not at all delighted with him. I went again and I heard a sermon which opened my eyes at once to the fallacy, and yet to the alarming growth at the present time of papal power. It was a sermon in which every sentence meant something—to want one sentence I think would have broken the chain of reasoning. I was delighted, for not only was there weighty reasoning, but there was also the Gospel pure and simple. I went to the communion service on Sunday morning, remembering that on the same day and at the same hour at Kirkwall, many for whom I had often earnestly prayed, as well as many others (there were twenty-six in all) were for the first time taking into their hands the sacred emblems. In seeking blessing for others, the blessing came to my own soul. If I could be as near Heaven oftener, I would live a more earnest life. I sat in the gallery and with a full heart looked upon the hundreds of worshippers below, and as I remembered the occasion of the gathering, I thought of the time when we shall all sit—earth's trials over—at the marriage supper of the Lamb. The text was, 'And the people stood beholding,' in the exposition of which the speaker showed conclusively how small indeed is that 'remnant' who outwardly profess to be followers of the crucified Christ, and how much smaller even than that is the company of true worshippers.

"When in preparation for the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the wine, the solemn, mournful strains of that beautiful 35th paraphrase, sung to the tune which has been familiar since childhood communion, all the years of the long ago passed before me. I remembered the old church, the reverent face of him whose dying words were 'my people,' and the sweetness of the music to my childish ears as the green branches of a tree behind the old church

swayed in the summer wind; then my thoughts turned to a little white church in a country neighborhood, where at the holy twilight hour I first took upon me the vows of a consecrated life. Soon I found myself in another country church, and saw before me two pupils very dear to me, standing, God, men and angels being the witnesses, before the altar to take their consecration vows, and it seemed to me these were earthly glimpses of Heaven. The organ rolled its music sweetly and softly, while the people sat, apparently subdued and reverent. Then the emblems were distributed, but my eyes and thoughts looked not upon them, for the Spirit had carried me away, the veil intervened but thinly between the fair city and me. After the bread and wine were replaced the pastor's only admonition to those who sat at the table was, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.' The old familiar psalm—the 23rd—was then sung, and I rarely have heard singing in which there was to me more of true worship. I went home feeling that it had been indeed good for me to be there.

"So far as I now know I think the 'crowning event' must come the first or second week of June. Commencement week begins on the 17th, but Jean says she would like us to be there before school closed. Commencement Day, when Jim and Will bid farewell to college life at Wilmington, is on the 20th. I have pleasant anticipations. . . . .

"If I find time to devote to writing, it is scenes from real life I shall devote my pen to. That class of literature always touches readers, and to faithfully depict life as one finds it, appending the moral, and seeking to commend whatever is good in the humblest life, seems to me no mean aim. I think you ought to write down all facts concerning the lives of those around you.

"Brother John will be home this week. My letter is a strange mixture, I know—now take the wheat and leave the tares.

"Your affectionate sister,

"JESSIE."

"April 8, 1888.

"MY DEAR, DEAR SISTER: In the blessed calm of the holy Sabbath evening, my spirit is drawn heavenward, and as I sit at the western window, looking longingly at the setting sun, I remember the sunset link which binds a number of us together. It is years now since a few friends and myself agreed to think of and pray for each other at the sunset hour, so it is always a holy one to me. It seems peculiarly sad and beautiful this evening—a holy quiet rests upon all the landscape; the water, which has overflowed the banks of the stream, lies beneath us, truly reminding one of the 'Jasper sea,' not a ripple moves the surface, which reflects in the twilight shadows the leafless trees. Do you

remember the 'big creek' as it was when we were children? I have looked upon it to-day with ming'ed emotions. So far as I know, two months from to night will find me no longer my own—a wife—and upon all that means, when viewed aright, I tremble to think. The scenes of childhood forever passed away, and I in a new and untried sphere—is it any wonder my throat and eyes fill as I write:

'They come—the shades of joy and woe,
The airy forms of long ago,
The dreams and fancies known of yore,
That have been and shall be no more.'?

Across the water the white stones show where lies the dust of those whom once we knew—and I think of the old church as it was in childhood's days. The trunk and one large branch of a tree, which as it waved in the summer wind used to preach to me in language which I could far better understand than that of the preacher, still remains—a relic of the times gone by. (If possible, I want to get the church and peaceful churchyard with that blighted tree sketched and painted.) The shadows fall deeper, I cannot see the lines, yet I write on. Eight more Sundays—only eight—and then farewell—farewell to the farm, the water, the sunsets, my childhood home—all farewell! It is better so. I do not regret it—yet, when I have time to think about it, tender thoughts will arise.

"The water brings other memories, too. As I look at it I remember the hymn:

'On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye,
On Canaan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie.'

And I think of some whose mind this language expresses in regard to spiritual things. I never hear it but I think of and pray for them. Rutherford's words:

"And if *one* soul from Anworth
Meet me at God's right hand
My heaven will be two heavens
In Immanuel's land,"

express my feelings in regard to their spiritual welfare, for whom, than any others on earth, I have prayed with more intense longing.

"I have had to light the lamp, and the charm of twilight has passed away, so commending you to His care, who has guided our steps all through life, who in the dark places in the past has been our pillar of fire, and who has said, 'Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass,' I bid you, sister mine, 'Good night.'"

. . . . . .

"I do indeed envy that calm state of mind which lives and trusts, 'just for to-day.' I am far, far beneath it. Mr. S—— told me long ago he lived above the cloudland, and longed to see me there, too, but never on this side the

Jordan which separates time from eternity do I hope to thus 'attain.' There are times when I would fain "fly away and be at rest,' yet I firmly believe 'all things work together for good to them that love God,' and in that promise for you and me there is comfort. I *know*, too—and it is a blessed knowledge—that others are praying for me. Strength comes when I know I have not sought for it as I should.

"My stomach has been better for two weeks than any time since I left Valens. I do hope it may be tractable, for, struggle as one may, it affects very seriously the disposition and spirits.

"In about six weeks I shall see you for a few days, and then, 'Good-bye to the stepstone—good-bye to my home.

"Your affectionate sister,

"JESSIE."

"May 19, 1888.

"MY DEAR SISTER: On this 'sweet Saturday night,' after a week, busy 'frae mornin's sun till dine,' I commence this letter to you. As it is new work to me—this house-cleaning business—I don't think I take very kindly to it. It is so long since I wrote, and so many things have happened since, that I scarce know where to commence. I know this is the last *letter* I shall write to you until other duties and other surroundings are mine, so it is no wonder if a tinge of sadness will sometimes cross its pages,

'Resembling sorrow only
As mist resembles rain.'

Again the sweet, holy, quiet evening has come, and again I sit at the western window thinking of the past and the future. I have told you before, I think, one of the charms of the sunset hour to me—'tis a thought of heaven to know that there are some who think of and pray for me at this holy hour. On land and sea, in quiet resting-places, and in the busy world, by Scottish loch and glen, in the solemn stillness of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, has the sunset hour been hallowed by prayer, and no place so much as that dear, dear schoolhouse at Valens. It seems a part of myself. Many a time after the happy, careless boys and girls had left, have I knelt, where some of them sat, praying that their young feet might be guided in the right way. Our last meeting of Bible class there I shall never forget. I don't think it is sacrilege to say that to me these meetings and partings are foretastes of heaven. Sometimes I feel as if life, with its trammels and proprieties, were too great a burden, and I would fain be with the angels in heaven.

"I was over at Valens a short time since, and at noon I was standing looking out on the familiar scene, and some of the children noticed me. I waved my handkerchief and immediately a score of handkerchiefs were waved back and as many straw hats. I could not stand it any longer, and bareheaded as I was I stepped off the verandah and down towards the gate. Before I had got

to the bridge I met all of them—boys and girls—save three, two of whom I had seen the night before. It being Arbor Day, and a half holiday, I went with them to help to fix the flower-plots again. When I said 'Good-bye,' I left them as I always did—tearful children. Is it not strange I should so care for them, and they for me? Yet I would not go back even if I were to teach again. I think my work there is done.

"The clock reminds me I must finish my letter. What more can I say than I have said? Yet, as one lingers near the grave of a loved one, so I would fain write a little longer. I am sorry that in the vanished past, there are so many memories one would feel better to have forever blotted out, but it is all gone now, and in the severing of the ties that bind one to home, all save what is bright and tender will melt away. I have not been what I might have, and should have been, in the years gone by. I can only pray that God will give me the grace sufficient to be a good wife—a true helpmeet. Every one has been very good to me. The warmest welcome awaits me from the family whose interests will soon be mine.

"My companion in the early days, by all that is tender and touching in life we are bound to each other, and it is no easy matter to say farewell.

"Your loving sister,

"JESSIE."

To Miss Mary McKellar, June 10th, 1888:

"It is again the quiet of the holy Sabbath. I have never made a habit of writing letters on this, the Lord's day, but I have been thinking over all our meetings and partings in that dear old school-house, which was indeed a Bethel to me, and it seems at times that Heaven is very near. Mother is very sick—sometimes it seems as if the poor, tired body were going to enter into rest. The sun is just fretting with a golden edge the heavy clouds in the west, and as I look, I think how often I stood at another western window, longing over the highest interests of those boys and girls of mine. The room seemed sometimes the holy of holies to me. Six days in the week we met—on Sunday we all were there—is it any wonder my heart turns longingly to the scenes of the past? I thought a great deal about our meeting a year ago. Three of us so widely separated, and I here, preparing for the most momentous step in life.

"If the world ever leaves me, it is in the evening twilight of the Sabbath, as I bring those I love with me to the mercy-seat. There is a hymn which I used to hear sung which expresses my feelings:

'I love to steal awhile away
From every cumbering care,
And spend the hours of closing day
In humble, grateful prayer.'"

On the 16th she adds:

"Ere I hear from you I shall have left the old home for the new. Owing to mother's state of health, my wedding has to be quietly and hastily

arranged. Life's realities are different from girl dreams, Mary— not a cloud was to overshadow my wedding-day, but thus it is. I am very, very busy. I leave home on Monday, and it is now nearly midnight. Only one letter more shall I have time to write, until I bid farewell to maidenhood. When it comes to the last, it is hard to leave home—but just think of leaving mother on a sick bed from which she may never rise. If she is not better, I'll soon be back—yet, getting married is really the severing of the tie which binds one to the home of their parents. It is her wish, and I am content. It will be very quiet, and I once had such happy anticipations."

One more letter on the eve of her marriage, to her mother, closes her girlhood days:

"June 17, 1888.

"MY DEAR MOTHER: Knowing that when it comes to the last I can say nothing more than 'Good-bye,' on this the last Sabbath I shall be one of the old home circle, I write what I can not speak.

You told me a few days ago that when you left me in the woods at Campbellville, nearly twelve years ago, you were very sorry for me. I remember yet the great feeling of loneliness that came over me when I went back—among strangers; for though I had plenty to say to those I knew, I was timid, and did not know enough of life to do what I ought to do. I remember yet your last advice—I tried to remember it all through the years, 'Keep your tongue and you will keep your friends.' I know it is good counsel, and yet, I shall try to remember it as I go to my new home. I remember, too, with deep feeling, your last words, 'May the Lord guide you, child.' Well, I have been a wayward girl, but I think He has guided me, for it makes me tremble to think how often my feet have well nigh slipped. If ever a branch was plucked from the burning, that was I. I have realized as the years passed by that the strongest power to keep young feet in the right path is a mother's prayers. When I remember how I have been kept, my faith grows strong.

"I think we have all in some measure appreciated your many efforts and wonderful sacrifice, to give us a chance in life. I regret I have not shown my appreciation as often as I might, and would gladly do more than I have done. If I can be as faithful in the performance of my duty as you have been; if I am enabled to be as unswerving in the cause of truth and right as you have been; if I can be as charitable and generous to every good cause as you have been, I think the highest reward that has come down through the ages will be mine—'She hath done what she could.'

"I hope you will not think I am fretting because I am leaving home so hastily. I assure you most sincerely that it is not so. I am sure I have not a doubt about it—it is all for the best, and if you are spared to grow strong enough to come and see me in my new home, I am quite contented.

"And now, mother dear, good-bye. I shall miss your wise counsel, but I hope you will ask for me that wisdom may be given me. In the words of Tennyson's Little May Queen, I would say,

'I've been wild and wayward, mother,
But you'll forgive me now.
And you'll kiss me, my own mother,
And bless me ere I go.'

"JESSIE."

It had been a girlish fancy to be married in early June under the falling blossoms, surrounded by the friends she loved, but owing to her mother's delicate health the ideal vanished, and on the 18th of June she was married to Mr. James Robertson, of Welland.

Kneeling at her mother's bedside she bade her a last farewell and at the foot of "yon little hill" with a bright laugh and handkerchief waving in the summer sunlight, she bade good-bye to the home of her girlhood, leaving behind her a life record pure as the lilies, fragrant with deeds of love and kindness, sweet scented as the blossoms of the bonnie May. Thither the bride went to the bridegroom's home and on her wedding day she writes:

"The first page of the first chapter discloses a new scene in the voyage, for maidenhood is left behind, and it is I, Jessie Robertson, a *wife* who writes here. The ideal for the past, the present the reality, the future all in hope and trust and *faith*. Many and tender are the memories that cling around the old home and the associations of childhood days, but willingly I say *farewell* to all.

"My marriage day—June 18th, 1888."

The following days were spent at New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, where she enjoyed to the full capacity of her nature the College Commencement there. In her diary she writes:

"And Commencement day is over; pleasure anticipated for years is past, though I little thought when I promised to come that I would come as 'Auntie.' Very proud was I of my nephews as they stood among the graduates of Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa. Thoughts of my own early hopes and dreams, when to go to college was one of the dearest wishes of a longing nature, came to me as I looked upon them—the manly youths and the sweet girl graduates."

In her "Uncle Tom" letter for September, 1888, this college scene is described, and an account of these days at Wilmington is

given in the following pen picture, by her friend and niece, Jean A. Robertson :

"I look back to the days of 1888. How, during all the college year of 1887-8 we looked forward with delightful anticipation to Commencement time and the expected visit from uncle James and our Jessie ; the disappointment we felt when we thought that that visit was to be denied, and then the joy of seeing them. June days never lack a charm, but when they bring real pleasure with them, they are indeed beautiful days. The June days of eighty-eight were rare days to us, for they brought us the companionship of dear ones whom we did not often see. We met them one afternoon, the day before commencement, and brought them home. How quickly the hours passed that evening—the first of that long expected visit—and not less pleasantly.

"Commencement day soon dawned upon us. The graduating performances were the chief features of the day, and began at nine o'clock in the morning under the trees in the college campus. But I recall the noon hour, the merry time at home, at dinner, and the after dinner chat as we sat about the door, till, after an hour or so, we returned to the campus. Jessie's interest in the performances was deep, because of her sympathy with the young graduates. When one, a dear friend, but then unknown to her except by name, stepped forward, essay in hand, Jessie, bending toward me, whispered, 'The perfect realization of the sweet girl graduate.' She was indeed, and Jessie afterward learned to love Hattie Shontz.

"The time soon came for the Doctor's final address to the class, and the bestowing of diplomas. How vividly it all comes to me now ! The dreamy June afternoon ; the "mild-chequering" sunshine playing on the crowd of heads in the audience, and falling like a tender benediction on those of the graduating class, as they stood, a double semi-circle, listening to the Doctor's words ; the Doctor's clear, ringing voice, commending their class motto, 'Keep your record clean.' Many a dear face I see in that class, but turning I see one beside me, so earnest, so pure, I cannot describe it, I need not, it is known to you, and the knowledge of it is a blessing. Clad all in white, the sunlight wavering over her, and Jessie enjoying that to which she had so long looked forward—Westminster's commencement of 1888. In a few minutes, however, all was over, and the campus, deserted, quietly recorded one more commencement day in its annals ; one more, yet quite unlike any before or any that may come ; unlike, that is, to us ; to many others not unlike.

"But we have left the campus, supper is over, and Jessie and I have walked slowly along the quiet street to the secluded little place where the Shontzes made their home while students. We find them all seated on the lawn and a very kindly welcome waiting us, and we quickly have our places among them. The white dresses that Jessie liked are there—the girls' graduating gowns, and mine and Jessie's own, her wedding gown. Can it be that for nearly a year it has been her shroud ? But why must I think of November's dreary days ? I am writing of June, happy, happy June.

"Our pleasant little chat there under the trees, in the lovely sunset hour, soon came to an end, for it was time to prepare for the last event of the day—the literary contest—then Commencement day of 1888 was done, a day to be remembered, not anticipated more.

"On Thursday we were all tired, and the day was passed very quietly. That evening Jessie spent in her room, enjoying the sunset hour alone. Afterwards mother and I joined her for a little time, and had a happy little chat in the shadows, with only the moon's quiet beams to light us. I remember, too, singing some songs that she liked. Even now, I seem to be as then, sitting on the floor beside her chair, looking out in the night sky and listening to the quiet voices of mother and Jessie as they talked—a sweet memory that will always be to me.

"To-night I stood by a gate, overshadowed by trees, through which the timid moonbeams fell. The place, with its light and shade, and the sough in the pine tree, awakened mingled feelings. Memory's magic wand turned autumn back to June, and robed the trees with garments long since laid aside. Then three friends stood with me—Jessie, Jim and Hattie. It was late on Friday night, and we had come, I to spend a last night with Hattie, Jessie and Jim to say good-bye to her. 'Good-bye' is said, and they two move away, while Hattie and I look after them, till they are lost in the shadows—the shadows of a fair June night.

"On Saturday at noon we set out for a drive over the country. We stopped first at Neshannock Falls, a spot noted about here for its huge rocks and picturesque scenery. After spending some time at the falls, we drove on over the pretty hills and valleys of our western Pennsylvania, and by a roundabout way reached home, amid rain and darkness, and quite ready for our late supper.

"But our best treat was yet to come, for by nine o'clock the sky had cleared, and while everything glistened in the moonlight, the 'College Quartette' took their places on the verandah, and the rest of us, gathering around, listened, as their voices rang out clear and sweet on the quiet night, the echoes coming faintly back. How Jessie enjoyed it all you may well imagine, and when the music was done she treated the boys to wedding cake. Soon our little company was broken up, and I could not help wondering at the sympathy Jessie had for each of us, and the love and confidence we all gave her. 'Our Jessie' she was indeed; yes, she is still 'our Jessie,' for who can take from us the blessings of that sympathy?

"The next morning we went to church and heard Mr. Cummings, now an earnest missionary to India, preach. The afternoon was spent very quietly. Jessie did not go with us to church in the evening, but staid in her room, enjoying alone the meditation of that hour so sacred to her. On our return I found her gazing at the fading sky—so she seemed, that is, for I knew her thoughts were far beyond it, perhaps intent upon the 'web,' which at that hour, for many a day, she helped to weave—a 'web' to clothe with grace and strength the weavers—the 'web' of mutual prayer.

"The morning hours flew past, and all too soon we were on our way to the station. Uncle James and father walked ahead, Jessie and I following. She seemed so happy, so pleased with her visit to our little college town. It seems but as yesterday since that walk, and the short wait at the station; since those last friendly words, and the injunctions to 'write;' and, at last, 'Good-bye—Good-bye.'

'"Good-bye," till the shadows are lifted,
Till the sands of life are all sifted,
Till the well-fought fight is won.'

"JEAN A. ROBERTSON.

"New Wilmington, Pa."

These few happy days at Wilmington passed quickly away and with bright anticipations for the future she returned to Welland, to her new home awaiting her, and with him whom she had chosen "to walk the shaded glens and pleasant uplands of life," determined to build on a sure foundation the home they were about to establish. In other years she had written, "The happy wife of a happy husband, the angels of heaven might envy." The ideal home, as she viewed it *now*, was a relic of Eden ere sin had entered. To attain and preserve this lofty ideal as she conceived it was the highest aim of her hopes and fond ambition.

She realized fully the deep responsibility of thus establishing a home, and entered upon her new duties with a characteristic earnestness of purpose, determining to brave all difficulties that lay in this untried pathway, and to be in every sense of the term, a "helpmeet"—with wonderful matter-of-fact common sense, for one so idealistic, she set about the inevitable, carrying with her, her school watch-word, "to do well and hasten slowly."

Happily those early days flew past, her interest in her home deepening day by day. Light-hearted and free she writes: "I almost forget I am married," and again, "I am a happy wife."

Her new surroundings, especially the friendly faces and kindly hearts who extended to her so cordial a welcome, found a warm place in her heart.

Many times she had written from Welland, "the lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places," and for the sake of those who thus made life bright and happy, she strove to be reconciled to the murky waters of the sluggish Chippewa—the dull, flat, uniform

landscape around there, though longing often for the hills and streams, the cooling springs and "bonnie burnies" of home and Valens.

Church and school work were dear to her as in teaching days, while her literary tastes and desires were not abated.

Her "Uncle Tom" letters manifest no lack of interest—indeed her pen seemed to be quickened as she saw the "white fields" around her. In her enthusiastic imagination she saw a far wider field of usefulness opening out before her. Her last effort with her pen was to inculcate a *love of home* in the hearts of the "nieces and nephews" for whom she had written for years, but ere the completed message had been conveyed to paper, she herself had reached the Land of Love and the Home Eternal, and unfinished the letter lay, till it is here produced in these memorial pages.

A heavy cold, with returning indigestion, had undermined her health and constitution. In early fall her illness assumed a more serious form, and with the autumn leaves she faded; though her own cheerfulness of disposition, her patient enduring, and the hope within, allayed all doubts and fears. Even those who loved her most, till the last moments, apprehended not that death was so near. Her weekly letters home, though written while confined to her room, and suffering intensely, breathe ever of hope and cheerfulness. In her last one to her mother, dated November 2nd, she writes:

"A letter from home reached me yesterday, saying *you* sat up in bed every morning to read or knit, and here I am almost too lazy to do anything. I told you I was out every day last week, but I felt wretched. Yesterday I had to give up and come back to my old place. The chief trouble now is a horrid attack of biliousness, which keeps me awake more than half the night, and not being able to take food, keeps me weak. I rebelled against everything—even cold water. The doctor said I must try some raw oysters. This morning I have chewed the reptiles, and am 'wrastlin' to keep them down. The doctor says they will digest in three quarters of an hour, so I think I'll come off best in the fight, for as yet they seem quite peaceable. (Later.) The oysters have stayed, so I'm hoping for better things. I got some cider from my good 'ministering spirit'—[a leal-hearted disciple who many times during her illness had given the cup of cold water, and who since then herself has been called to a higher ministry among the redeemed ones in heaven]—that brings

me back to the old days when I used to drink cider through a straw out of a barrel. Although I feel sick to-day I am in hopes to be better to-morrow."

Assured by her friends that her illness was assuming a more dangerous form, she said, "I'm in God's hands." Feeling a little better, she adds: "Maybe I'll come through yet." And later, though scarcely conscious the Borderland lay so near, she wished her favorite psalm to be read, and asked to be commended to her God, and her spirit passed in the light of that November afternoon beyond the mists and shadows. No longer the white-winged spirits—from that radiant shore—needed to whisper of love, peace, and glory inaccessible—for herself she beheld them, and the King of Heaven himself we believe made her welcome.

Like an electric shock, the intelligence of her unexpected death reached her friends and acquaintances in the community from which she had so lately gone. A large number of her friends and pupils went from Valens to Welland to pay the last sorrowful tribute of respect and deep affection to one whom they had learned to love and honor, bearing with them a memorial wreath, inscribed "Bible Class, Valens." In the little church at Welland the funeral service was conducted by the Rev. Mr. McCuiag, amid the tearful eyes and sorrowing hearts of the friends she loved, the scholars she taught, and those kindly hearts that so shortly before welcomed to their homes the stranger bride. Together they sang, "Shall we meet beyond the river?" and as if an echo from the other shore came the response, "Some sweet day we shall meet." Over the coffin lid the sunlight streamed, and it seemed meet that the holy angels of heaven might not forbear to weep that one so dear from earth had gone.

To the quiet cemetery on the hillside near St. Catharines, the remains of that loved one of earth were borne, as the last rays of the setting sun were reflected from the west. In the calm, clear night the glimmering moonlight fell on a group of mourners as they stood with uncovered heads by an open grave. At that "holy hour" when in life her offered prayers found access to the Eternal, tender hands and broken hearts laid "Our Jessie" to rest.

On the Sabbath following, the Bible Class, Sabbath School and friends of Valens gathered once more in the school-room. The

hand of each was taken, no word was uttered, but tearful eyes told how deep the feelings were, told how strong a hold she had on the affections of those among whom she labored during the last years of her life. A few words were spoken by the superintendent, her favorite school hymn was sung, the same that closed her teaching days a little over ten months before, and that company, overcome by the sorrow that crushed them, separated, to gather once more on the following Sabbath to hear Mr. Carruthers, her former pastor, deliver an address from the words, "Prepare to meet thy God." He sought to improve the opportunity by urging a true Christian life as the best preparation for death, striving to make each day beautiful and sacred and tender by love's holiest memories and ministries, kindest sentiments and delicate attentions, and pleaded with her scholars individually to let the long forgotten but now remembered words their teacher had spoken to them, sink deep into their hearts, and bear fruit in their lives.

In tones manly, tender and true, without flattery, he commended her life to them, and prayed God that the Holy Spirit might carry home all her instructions by word and example to the heart of each, that thereby they might be constrained to yield their hearts to Christ, and consecrate their life to Him.

Ere the prayer had closed the sunset hour had come—that hour when in other days she commended the erring feet of the little ones to the tender care of Him who through life had guided her own pathway. The same dear faces were there—the flowers she tended, the scholars she loved, and the old familiar voices sang "Gathering Home." Alike the aged sire, with hoary head and bowed, and the little ones that scarce had learned to lisp her name, —like Jesus at the grave of Lazarus—wept, some of whom since, like their friend and teacher, have been called from earth and in eternity behold the things we know not. The evening sunlight like a benediction rested on the heads of the mourners, and amid the falling shadows, the turrets and towers of the New Jerusalem seemed not so far distant. Away beyond in the light of eternity we beheld her, and who shall say in the years that are not, when life's history is disclosed, "What shall the harvest be?"

From the holy impressions of that day of tender memory

sprang into life the conception of this memorial, and with the hope, that through it the teacher may live again in grateful remembrance in the hearts of the boys and girls for whom her life was spent; that the lessons taught be more deeply and permanently impressed; that the profession she loved be quickened, that through it the generous impulses and youthful ideals of the child heart and mind be constrained to greater endeavor, loftier aim and nobler purpose; that it prove useful to other lives, stimulating them to higher aspirations and holier zeal, and in each create intense longings and strivings to live daily nearer God. With this hope we lay it down, and if the end be attained, then

"'Tis well, 'tis something we may stand,
Where he in English earth is laid,
And from his ashes may be made
The violets of his native land."