Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

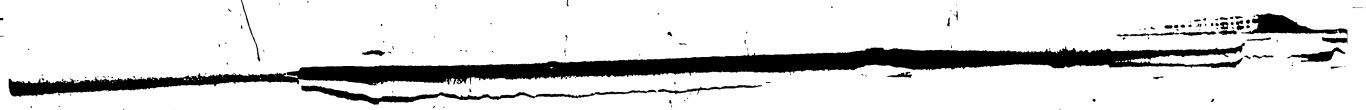
L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- ☐ Coloured covers/ Couverture de couleur
- ☐ Covers damaged/ Couverture endommagée
- ☐ Covers restored and/or laminated/ Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- ☐ Cover title missing/ Le titre de couverture manque
- ☐ Coloured maps/ Cartes géographiques en couleur
- ☐ Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/ Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- ☐ Coloured plates and/or illustrations/ Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- ☐ Bound with other material/ Relié avec d'autres documents
- ☐ Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/ La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distortion le long de la marge intérieure
- ☐ Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/ Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.
- ☐ Additional comments:/ Commentaires supplémentaires:

- ☐ Coloured pages/ Pages de couleur
- ☐ Pages damaged/ Pages endommagées
- ☐ Pages restored and/or laminated/ Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- ☑ Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/ Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- ☐ Pages detached/ Pages détachées
- ☑ Showthrough/ Transparence
- ☐ Quality of print varies/ Qualité inégale de l'impression
- ☐ Includes supplementary material/ Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- ☐ Only edition available/ Seule édition disponible
- ☐ Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to ensure the best possible image/ Les pages totalement ou partiellement obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure, etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à obtenir la meilleure image possible.

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
				✓							



THE BROCK FAMILY.

THE BROCK FAMILY

BY

A. L. O. M.

TORONTO:
WILLIAM BRIGGS,
WESLEY BUILDINGS.

MONTREAL: C. W. COATES. HALIFAX: S. F. HUESTIS.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE OLD BROCK HOME.

"I DON'T see any sense in grammar. If I were Minister of Education, I'd cast it out entirely," said Martha, disdainfully, as she threw her grammar on the sofa, drew a broad pink ribbon from her pocket, and began arranging a gay bow.

"Oh, we must all have grammar, the Brocks all had; and we'll never grow up to be ladies if we use ungrammatical language," returned the sensible Eva, as she placed the last wiped apple in the pan to roast for tea.

"I admire good language as much as any one, but it's like climbing the stair of a towering monument to gain it by learning this book. Besides it's unreasonable, for if *he* is a *pro*—noun because it stands instead of a noun, why isn't *did* a *pro*—verb, because it stands in place of a verb in this example? 'Who churned? I did.' If I've got to learn grammar, I'll write a decent one for myself, then I can understand it. I've learned the vocabulary at the back of that old Third Book so

well, that I think that ought to do instead," as she placed the finished bow at her throat and walked to the looking-glass to study the effect.

Myrtle smiled at Martha's vanity, and carelessly chimed in: "Wait till I pop into that class, I'll give Mr. Rogers a peach, so he'll let me slide when I miss."

"H-m! I'd like to see you come that game over his lordship, he'd peach you," and turning towards Eva, Martha continued:

"Now listen to my fine flowing language from that old Third Book, say 'The Vision of Mirza'—here's the vocabulary: '*vision*, that which appears to be seen in one's sleep; *oriental*, eastern; *manuscripts*, written documents; *translated*, changed from one language into another; *meditation*, thought; *melodious*, sweet; *soliloquy*, a talking to one's self; *prodigious*, great; *scimitar*, a sword with a curved blade.' Now, ready-whip-cut-go, 'In my vision last night I saw a maiden supporting an oriental candlestick which bore several lighted candles, by the light of which she translated the prodigious manuscript. At this point she waved a shining scimitar over her head, began a soliloquy in a melodious tone, and then settled down into a peaceful meditation.' How does that suit your fastidious taste, Miss Eva?"

"Eloquent! most eloquent! You might almost aspire to Mr. Rogers' situation and twelve hundred a year," replied Eva. "But you did use grammar in that speech; if you learned it no other way, you learned it unconsciously from papa and mamma, for you speak

very much as they do. If mamma said *worser*, you would say worser. So you see we ought to be thankful for the good parents we have. If they were pagans, we'd be the same until taught a different belief."

"But," said Mrs. Brock, who had entered unperceived, in time to hear Eva's last speech, "I'm afraid you do not divide your attention equally among your studies, for you took ninety per cent. in literature last examination, while your deficiency in arithmetic caused your failure," and she began to stitch away at a button-hole in Martha's new dress.

"I love literature," expostulated Martha, with enthusiasm. "Hear me say canto II., beginning at XXII., please," as she passed the book to her mother.

Mrs. Brock patiently took it, remarking:

"I scarcely need any aid to my memory, for I've heard you so often, I think I know the poems almost as well as you do. We had none of this nonsense when I was a girl, we had to learn the catechism and Psalms. Very well, begin."

Then Martha began to recite from Sir Walter Scott's writings:

"Some feelings are to mortals given
With less of earth in them than heaven;
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!"

At this she paused in her recitation, and mockingly patted Eva on the head, repeating "A duteous daughter," then proceeded with,

> "And as the Douglas to his breast
> His darling Ellen closely—"

"Where did you get that gaudy bow, Martha?" interrupted her mother, anxiously.

"I forgot to tell you. I found an old purse going to school this morning—"

"Was the purse walking or driving to school?" inquired Myrtle.

"You think you're smart now, don't you? Spell phthisic," and turning to her mother, said, "but wasn't I lucky? It had four ten-cent pieces and a five in it. At first I thought I'd made my fortune and needn't go to school any more; but after I came to my senses, I concluded it wouldn't quite support my gray hairs in sufficient dignity to satisfy the pride of my aristocratic Grandmother Brock, were she to take a peep at me from the past, so I sorrowfully gave up the brilliant vision of future grandeur and continued on my way to school."

"You should have tried to find an owner for it, my dear Martha."

"So I did, mamma, but couldn't. I ran and caught up to a man with a load of grain, but he hadn't lost it. Then I thought I'd give it to Mr. Rogers, but then it occurred to me he'd ask the scholars, and as none of

them come up the hill to the country but us, he'd only put it in his desk."

"Do you know, mamma, I don't care about tattling, but I was really ashamed of Martha this morning; she started shopping. As I saw she was going to be late, I went on to school, and it was precisely five minutes after ten when she came in. At recess, she showed me just thirty-nine samples of ribbon from no less than ten stores."

"Martha! Martha! when will you learn to quit these shopping expeditions?"

"I don't know, dear mamma;" and she folded her arms, arched her brows, and vainly curled her lip; "if ever I get rich, and buy numerous silk dresses and pearl necklaces, I may get satisfaction; but you don't know the real pleasure I enjoy in looking at the pretty goods in the stores. See these pretty samples," as she emptied the contents of her pocket into her mother's apron, and tried to extricate the samples from the tangled crochet thread and needle, a half-eaten apple, some plum stones, pencils, and other miscellaneous articles.

"This blue cloth is only sixty cents and double-fold, purple velvet only seventy-five cents. Wouldn't it make me a lovely dress, trimmed with deep bead trimming?"

"I think you have inherited this trait of character —your love of beads and other finery—from your grandmother's sister, Aunt Becket," remarked her mother, with a laugh, while she glanced significantly at the other girls.

"Mamma, sell a cheese and get me a dress from this purple piece; please do. I have the buttons, thread, lining, and everything but just the dress, the velvet I mean. Won't—"

"Nonsense!" interrupted Eva, in a womanly way, "you've nothing to correspond with it, and you'd just beg for new boots, purple kids and a feather, so you are happier as you are. Besides, the cheese has to go to make up money for the taxes and the interest."

Not appreciating Eva's remarks, Martha tossed a parcel of almonds in her mother's lap, saying:

"Please divide them, I forgot to give them to you before."

"My dear Martha, I wish you would think less about finery, and feel more contented in the sphere in which God has placed you. It grieves your dear father and me, to think we are not in a position to get you better clothes; but you see how hard he has to work to keep you as comfortable as your are. I fear we shall not have him very long, for he is getting frail, though he never speaks of himself. Please repeat the Tenth Commandment."

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor anything—"

"Well, do you think it is any worse to break one commandment than another?"

"No, I s'pose not; but what's the good of putting beautiful things in the world and setting us beside them, without a cent to buy anything, and then call it wicked if we send our eyes after them, even when we

do manage to keep our fingers at home, I'd like to know?" she said, half in anger, and forgetting her fine, flowing language.

"Hush! then bear in mind you are stealing in your heart when you covet those goods."

"I'll try and be good, mamma, and be a comfort to you and papa yet; maybe I'll teach school some time and get a high salary, or keep a great herd of cattle in the west and be worth millions; then you'll see my name in print for being the wealthiest cattle-owner on the continent. Then, won't I buy you everything—a lovely mansion, a silk velvet jacket glistening with bugles; pa, a seal overcoat and gold-rimmed spectacles; and Myrtle, a string of pearls. But, I suppose I must curb my pride, put a bridle on it, and rein it in this way," as she threw two yards of crochet lace over Eva's head and pulled her off to the pantry, it being now time for them to set the table.

"But," said the thoughtful Eva, as she counted out the plates, "the chief object of a teacher ought to be to train souls for heaven, not to obtain riches. I do wish I could find one heathen girl to teach."

"Hear, hear! I'm afraid you'll not live long; you're too good for your age. *I* think the chief object of a teacher should be to teach boys not to endorse notes. There's another cup wanted; scrape the dough out of that, and see if it won't bring you down to a level with the rest of your family," and she clasped her arms about Eva's waist, waltzed her around the cook-stove, jerking off the damper, spilling the contents of

the teapot on the floor, and tearing a yard of braid from the skirt of her own dress.

While these two are busy preparing tea, we will take the opportunity of giving our young friends a description of the family.

On a beautiful farm adjoining the town of Bradwardine, in Western Ontario, in 188–, when our story opens, lived Mr. Brock and his family. He was about forty-five years of age, with his black hair prematurely sprinkled with white. Not being very strong, and working continually, he did not look like one destined to live out the allotted period of three score years and ten. He was patient and serious, and very fond of his family and his home.

Mrs. Brock had not the quiet seriousness which characterized her husband, but was cheerful and sensitive. She cherished in her heart great hopes for the future of her daughters.

Maggie, the eldest daughter, closely resembling her mother in appearance, was then some miles away, engaged in teaching school.

Next in years was Frank, the only son, a brown-eyed boy of sixteen years. He was a great pet, slightly spoiled, but deprived of a good education, because he was his father's chief help. He thought his father's character perfect, and in every respect tried to follow his example.

After him came the twins, Martha and Eva, who were now fifteen. Martha was tall and willowy in figure, but lively in disposition and often the ringleader in mischief.

Eva was chubby and rosy, and the personification of good-nature. She was always ready to assist any one, and to restore peace in the many domestic broils incidental to young and ardent spirits.

Then two white stones in the cemetery mark the graves of as many little boys.

Last, but in her own opinion, at any rate, not least in importance, came Myrtle, a lovely child of eight summers.

Besides these there was little Michael Carrol, an odd-looking Irish orphan, whom Mr. Brock had adopted.

Their farm was situated at the foot of a mountain, from which several gurgling streams of purest spring water danced and foamed on their way to join the river. Between the vine-clad house and the street flourished the great orchard which produced a variety of choice fruit. One tree in this orchard was very crooked—a freak of nature—the deformity of which Myrtle attributed to the handicraft of Martha, who, when innocent, was often blamed. Then there was always a good garden, which produced, among other things, luscious melons and strawberries; these, on many occasions, tempted the prowling town boys to break one or two of the commandments. But there was a shadow over this farm. It was not a cloud that would break over it and leave it richer than before, but a dark cloud of debt which kept the father careworn and ill at ease meeting the interest. Owing to this debt, Martha's wardrobe included only comfort-

able, plain clothes. This mortgage Mr. Brock had inherited with the farm from his father, who, through kindness, endorsed a note, reaching up into the thousands, for an old schoolmate. The ungrateful man absconded, and the benevolent old gentleman was obliged to mortgage the homestead to pay the debt. Grandfather Brock did not long survive this reverse. The present Mr. Brock, with the increasing expense of his family, and inferior crops, had been unable to reduce the principal.

Tea being now announced, the family sat down in the plain but cosy dining-room, where the bright lamp reflected equally bright faces. They reverently bowed their heads while their father fervently asked God to bestow His blessing upon them. The evening meal consisted of good bread and butter, cheese, and baked apples with cream and sugar.

After an interval of silence, in the course of the meal, Mr. Brock suddenly said:

"I believe this North-West prairie is much better than is generally supposed."

"Yes?" inquired Mrs. Brock, "but I feel we are far enough north now."

"I have just been reading a letter in the *Times* from a farmer who went out there some four years ago, and he and his two boys now own two sections of land, free from all encumbrance. Now, you know, that is two square miles. Each of the three men homesteaded one hundred and sixty and pre-empted one hundred and sixty, making nine hundred and sixty acres; and

besides this he bought three hundred and twenty acres."

"Far-away birds have fine feathers," demurred Mrs. Brock.

"That's all very true, my dear, but this letter appears to be quite plausible. He has a hundred head of cattle, fifty sheep, and a number of horses. In summer the pasture is better in quality than any we have ever seen, while there is almost no limit to its extent. The hay for winter only costs the labor of cutting and stacking. Then wheat, he writes, produces forty bushels to the acre, and other grain accordingly, while for potatoes, it is an Irishman's paradise."

"Faith, an' if it'll grow peraties widout rent, what fur do they grow whate at all, at all?" cried Mike.

"So far," continued Mr. Brock, "he has had no trouble in finding a ready market for all his produce. What do you say to our emigrating?" and he cast an amused glance at his wife, knowing her opinion on the subject too well to require a verbal answer.

Then Martha, who had no idea they would ever emigrate, took up the subject by saying at random:

"I suppose *we* could get that much land if we went there, and we could take all our stock. Now, supposing we sold the wheat off twelve hundred and eighty acres at a dollar a bushel, that would be forty times twelve hundred and eighty; nought's nought, four nought's nought, four eights—fifty-one thousand two hundred dollars. Oh, my! Just fancy! Why, by good management we'd soon be rich as Crœsus, and be happy."

"But there might be a Solon, and a Cyrus," said Eva.

"We'd be million*ears* then," suggested Myrtle.

"And pray what would you do with a million *ears*? String them with diamonds? But we could invite the President and his wife from Washington, the Prince of Wales and his wife, and the old Sultan of Turkey, you know, he'd give us presents of carriages with golden spokes and diamond hubs in the wheels. We'd entertain them in first-class style, something like the Earl of Leicester entertained Queen Elizabeth, only we'd behave ourselves rather better than he did, and be benefited by the latest improvements, such as electric light and spring mattresses."

"Now," said Mrs. Brock, "I don't mind receiving a visit from respectable people like the President and the English royal family; but when you come to the Sultan, I cannot lower my family to such a degree as to be on visiting terms with him, even should we become rich."

"Then," continued Martha, "they might invite us to visit them. Of course, we would not go so far as Turkey. But it would be grand to spend six weeks at Washington, in the White House."

Speculation monopolized the conversation until the family rose from the table.

After tea, their mother seated herself in the familiar old rocking-chair with her mending. Myrtle placed a plate of grapes and apples on the table, and Mr. Brock read aloud from "Half-Hours with the Best Authors,"

with so much expression that he could not fail to fascinate the most inattentive listener.

Before retiring, Eva took her place at the organ, while they all joined in singing their favorite hymns. Mrs. Brock's voice always rang out clearly in Toplady's "Rock of Ages." When they were all seated, the father took the well-worn Bible on his knees, and opened it where the faded green ribbon marked the place. He read a chapter, and kindly advised his family to attend to the one thing needful, trying to impress upon their minds the text, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." Then followed the earnest petition in which he placed his family and himself in his Father's care, and, making a special plea for his absent daughter, he finished with the Lord's Prayer.

The girls wished the others "Good-night"; Frank wished pleasant dreams, and soon they were all enjoying sweet sleep.

It seemed to the children a very short time until they heard their father calling:

"Come, girls; come, Frank; come, come."

Eva turned over for a little more sleep, but Martha sprang out of bed and tugged away at the other girls, threw a pillow at the head of one, a scribbling-book at the other, until they decided there was not much comfort while she was teasing. So it was not long until all three took their pails to help milk the twenty-

five cows, that did so much towards supporting the Brock family.

As they milked away, one girl sang, another repeated a proposition in geometry, while Myrtle talked to the cow that she was milking, and imagined she received comforting answers. While the girls were laughing over the vat, and the last pail of foaming milk was tipped into the great strainer, their mother, wearing a clean collar and apron, opened the factory door and smilingly said:

"Please come to breakfast, girls."

"Yes, yes, dear mamma."

When Mr. Brock was opening the Bible for family worship after breakfast, Martha whispered to her mother, as she glanced at the clock:

"Mamma, I'm afraid we shall be late for school; I wish papa wouldn't bother reading this morning."

"Hush, dear! God's Word will speed rather than retard you."

There was a general commotion in preparing for school after prayer.

Eva asked, "What'll I get for our dinner, mamma?"

Myrtle shouted, "Where's my pink hair-ribbon?"

"I saw it round Kitty's neck, with a bell on it," replied Eva.

Martha tossed books, combs and hats promiscuously about as she called out:

"Who saw two stray leaves of the 'Lady of the Lake?' and picking up some tiny, twisted paper, she,

with a forlorn look, continued: "There, now, if that ain't too bad! Eva's just used them for curl papers for those dandy bangs. Papa said we'd be taking a leaf from the family Bible to curl our hair with, next thing, and sure enough Eva's got those dear leaves twisted up, with her brown threads holding them tight," as she began picking off the odd hairs and straightening out the leaves of her favorite book. "Guess I'll make a little curl of the hair, and take it to your favored Walter as a keepsake; he can put in his locket."

Eva, feeling guilty and desiring to keep the peace, said she was sorry. Just then, Mike opened the front door and shouted:

"A roide! a roide to school! yous'll all git a roide! there's an omnibus comin' aroun' Jardon's corner, shure."

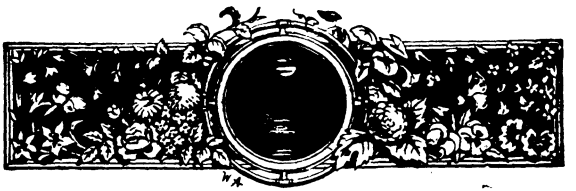
"Nonsense," responded Eva, "that's a threshing machine."

"Faith, if it can handle the shillelagh loike owld Rogers, I'll wait till it goes by."

"We're off, now, mamma; enjoy yourself," said Myrtle, and her eyes beamed with the satisfaction that her worried mother would at least have the best of the day to herself.

Fifteen minutes after eight found the children on their way to school, having their pockets well rounded out from the products of the orchard; and Mrs. Brock in the rocking-chair, thinking and resting before she returned alone to her work.

"Now," she mused, "they are away for the day; they're a great trial in one respect, but I would almost rather lose my own life than suffer the loss of even the most troublesome of them. Well, to-morrow's Saturday, and I promised them that they all might go up to their grandpa's for nuts, so I must lengthen Myrtle's check dress. She grows out of her clothes very fast."



CHAPTER II.

A VISIT TO GRANDPA'S HOME.

NINE o'clock the following morning found all the young Brocks dressed for a visit to Grandpa Gladstone's pleasant country home. They expected to gather nuts in company with their Boston cousins, Oscar and Emma, who were then spending a few weeks at their grandpa's farm. Frank drove the prancing horses up to the gate amid the usual confusion on such an important occasion.

"Eva," said Frank, "bring out my other hat and coat please, I can't leave these horses."

"Yes," returned Eva, laughing over her shoulder as she turned towards the house, "I hope you'll get a wife with ten hands, for you've been used to that many waiting on you, and if you settle down with only two you'll be disappointed in your lady-love."

"I'm glad you have such a fine day, children," remarked their father, as he smiled over the gate under the great maple trees, and almost wished he were again

a boy, that he might join them in their youthful pleasure.

"Good-bye, papa!" "Good-bye, mamma!" "Good-bye, all!" rang through the air, as the impatient horses pawed and tossed their heads wildly from side to side. As the words "Mind the horses" reached Frank's ears, away they went at a lively pace down the shaded lane to the gate at the road.

Myrtle, beaming with delight, jumped out and opened the gate, once more climbed into the carriage, and on they drove down the steep hill, over the bridge by the mill, up the other long sloping hill, and past the Bay Horse Hotel, where Mike's poor father had spent his wages and his life.

"Well, here we are," and they turned in at the white gate under the shade of the willows. The two little city cousins popped up from behind the hedge, shouting:

"Hello, there!"

"Hello, yourself!" was promptly returned.

"Good for you. I always thought you country folks behind the times, but you seem to have been alive this morning."

Then they clambered in, and a happier load never came laughing and singing up their grandpa's pretty lane to the old stone house among the trees.

"Good morning, grandpa."

"Well, children, glad to see you."

The children sprang out, and the little Brocks went to greet their dear little old grandma.

"Mamma sent her love and this lace cap to you, and papa weighed these two pippins, one is nineteen pounds and —"

"Ounces," corrected Eva.

"Maybe it was ounces, and the other twenty, and he wants to know if you can beat that," and Myrtle looked inquiringly at her sisters to see if she had delivered her parcels and messages correctly.

The cap, after being tried on and admired, was placed for safety in the lower drawer of the old walnut bureau and locked up, and the two apples were put on the sideboard beside the silver.

Their grandpa was feeding what he called his royal family—the large flock of hens, turkeys and geese. The children laughed heartily as Oscar stooped down and mimicked, almost to perfection, the old gobbler strutting proudly about. Grandpa laughed and talked to the fowl as if they understood him as they followed him about the lane and barnyard.

As the procession of grandchildren started away to the woods, the old gentleman jokingly remarked:

"I must have a tenth of the nuts you gather, for toll."

"I'm sure you'll get that and more, too," replied one.

"You'll get none of mine, you and your old straw hat," muttered Oscar.

This shocked the young Brocks so much that Eva said, "He is our dear old grandfather and should be treated with respect. He does not want the nuts, but is childish. You know he'll be eighty the tenth of May."

"You go along with your grandfather and the tenth of May. If he had treated you as he did me, you wouldn't stick up so for him."

"Why, that's something new! What's happened you, poor fellow?"

"Oh, nothing, only the old man's so crusty, I can't do anything to please him. I came out to the country for a lark, you know; and yesterday when we were swinging on the gate, all of a sudden smash it went. Then he sent us flying into the house, saying, 'You're bad children, I'll take you to the station first market day, mark my word.'

"Next thing, I was shooting at a target I set up against the horse stable, and he told me I shouldn't shoot there, for fear I'd kill the horses. What do you think I wanted to kill the horses for? They don't amount to a row of pins, any way. If he'd see some of our Boston horses he'd get his eyes open. However, I did'nt pay any attention to him, but fired away. And what do you b'lieve he said next? 'Get off this farm in fifteen minutes.' As the farm was his'n I said, 'Farewell, Elder Gladstone,' but I only whispered it, for there's a good deal of force in the toe of the old man's boot; it would almost land me on the station platform, and save me walking that humbuggin' six miles. By the way, I don't see what tempts people to get away out here in the mud, so far from the station. I went in to bundle up my dry goods, and tell Emma, when grandma took my part for once; so he agreed to let me stay till I could get a ride to the station."

"Well, Oscar, it's too bad that you and grandpa are not getting along better, but you should be patient with him. He'll not live much longer, and we'll be sorry after he's gone for being unkind to him," said Frank.

"Come, young justice, you needn't side in with him, for he thinks as little of you as he does of me, and that's precious little, mind, I tell you; for every time I'm here he shows me the big F you scratched on the end of the piano when you was a youngster."

"I know I'm as bad as the next one, and don't deserve his kindness, but I'm always trying to improve. Let's wait till the girls get even, and race from here to that stone at the foot of the hill."

"All right, hurry up, girls."

"Toes to the mark, ready; one, two, three, go."

Away the half-dozen went. One after another fell behind; Myrtle tripped and fell, raised a cloud of dust, and sprang up with a scratched nose.

Oscar tossed his basket in the air and shouted, "My innings."

On they chatted, and sang, and skipped, and sauntered, and quarrelled, until they reached the wood, and began to gather nuts. The wood was delightful on that lovely Indian summer day, with its bed of red, yellow and brown leaves, rustling beneath their feet, and the cunning little squirrels scampering off to their nests, bearing hickory nuts for their winter food.

"Now, girls," said Oscar, as he began the ascent of a butternut tree, "Frank and I'll knock the nuts down,

you can gather them up in a pile, and we'll divide them afterwards. Will that do, Frank?

"Oh, yes," answered Frank, while he thought, "It might be safer to make a settled bargain at the beginning, to prevent a quarrel in the division," but he did not mention it, as he feared it would offend Oscar.

They showered down nuts like hail, and the girls gathered away until they had a great pile on the red-and-yellow carpet of leaves. Then they sat down to rest and chat after their hard work. They threw nuts at one another, compared their brown stained hands, and built pyramids of nuts. While the others chatted away, Eva slipped around to her coarse cousin Oscar, sat down beside him, and said, as she raised her mild, pleading eyes to his:

"Oscar, I'm sorry you and grandpa are not on better terms. He's so old that your next visit here may be to his funeral, and it would be too late to make up. Besides, your mother will feel sad when she hears of it, so please make it up when we go back, and he'll be proud of you."

"I'm not so soft as you country girls are; he has offended me, and I can't get over it."

"Yes, but it's all about a trifle, and it was your place to obey him, my dear cousin. You know God says, 'Have peace one with another.' When we go back, just meet the dear old man outside alone, and tell him you are sorry you disobeyed him. It will make you and him happy, and set the rest of us at our

ease. You know if a stranger spoke a word against you he'd stand up bravely for you; he even likes you now, for all your little disagreements. Won't you, Oscar?"

"You are quite a little preacher, but I suppose for the sake of peace and quietness I had better apologize, though it's not in my veins to knuckle down."

"I'm afraid we'll be keeping dinner waiting, for grandma is preparing an extra superfine one, and she said it would be ready at two," remarked Emma.

"Oh, if that's the case, I'm her man," said Oscar, rising to his feet, followed by the others.

"Here's Uncle Fred, according to agreement; we'll throw our bags on his load of wood and start off."

Soon they were all trudging homeward, feeling tired and hungry, although the forenoon had been extremely enjoyable.

Then they began to talk about the division of the nuts, Oscar claiming more than half, which none but Martha disputed. She did not value the nuts, but she did strongly object to Oscar's domineering ways. The two shot back and forth some stinging epithets, before Frank and Eva succeeded in convincing Martha that peace was preferable to nuts or even gold. So Oscar took the lion's share; but though the Brocks did not care for the nuts, they afterwards thought that even relations should not neglect to make a definite agreement as to division in a case of this kind.

Upon reaching the house, the welcome sound of grandma's voice was heard, saying: "Now, children,

you must be hungry; come to your dinner!" a summons which was obeyed with alacrity, and the keen appetites of youth and health soon made such inroads on the fat goose and plum pudding as to threaten total destruction of those dainties and fully satisfy the hospitable anxiety of their good old grandmother. After dinner, when Mr. Gladstone entered the library, Oscar shyly followed him, taking his powder, shot and caps along. Closing the door behind him, he said:

"Grandpa, I know I ought to mind you; it's hard to keep straight, but I'm going to try this time, so here's my ammunition. If you lock it up for me I cannot get it, even if I do take a notion for it."

His grandfather had only time to give him a friendly clap on the shoulder, before he bounced out of the room. He slammed the door after him in his usual rough way, which left the old gentleman saying to himself:

"That boy will have the last door off its hinges. My own ten children never broke a hinge in the house yet, and it's a funny thing if that boy is to come here and ruin things."

Eva, suspecting that Oscar had sought and obtained pardon, gave him a friendly smile, as much as to say, "Now you are approaching the right road."

Soon the old people and girls went into the parlor to rest and talk. Their grandma seated herself in the rocking-chair which Oscar's mother had given her last Christmas. Their grandpa took the arm-chair, while the children all crowded on to the large, old-fashioned

haircloth sofa. Emma took one of the cushions on her lap to make more room, and as she glanced at it, inquired:

"Grandma, is this the cushion mamma worked?"

"Yes, she worked it shortly before her marriage, and I well remember how happy she was in planning and making her wedding dresses that summer! One day she thought she would be married in blue, another day pink, and so on. I almost fancy now I hear her merry laugh and her sweet songs ringing through the house, and she was pretty, too, with rosy cheeks and golden curls. The neighbors called her Gladstone's beauty."

"You must have something to remind you of all the the family," remarked Eva.

"I believe we have," and the old lady glanced thoughtfully about the room. "Those two oil paintings your Aunt Catharine did when she was at Miss McAuley's academy. Aunt Frances did those three drawings the summer she taught school. Uncle Fred painted that picture with the man shaded so cunningly in the clouds, and Uncle George made the picket fence enclosing the garden, just after he had finished his college course."

"I remember that well," interrupted their grandfather. "Professor Peters wrote to me at that very time, stating that George would be an ornament to the ministry. How proud I felt as I carried the letter out to him! There are not many men as good as your Uncle George; he has spent his life, so far, trying to serve his Maker."

"A great many queer things must have happened while your large family was growing up."

"Yes, many indeed," returned their grandmother, with a sigh, and she raised her spectacles, wiped her eyes, and began: "It seems to me almost like yesterday, that, one Sunday morning (it was sacrament Sunday, too, and we were particularly anxious to be early at church), I dressed Freddie first, and told him to sit down until we were ready—"

"Grandma! Grandpa! Oscar's killed!" interrupted Frank, as he threw open the door. All rushed out in a state of great excitement; and as they approached the old well, with its wooden curb, long sweep, chain and bucket, they became terror-stricken on beholding Oscar motionless on the ground, near the long end of the sweep. Emma's grief was uncontrollable, as she cried:

"He's dead! he's dead!"

His forehead and wrists were gently bathed with cold water, and all were much relieved when his eyelids slightly moved, and a few indistinct words were muttered. Shortly after he became conscious, and they carried him, writhing in pain, into the house, and laid him carefully on a sofa, to await the doctor's arrival.

Upon examination, he found that his arm was broken and his shoulder dislocated, besides which he had received internal injuries so serious as to cause the doctor to give them little hope of his recovery.

When the excitement had somewhat subsided, Mrs.

Gladstone asked the other boys how the accident had happened. After some hesitation, Fred reluctantly answered:

"I was drawing water at the well for the horses when the boys came up to me. Oscar was boasting about his dexterity, and remarked that the minister's son could never have lived in Boston, or he wouldn't have fallen off the sweep like a baby. And he said he could mount the idle end of it and go as high as the roof of the carriage house, spring right over on to the roof and wave his red handkerchief from the ridge. Frank told him that it would take a smarter man than he was to come that game, when Oscar said, 'I'll show you how it's done,' and jumped astride the end of the sweep with an air of superiority. I told him, several times, to get off, but in vain, and as I had to get more water, I lowered the bucket into the well. He held on bravely until he was about as high as the roof, when his body began to sway from side to side, and before I could think, Master Oscar was on the ground, while his end of the sweep flew away up and sent the bucket splashing into the water."

Fred was despatched to send a message regarding the accident to Oscar's parents, while the frightened young Brocks were hurried home to acquaint their parents of the sad termination of the long-looked-for holiday.

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTMAS.

THE balmy days of autumn had passed away, and the birds that had twittered and sung so merrily in the tree-tops, had flown to the sunny south, and all nature had undergone a change. The gloomy-looking ground was covered with the sparkling snow, the merry tinkle of sleigh-bells had been welcomed, and laughing boys and girls were eagerly looking forward to Christmas and its accompaniments.

Preparations for the holidays had not been neglected at the Brock home. The house had been cleaned from cellar to garret, Maggie's former room put in order, and brightened up with new lace curtains, and evergreens were gracefully festooned about them and the pictures, while a choice geranium bloomed invitingly on a small table. The turkey was ready to roast, and a great cupboard was packed with various kinds of pastry. Besides, the cellar-bins were full of the products of the farm.

On Christmas-eve, while tea was waiting Mr. Brock's return—for he had gone to bring Maggie, the young teacher, home on a visit—Myrtle exclaimed in delight:

"I wonder what Maggie'll give me! I'd like a doll that could cry. I'd have it dressed magnifying in pink silk."

"Magnifying? you mean magnificently," corrected Eva.

"I wonder now if you can't cry enough yourself, without craving assistance? Who's going to dress your doll? And where is your pink dress coming from, pray, madam?" inquired Martha, fearing Myrtle was wishing for her own pretty piece of silk.

"I was thinking mebby you'd dress it, you're so handy," replied Myrtle, meekly; and casting a sly glance at Eva, she proceeded, "and if it's a very pretty doll, mebby you'd *lend* me that pink silk in your work-box, till you get little, like me, again, and want it."

"You were, eh! and how did you know which of my boxes it was in, I'd like to know. Besides, you'd better wait till you get your doll, for she may give you a *grammar*, or she may not give you anything," remonstrated the tantalizing Martha; "but *I'd* like about a ton of black bugles to trim my new cloth dress."

"What cloth dress?" inquired two or three in a surprised tone.

"The one mamma's going to get me when she sells the cheese."

"A likely story, if she gets one for you she'll get one for me, too," said Eva, dubiously.

"And me too," said Myrtle, as she jumped up and frisked about the room. She accidentally whirled against Martha, and sent a saucer of small beads from her lap to seek shelter in the crevices of the rag carpet. Although Martha felt a little annoyed at the damper cast on her cloth dress prospect, she could have recovered from that if her beads had not been scattered over the floor, but such a combination of calamities proved too much for her. So before she stooped to gather them up, she gave Myrtle a box on the ear which sent the poor girl crying to a corner. Mrs. Brock was much grieved, and promptly escorted the offending daughter to the kitchen, where she bade her remain until her father's arrival.

The girls were busy gathering up the beads, when the quarrel was ended by the sound of bells at the door, and the prospect of once more seeing Maggie.

There never was a more welcome visitor, and there never was a girl more pleased to be home to rest and receive consolation than Maggie was, after her year's experience as a teacher. She was kissed by each one alternately excepting Myrtle, who kept her turn up all through the performance. Then she drew her to the sofa, unbuttoned her overshoes, and practised lady's maid in general.

Mr. Brock remarked, as he laughed, drew his chair nearer to the fire, and rubbed his hands in his usual happy way:

"So there's no place like home, Maggie, eh?"

"One need only to live among strangers a year, to find that out; if we were not in debt, I would never teach another day, but stay at home and help you and mother."

"My dear, you know it was neither your mother's wish nor mine that you should leave us."

After tea, Myrtle slipped up beside her sister, whom she now looked upon as being a very wise woman, handed her the slate and pencil, and asked her to give her a question to work in arithmetic.

"You must notice her improvement in arithmetic, for the thought of showing you how much she had learned has prompted her all through the last term," said Mrs. Brock, considerately.

Maggie, at her mother's request, played and sang some pretty tunes, and her father was delighted with his favorite.

"THE SONG FOR ME."

"On a winter night when the fire was bright, and the door was barred on care,
I asked the maiden I prize so well, what she would sing to me there;
She warbled a song of 'La Belle France,' and a song of Italy,
Her voice fell clear on my loving ear, but they were not the songs for me.

"Their accents hung on her witching tongue, as I listen'd dreamily on,
And I fancied I roved in distant climes, where she was the flower and the sun.
Then she sang a strain from lordly Spain, and a lay of Germany,
But at last she sang me 'Home, Sweet Home,' and that was the song for me."

While the music occupied the attention of the older members of the family, Myrtle, whose patience regarding the parcels had become exhausted, began to investigate a certain mysterious looking bundle in hope of discovering the presence of a doll. After feeling the outside of the paper wrapper with little satisfaction, she ventured to tear a tiny hole, and was peeping and picking away at a fold of flannel, when Mike, stealing up to her from behind the stove, alarmed her by saying in a low tone :

"Av ye plase, Miss Myrtle, look an' see av ye can't cotch soight of a knoife, faix."

"Go away, Mike. What do you think a knife would be doing here among the dolls?"

"Arrah, it's jokin' ye are, more sorrow to poor Mike, sure."

Before Myrtle could find anything resembling a doll, however, she was caught at her sly work and hurried, off to bed.

It was at last quite late, and not without considerable stratagem on the part of Maggie and Mrs. Brock that they were left alone down stairs. They remained quiet until they thought the others were asleep, when they began the work often attributed to the generosity and ingenuity of Santa Claus. They brought in and made stationary a graceful balsam tree, which had been previously cut and hidden by Mr. Brock. When the parcels which he and Maggie had brought were opened, they displayed a number of bags made of gay colored tissue paper, for holding the sweetmeats, books

bound in bright colors, two jack-knives, a box of chessmen, some pretty ribbons, fur caps, figs, and candies in many novel and attractive forms. They worked happily away, dressing the branches and giving to the tree an appearance intended to thrill the hearts of the youthful sleepers.

Martha, having a suspicion that the Christmas parcels were being opened, could not sleep; so she crept softly to an unused stove-pipe hole in the hall, above the parlor, and triumphantly viewed the progress of the work below. She eagerly watched the ribbons and caps as they were being placed upon the tree, and wondered which of them were intended for herself. At last, unable to control herself further, she, still unnoticed, watched her opportunity and picked the flag from the top of the tree, and adroitly hung in its place her mother's white night-cap.

After the workers had finished they stepped back to admire the tree, when to Mrs. Brock's surprise she missed the carefully embroidered red flag, and raising her eyes still higher, caught sight of a glistening eye staring through the hole. Instantly guessing to whom the aforesaid eye belonged, she called out:

"Off to bed with you, Martha, this minute."

Martha silently obeyed, while Mrs. Brock and Maggie felt that the secrecy of their preparations had been somewhat interfered with.

When they had locked the room containing the tree and had gone upstairs, Martha appeared to be sound asleep.

Long before daylight the ensuing morning, "Merry Christmas!" resounded on all sides. Several of the children had made excursions downstairs, and returned sadly disappointed; and such soliloquies as these were muttered:

"Bad luck to poor Mike!" and,

"I wonder if Santa Claus has forgotten where we live."

When they were assembled around the fire after breakfast, Mr. Brock said:

"We should not spend this our Christmas-day merely in feasting and gaiety, but we should offer up our grateful praise to God for the gift of His Son." He then read a part of that loving chapter, St. Luke ii., and when he came to the words, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord," and "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men," he could scarcely control his voice, he felt so glad and thankful. He again seemed to be overcome with joy while reading Simeon's song, "Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." Then the sweet voices of the family blended in that grand hymn:

"Hark! the herald-angels sing,
'Glory to the new-born King,
Peace on earth and mercy mild;
God and sinners reconciled.'

Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies ;
With angelic hosts proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem!'
Hark, the herald-angels sing,
'Glory to the new-born King.'"

After singing, they all repaired to the parlor, and a happier family was seldom seen, as each received a share of the gifts from the bountiful tree. Mike was delighted, for he happened to be given a knife, but no dolls were to be seen. However, Myrtle received the chessmen and a handsomely-bound Bible, as well as some sweetmeats.

When Mrs. Brock went to the kitchen to attend to the roasting turkey, Myrtle left the others enjoying themselves in the parlor, and hastening to her mother's side, whispered :

"Mamma, I wanted a doll so much, and I cannot understand this book," as she laughed amidst her tears.

"Well, my dear," and her mother sat down and placed her arm around her, "I think Maggie acted very wisely in the selection of the presents ; she thought she would have you remember your Creator in the days of your youth. We are all placed here to be tried, and if we spend the time here profitably, we shall be taken up to heaven—a place so much better than this, that 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.' By reading this Bible, and by asking God to help you,

you may be led to trust in Jesus, and to go to heaven when you die. We are not placed in this world to enjoy ourselves, or to lay up gold, but life on earth is merely a short term of trial for our real life, which is to come. Remember, dear, we shall only spend about seventy years on the earth at the best, and after the death of the body, there are more than millions of years—all eternity—to be spent either in heaven or in hell, according to the way we live here. Think over it, Myrtle."

"I guess Maggie knew best. I'll read it and try to be good; but I would like a doll." Her mother gently stroked her hair, and then returned to her work.

Mr. and Mrs. Frame, a feeble couple, who were very poor, lived across the road from Mr. Brock's. Thinking of them, Myrtle said:

"Mamma, may Eva and I take some of our Christmas dinner over to Mr. Frame's, just to make them joyful, you know?"

"I, too, was thinking of them, and wondering if it was not too stormy for you to go."

"This is not stormy; we'll enjoy going," remarked Eva, who had also followed her mother.

"Very well;" and Mrs. Brock moved briskly about filling the basket, while the girls were putting on their jackets and caps. They took the basket between them, and started away laughing and singing. As they walked down the lane by the side of the orchard, Myrtle asked:

"Aren't you afraid they'll be offended?"

"Oh, no. If they should, we would take the dinner back, and hold a picnic over it ourselves. Poor things, it will remind them of better times. Wouldn't it be nice if we were able to take Christmas dinners to all poor people?"

"Yes; if anything turns up that I get rich, I'll give lots and lots of presents. First, I'll give presents to every one who was ever good to me, then I'll hunt up the poor people, and give them flour and dolls, flannel and dolls, and lots of cherry preserves and dolls."

"Here we are, I wonder what they'll say," said Eva; then she knocked gently at the door that opened into their humble kitchen.

"Come in," came softly from within.

"Merry Christmas, Mr. Frame! Merry Christmas, Mrs. Frame!"

"You are welcome, my dears. I see you are brimmin' over with life and health, may you never lose your rosy cheeks," said the frail old woman, who was taking out of the oven a few baked potatoes, which, together with salt and coarse bread, were to compose their Christmas dinner.

"See some of our presents," remarked Myrtle; "you may read them to-day, if you like."

Meantime Eva was placing the contents of the basket on the table. There was a nice roast chicken, some fried parsnips, plum-pudding and sauce, coffee, cream and sugar.

"Oh, dear, oh, dear! this is like old times; it seems like a dream. You are two kind little girls. May the Lord reward you, for I *never can.*"

"That's nothing, but don't thank us; 'twas mamma gave them."

While the surprised old people were beginning their dinner, the girls slipped away. Eva thinking:

"They would enjoy themselves better alone, talking of former Christmas dinners." And also having due consideration for their own good dinner, awaiting them at home.

"I'd never let our father and mother be poor like that, as long as I could work for them myself. Would you?" inquired Myrtle.

"No. There is much more pleasure in giving them the dinner than in eating it. Christ must have been happy all the time, when He did so much good. He cured sick people, made blind people see, and raised the dead. Although He was despised by some, He must have been praised all the time by others." And while they tramped through the snow, facing the wind, Eva continued:

"Myrtle, I intend to try and make my life as much like Christ's as I can, because I love Him ever so much, and then it is such happiness to be doing good."

"That won't be hard for you to do. I guess you were born good."

"No, I wasn't. I am often very bad. But when I see mamma and papa so troubled and care-worn, I try to bear my own small troubles as quietly as I can, to help them a little."

When they entered the house, their father smiled, and said:

"My little snow-birds, we are waiting for you to join us in our own good Christmas dinner."

During the afternoon, when the girls were alone in the parlor, the younger ones gave Maggie a minute account of the day they spent at their grandpa's last autumn. Maggie listened attentively, especially to the various versions of the accident that befell Oscar. When they had finished, she assured them that she was glad that he had recovered and had been able to return home.

"Well, Maggie," inquired Eva, "how did you come to change your boarding place?"

"Oh, yes," added Myrtle, as she and Maggie were making a cat's cradle with a cord, "tell us some funny stories about that queer Mrs. McFadden who built the church. You must know lots of funny tales."

"Well, such a thing as making a change had never occurred to me. Although Mrs. McFadden is peculiar and domineering, and I was much disappointed in not having any pleasant companions, I had all I bargained for—board and lodgings. But the day grandpa brought his organ for my use, Mrs. McFadden, guessing that the organ was for me, met him at the gate, and asked if he had intended that wicked machine to come into her house. So when he had told her that it was for me, she shook her fists defiantly and said hotly:

"'Ye're no' gang to defile my hoos wi' sic a sinfu' thing. What do you think oor minister, Mr. Hall himsel', would say to see that kist o' whistles in this

sacred hoos?' And shaking her head, she added with emphasis, 'Nae, nae, nae! awaw wi' it. But if ye like to gang in yersel', I'll mak' ye a cup o' tea.'"

"I hope grandpa had more independence than to enter her house," interrupted Martha, indignantly.

"Well, Martha," resumed Maggie, "it was scarcely a matter of independence, but rather of convenience and tact. So he pocketed any disagreeable feelings he might have entertained on the subject, and accepted the invitation. You see, we were obliged to make some arrangement about the organ, and we knew it would be better to remain friendly with Mrs. McFadden, as she is the trustee-ess of the section."

"Trustee-ess," exclaimed Myrtle. "I thought a woman had to be a man to be a trustee."

Maggie smiled, as she explained:

"You see, Mrs. McFadden was really not elected a trustee, but she has taken upon herself the powers of one. Well, where was I? Yes, Mrs. McFadden is wealthier than any of her neighbors, and as she has not given her son any property, he and his family live with his mother. So he was elected a trustee, and he acts in school matters according to her judgment rather than his own. Then the other two trustees, being rather poor, are often under obligations to Mrs. McFadden, so they also vote as she wishes. And what's more, all the school meetings, except the annual one, are held in Mrs. McFadden's house, and she is present and gives her opinion gratuitously. Now, you see, it was important that I should not fall into disfavor with her ladyship.

"However, as the organ could not be allowed to remain outside, and as Mrs. McFadden was determined that it should not enter her house, something had to be done. Mrs. Cameron had upon one occasion asked me to board with them, so we concluded that I had better accept her offer. By using a good deal of tact I parted with Mrs. McFadden on quite friendly terms. As her house is the nearest to the school-house, she gave me a very pressing invitation to remain over night with her in disagreeable weather.

"Some time after, just as I was opening my dry lunch at noon, Mrs. McFadden's little bashful grandson, Donald Jacob, came up to my desk and, hanging his head, jerked out:

"'Granny says you must come over.'

"Instantly such suspicious queries as these flashed in quick procession through my worried brain, 'I wonder if the scholars have lately been in her orchard?' 'Have I punished any juveniles by the name of McFadden?' or 'Has a *cheaper* teacher applied for my position?' However, I ventured to ask, 'What for, Donald Jacob?' and took the precaution to stoop down for the answer, so that the child need not sound aloud any of my real or imaginary shortcomings. I might have saved my trouble, for I caught the answer:

"'Killed a sheep.'"

"Did she mean that you had killed her sheep? I wonder what she thought you'd kill it for? I'd have sued her for *definition* of character, as Myrtle says."

"No, no, no; I'll soon explain."

"Hurry up, then, for I want the business cleared up systematically."

"Well," said Maggie, "we left off at 'killed a sheep.' I felt relieved, for I knew I was yet in favor with the lady of the land, so I laid aside my cold dinner, and hurried away to the scene of feasting. It is needless to tell you that I enjoyed a sumptuous dinner, including roast lamb. Mrs. McFadden was more friendly than usual, and after dinner she even asked me into the parlor, and directing my attention to a handsome new piano, asked what I thought of that. She spoke in a hesitating manner, as if her conscience was telling her she ought not to have objected to the presence of my organ."

"Oh, oh, oh!" interrupted Martha, "I'd have watched my chance, and gently bathed the wires, that are so liable to rust, even if I had been obliged to moisten my handkerchief with tears to accomplish a revenge."

"Oh, Martha! that would have been very wicked. She explained to me that she had lately been visiting the minister and his bride, and that she had been shocked at seeing a new piano in their house. She felt like telling Mr. Hall 'never to put a fit into my hoos' again,' but concluded that she had better not offend so good a man. She told him that she would have had a piano of her own long ago, only that she was afraid he'd think it a very 'sinfu' machine.' Her prejudice was somewhat overcome when she heard 'Old Hundred' and 'Kilmarnock' sung to the music of the piano, which really did not sound so profane as

she had expected. She thinks so much of Mr. Hall that his words and actions are a law to her, so the next time she went to town she brought home that valuable piano."

"And who plays it?" inquired Martha, with sarcasm.

"No one, excepting Mrs. Hall, has ever yet sounded a note on it; for she will not allow her own granddaughter to enter the parlor, much less touch the piano.

"Well, what do you think? she asked me to come back again and board with them. But I excused myself, thanked her, and hastened away to my pupils."

"She must have plenty of gold," suggested Eva.

"And brass, too, I should say," Martha managed to sandwich in.

"Yes, she is rich. Why, last spring, a minister at a distance assisted in the dedication of her church. She learned that he had no horse, so she drove him to town, and bought him a new horse, harness and buggy. But she is so cross to her grandchildren in the kitchen that, in my estimation, her munificent acts lose much of their charm."

"A new horse," repeated Myrtle, "that would be a tiny colt: the harness would have to grow, too. But I'm in earnest now; did she go right into a stable, wearing the black silk dress you have told us about, and buy the horse?"

"I don't know about that part of it, Myrtle, but I know she paid the money, which is a very important part."

"I wonder," exclaimed Eva, "if she would send me as a missionary to China."

"I wonder," echoed Martha, "if she wouldn't give me money to search for the North Pole. Tell another story, please."

"This incident happened before I left Mrs. McFadden's. When I had been dispensing knowledge for about a month, and was beginning to overcome any timidity I had cherished regarding my audacity in presuming to be a teacher,"—at this point Myrtle, looking disappointed, whispered in Martha's ear:

"I don't know what she is telling us. Won't you ask her to say it in English?"

"Mrs. Cameron," resumed Maggie, "fearing I was home-sick, and wishing to introduce me to a few select young people, told me that she intended to invite about a dozen to tea the following Tuesday. She gave me, as well as Mr. McFadden and his wife, a pressing invitation to be present. She told me with a significant smile that her brother, a shrewd young city lawyer, and Colonel Benton, who had lately inherited forty thousand dollars, were to be there; therefore she wished me to look my prettiest. Of course, I did not care for the gentlemen, but I always try to appear as well as I can."

The last few words were rendered almost inaudible by Myrtle and Martha clapping their hands, and exclaiming:

"Oh, oh, oh! Maggie's got a beau! If he is not perfection itself, forty thousand ought to fill up any

glaring deficiencies. Just think, she can send all of us round the world on a pleasure trip."

"When you marry him," cried Myrtle, "won't you buy me a car-load of dolls?"

"Be patient, until you hear how it ended, girls."

"Why," inquired Martha, "you weren't so foolish as to refuse both of them, were you?"

"Why, you weren't wishing her to marry both at once," cried Myrtle.

"I spent the money which I had intended to apply on my board account, in buying a pair of fine boots, a lovely pale blue ribbon for my throat, and some delicate lace. The evening before the party I tried on my best dress with the new ribbon and lace. Mrs. McFadden (the dear old lady) told me I might have some of her pretty fuchsias to wear. On Tuesday, wishing my front hair to be well-curled in the evening, I left it in papers, and went to school with it ingeniously covered with a large bow."

"How I wish I had been in your place," interrupted Martha.

"I would willingly have exchanged situations with you that day," said Maggie.

"Pro—ceed then," urged Martha. "Did the gentlemen not notice you, or propose?"

"Well, I have noticed that when I am prospering and everything is satisfactory, some great calamity scatters my conceit to the winds. During the forenoon, one boy, Harry, who had continually afforded me much annoyance, became still more provoking.

He began by prompting innocent boys to mischievous tricks, and laughing in derision when they were corrected. Then he and his seatmate repeatedly asked and obtained permission to get a drink, so I told them they were not to get another drink until noon. He laughed and walked defiantly to the pail, and after drinking, poured a cupful of water into another boy's pocket. I called him up to my desk, and as I took a strap to punish him, he gave another sneering laugh, and muttered that I could not hurt him with that 'thing.'"

"Why," exclaimed Martha, angrily, "I'd have spent the whole of my salary paying a big boy to keep him performing involuntary somersaults all the way to his father's house."

"I became aroused, though I did not lose control of myself, so I picked up a piece of slate-frame and administered three slaps on each of his hands. I intended to hurt him sufficiently to conquer his bravado spirit, but am sure he was not injured in the least. Indeed, he laughed again. Before noon I noticed him running pins under the skin of the palms of his hands and tearing it up. I forbade him continuing this, and thought no more of the occurrence then.

"When school opened in the afternoon my gentleman was in high spirits, whispering loudly about his father, and occasionally raising himself up to steal a glance through the window. I did not dread his father, for the only time I had met him he had told me to whip Harry when necessary, and that he also

would whip him when he came home. But about two o'clock I saw a horse and rider approaching the school-house. The man, who was Harry's father, alighted and tied his horse. Unannounced, he strode into the room and up to my desk, shouting:

"'I am going to have you arrested, you have nearly killed my boy.'

"About eighty inquisitive eyes and ears were on the alert for any scene that would afford diversion to their monotonous lives. Terrified as I was at the angry man, I observed that the 'nearly killed' boy wore the same defiant smile, and that he was scattering winks and nods, which could easily be interpreted into 'Now I'm bringing her to time.' I summoned sufficient courage to ask upon what he founded his threat. He fiercely replied that any girl who would give seventy-nine strokes with a piece of board to a child, was not safe to be at large.

"I repeated in astonishment, 'Seventy-nine?' and 'A piece of board?' At this, the eyes of the bad boy dropped and he bent down, apparently to pick up a book. I told him that I had given Harry only six slaps. He mocked me and showed me the boy's hands where the skin of the palms was all torn in several places. I instantly explained that he tore the skin himself with pins.

"'You're clever at invention,' he said; 'I'll give you credit for that much, any way, but you'll have to pay a fine or go to gaol. I believe in punishing children, but there is a limit to all things, as you'll find to your sorrow.'

"I had been watching for an opportunity to ask him to step out to the porch, for I did not care about the children hearing all his threats and charges, but not until now did I find the chance or the courage. When I politely asked him to step out of the room, he scolded and stamped in a rude manner to the door; and as I stepped out to try to convince him of the truth, I placed the school in charge of a monitor."

"I s'pose they held a circus inside!" said Myrtle.

"In the midst of his abuse and the annoyance of the restless children within, I thought—Isn't it strange in our wakeful hours we never cease thinking? Sometimes I have tried not to, but still I would think.—Well, I thought of the *fine* and my money expended on unnecessaries, to wear a few hours at an entertainment. Entertainment, indeed! how I spurned the thought of so trifling an event, in such trouble. Then the image of my father's face—more sorrowful than I had ever seen it—arose vividly before me. I wondered if I had lost my senses and really had given the boy seventy-nine slaps, and my head began to swim. All this time the man was pouring forth his angry complaints. I think the fresh air must have sustained me, for I answered him calmly, 'I only gave him six slaps,' and I proposed bringing a girl out to corroborate my statement. But he objected on the ground that I would have my favorites, who would uphold me in the falsehood. I then called Harry out, and asked him how many slaps I had given him. His face grew crimson, and he faltered out, 'forty.'

"At this his father shook his fist at him, and exclaimed, 'Forty! Didn't you tell me seventy-nine? *I'll* take you in hand, and thrash the forty out of you, you rascal.'

"He at last went away much in the same state he had come, threatening to have me fined, and calling out that his boy had never been conquered at home, and that it was a funny thing for me to attempt it.

"The magistrate was no other than Mr. Cameron, and what effect would my lace and ribbon have, following in the wake of such a reputation as that angry man would give me.

"I had no time for reflection, for in opposition to the angry expressions of the man I had heard the continual noise of falling benches and loud voices in the school-room. I was twice interrupted by pupils peeping out, under the pretext of reporting some mischief to me, but really to ascertain if I were being sufficiently humiliated, and to hear some news which they might retail to their friends inside.

"Upon entering, the children began to resume their work, but I could scarcely get a breath, owing to the presence of the fumes of cayenne pepper and brimstone. In expressing my displeasure at so much coughing, I was interrupted by sundry coughing spells on my own account. I missed my chair, but numberless little tell-tale fingers immediately directed my attention to the ceiling, from which it was suspended. Upon inquiring for the perpetrators of the deed I found that they were the notorious Harry and his seat-

mate. These culprits not being visible, I concluded that they had found a means of egress through a window.

"I felt very much like going home. Indeed, if papa had driven up with the cutter then, I should not have hesitated in going home with him for good—yes, more, I should have preferred driving to Kamschatka."

"Wouldn't you have waited for a boat?" inquired Myrtle, who had lately been learning to "bound" the continents.

"Perhaps Behring Strait would have frozen over to oblige me in much the same way as novelists bridge over difficulties for their characters. However, there was no means of escape. I dreaded going home to face my 'trustee-ess,' so I dragged out the remainder of the afternoon in misery, taking care that the wormwood of my heart should not be depicted upon my countenance.

"When all was seemingly in order we were startled by a sound, apparently proceeding from the attic, which very much resembled the lamentations of a lately orphaned calf. This barnyard music, being away beyond my control, was interspersed with frequent whistles and the singing of 'Yankee Doodle' until school closed. To be sure, this was highly entertaining to the children below.

"When I reached home, Mrs. McFadden sympathized with me, and said that that man had been the annoyance of every teacher, and that Mr. Cameron would not impose a fine upon me without satisfactory evidence; and even if he did, she would lend me the necessary

money rather than see me go to gaol. She thought it right to whip a boy almost at any time, for if he was not coming out of mischief, he was going into it. All this was very kind of her."

"Kind to the boys?" asked Myrtle.

"No, no, to me. But it only added fuel to the fire in my bosom. To think of my being fined or going to gaol! I, who had taken the highest certificate ever merited in our county.

"Well, I adjourned to my room, and cried with the vehemence of a dozen abused school-teachers, and wondered why I had ever been born."

"Poor Maggie," cried Martha, "you have been cruelly treated. Catch me be a teacher, to be a target and fired at by every ill-tempered person. I'll have a cattle ranch out west, or wash dishes even, yes, *wash dishes* until I am superannuated on a pension of one dollar ninety-seven and a half cents. But wasn't your pretty face all distorted for the evening?"

"*The evening!* There was no evening for me. A note came from Mrs. Cameron, stating that I should not mind any 'little' school trouble, but be sure to come, as she had invited the others on my account. Mr. and Mrs. McFadden exerted themselves to persuade, nay, to compel me to accompany them to Mrs. Cameron's. But all was in vain, my heart was torn and heavy, even if my face had not been red and swollen, my eyes bloodshot, and my bosom heaving great, uncontrollable sighs.

"The next morning the three trustees met at school,

and suspended Harry during my engagement there, and severely threatened his seat-mate with like treatment if he failed to improve. Since that I have the respect and perfect control of the school."

"Why," inquired Myrtle, "didn't you arrest that bad man for making you lose a forty-thousand-dollar husband and all my dolls?"

Martha stole out, and returned with tears in her eyes, a jar of strawberry jam in one hand, and a half-loaf of fruit-cake in the other. She handed the delicacies to Maggie, while she said, "We'll make up for it while you are home; so, eat these. When I make my fortune I'll remember those trustees in my will; see if I don't."

"Why not divide your fortune with them while they are living?" inquired Myrtle.

The faces of Eva and Myrtle, which had lengthened considerably during the recital of this story, suddenly brightened, for the girls laughed immoderately at Maggie's bountiful repast, and drew up to participate in it.

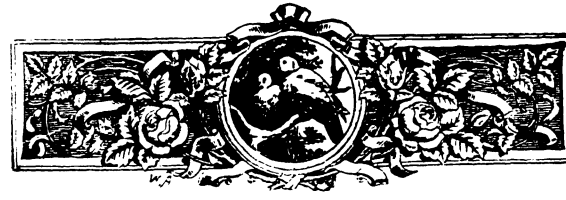
At the close of her stories, Maggie, in drawing her handkerchief from her pocket, accidentally dropped a much-worn newspaper clipping. With the owner's permission and with a caution not to sever the worn paper, Martha read it aloud. The piece was entitled:

"THE SCHOOL-TEACHER'S SOLILOQUY."

BY A SCHOOL-MA'AM.

"To teach or not to teach, that is the question ;
Whether it is better in the school to suffer
The noise and bother of four dozen youngsters,
Or to take up arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by marrying, end them ? To love—to marry—
No more ; and by marrying say we end
The heartache, and the thousand petty troubles
That teachers are heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To love—to marry ;
To marry ! perchance to be miserable ; aye, there's the rub :
For in that state of wedlock what troubles may come,
When we have shuffled off this happy girlhood,
Must give us pause ; there's the respect
That makes teaching of so long life ;
For who would bear the anxieties of examinations,
The scorn of Model-school teachers, the carelessness of trustees,
The weariness of mind and body, the criticism of inspectors,
The insolence of children, and the care
That patient teachers with unworthy pupils take,
When they themselves might their quietus make
By simply marrying? Who would all this bear,
And grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of misery after marriage,
That untried state, unto which if you once enter
You can never return, puzzles the girls,
And makes them rather bear the ills they have
Than fly to others that they know not of? "

"Well," said Eva, "there's a bright side to teaching, although we may not always be able to see it."



CHAPTER IV.

MARTHA MAKES DUMPLINGS AND GETS A NEW DRESS.

THE next morning, Mr. Brock said that he was going to town, and asked if Mrs. Brock and the girls would like to go with him. After some consultation, Mrs Brock decided to go and to take Maggie and Eva, the former saying she had some money burning a hole in her pocket. Mrs. Brock said:

"It will be no treat for Martha to go to town, for she goes 'shopping' nearly every day on her way to school, even if she has no money."

Maggie promised to bring Martha and Myrtle something that would please them. So Maggie said to Martha:

"What would you like me to bring you?"

"You needn't bother about me, my wants are of no consequence," she replied, half in mischief; "but if you *should* get me anything, I want to trim a very pretty hat that I have. I'd like a yard of ribbon and a few black bugles, if they'll not cost too much. I'll show it

to you;" and she bounded upstairs for the hat, which had already been the cause of much anxiety. She thought, "Now this is my chance for my dress, but then Maggie is so liberal with her money that I must not impose upon her."

While she was upstairs, Mrs. Brock said to Maggie:

"Never mind her hat, I'll try and get it trimmed before spring. We have had more laughing and crying over that hat than you could imagine. It was an old felt one of yours, and one day she asked if she might have it. I consented, thinking she was going to wear it about the garden, to save her school hat; but shortly after that, she told me that she was in trouble. She had secretly taken her hat to be made over and had not the thirty cents to pay for it. I would have given her the money, but I did not think the hat was worth it, and she would only want more money to buy trimming. However, she made a bargain with your papa, and gathered apples for the thirty cents."

Mrs. Brock had just finished her story when Martha returned, with the much-talked-of hat jauntily balanced on her head.

Maggie admired it, and decided that it must be trimmed.

"See," said Martha, "if it just had about three loops here," as she pointed to the spot, "and a few bugles dangling from the edge of the rim, it would be a real little beauty."

"Well, I'll look round and get some little thing for

it, dearie," said Maggie, as she imprinted a kiss on the brow of this delighted sister; "but you musn't make an idol of the hat."

"Do you think you can get dinner, girls? It will be about one o'clock when we return."

"Yes, mamma," replied Martha, "I'll have a chance to make dumplings. I'm nearly always at school when you have them. If I *am* at home, I never have enough, so I'll make them in the boiler."

Her mother started out to the sleigh, laughing, and thinking that she was only joking.

As it had been Maggie's wish to have Eva's photograph taken during the holidays, Mrs. Brock had decided that they had better avail themselves of the present opportunity. So while Maggie was arranging Eva's hair in the quiet dressing-room adjoining the art gallery, Eva remarked:

"I am decked in borrowed plumes all ready for flight. I have mamma's prettiest frill, Myrtle's hair ribbon, and Martha's beads. I got them all free, excepting the beads, and to get them I had to promise to do her share of dishwashing for the next two weeks."

"I am afraid your beads are dearly borrowed," replied Maggie. When their business at the artist's was finished, the girls proceeded to a dry goods store.

The salesman insisted upon showing them his fine stock of charming plaid dress goods. Maggie told him that she did not wish to purchase any, but he, with all the perseverance often attributed to his class, still

persisted, not in selling (as he remarked), but only in showing the goods. She fancied one piece of pretty green plaid, of excellent quality, and thought:

"A dress from this would charm poor Martha, but I'm afraid I cannot afford it just now." They passed on to the millinery department to get something pretty for the troublesome hat. Maggie bought some bright shaded ribbon, together with a graceful feather. They then slowly and reluctantly left the store. While walking along, the thought of the green plaid and of Martha's smiling face disturbed Maggie's peace of mind, and she said:

"I'll get this dress for her, and then she can go to church again; maybe the sermons will drive away some of her love of finery. Eva, if you won't expect one, too, I'll practise a little self-denial, and take Martha a dress."

Eva replied, "I wish you *would* get it, she will leave off teasing mamma, for one thing. She is actually turning poor mamma's hair gray, with her constant wishing for dresses. You see my best dress is not much soiled yet."

"You are a dear, good girl."

They returned and bought the green dress, then met their parents, and the four drove home together. Maggie told her parents of the presents, and finished by saying:

"Please don't tell Martha what I got, as I intend to have some fun with her about them."

Martha met the party at the door, and smilingly said:

"Come in, ladies, and take off your things, the dumplings are ready, and I'm delighted to be favored with a visit from you."

Upon sitting down to dinner, Mrs. Brock exclaimed: "Martha, did you forget to set the meat and vegetables on the table, dear?"

"Oh, no, not at all, at all; we have apple-dumplings with cream and sugar for dinner, and I wish you to enjoy yourselves. I know you have a keen appetite after your drive."

It was now quite apparent that the dumplings were a tangible reality, for there was a large one steaming on each plate, besides more in a platter and two vegetable dishes.

Myrtle was so overcome with laughter, that she was obliged to run to the kitchen to relieve her feelings. Martha remarked, "I am happy for once, as I see my way clear to a feast of dumplings."

Mr. Brock smiled, and glanced significantly across the table at his wife. She had been trying to refrain from laughing, but the comical expression of his face was too much for her self-command. Myrtle felt she was at liberty to return when she heard her mother laughing, and she came back to the dining-room to participate in the mirth occasioned by Martha's idea of what constituted a first-rate dinner.

They enjoyed the dinner very well, notwithstanding a slightly burnt flavor, and an occasional brown spot, caused by a lump of soda.

"Now, my friends, I hope you are enjoying your

dinner; there are plenty more dumplings," exclaimed Martha, when her mother, from curiosity, peeped into the kitchen. She returned laughing again, and exclaimed:

"She HAS actually made dumplings in the *boiler*, and it is still a quarter full."

Then, in a pitiful tone, Myrtle said:

"Mamma, she kept me peeling apples for nearly two hours."

Mr. Brock at first felt much annoyed with Martha's conduct, and was about to send her up to her room for punishment, when the recollection of one of his own boyish holiday pranks flashed across his mind. This, together with the thought of the cold lunch his children usually ate in the dusty school-rooms, softened his resolution, in so much that he decided to allow her to have her own way upon this occasion, and then to forbid any more of such behaviour. After dinner, Maggie gave Myrtle a pair of slippers, and Martha a small paper bag, containing the ribbon.

When Martha saw the ribbon, she was delighted, and exclaimed:

"This is lovely, you shouldn't have spent so much money on me. It is exactly like one of my samples I admire."

Then she skipped round the table to Maggie, and by way of showing her grateful affection, gave her a vigorous shake.

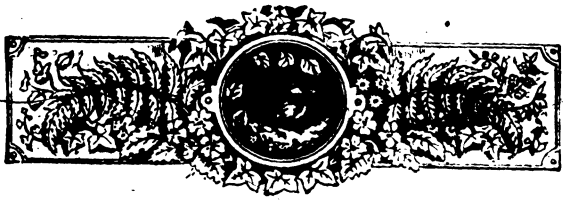
After a little whispering, pleading with her mother, she quietly left the room; but soon returned and

placed a glass of preserved pears in Maggie's hand. Then the feather was produced, which evoked further expressions of admiration, with the substantial accompaniment of more dainties from the happy Martha. At last Maggie gave her the dress, but this was too much for the kind-hearted, lively girl. She threw herself down upon the sofa near her father, and cried, while between the sobs were heard the exclamations:

"I don't deserve it! I'm too bad for it! but I'll try and be good like Eva, now that I can go to church again."

Her father gently stroked her hair as he whispered, "I am afraid you think too much of finery."

During the remainder of the vacation, Martha waited upon Maggie very attentively, anticipating nearly all her wishes.



CHAPTER V.

THE BROCKS RESOLVE TO MOVE WESTWARD.

ONE pleasant day, shortly after Christmas, the gentleman who held the mortgage on the Brock farm was expected to call for the interest, which was awaiting him. Mr. and Mrs. Brock had spent some time that morning discussing the probability of ever being able to pay the principal. It was quite evident that it would take many years, even under the most favorable circumstances, to do this. Mr. Brock once more referred to his old idea of emigrating to the North-West, and descanted on the great improvement which must follow upon settlement in that golden land. He spoke so enthusiastically that even Mrs. Brock, much as she disliked the thought of leaving their old home, began to think that Mr. Brock's plan was, after all, the best thing for them. She reluctantly consented that Mr. Brock might try to negotiate with the agent, with the object of selling him the farm. By this means Mr. Brock might free himself from debt,

—and receive sufficient cash to establish a new home. During that afternoon the unwelcome visitor arrived, and was closeted with Mr. Brock for more than an hour. At length Mrs. Brock, who had been anxiously awaiting the close of the interview, heard the visitor take his departure, and hurried into the dining-room to hear what arrangement had been arrived at.

"Well, my dear," said Mr. Brock, "it has come at last. Thinking it the best course open to me, I proposed what we had talked about so often—to give him the farm," and he sighed deeply, "on condition that he should pay us fifteen hundred dollars. I feel sorry to do it, but though we lose the farm, we, at the same time, free ourselves from the great cloud that has been lowering over our heads so many years."

"It's no more than we had expected," replied Mrs. Brock, "and we'll have to make the best of it. I presume you'll talk about prairie homesteading more than ever, now that we have no home. But I have made up my mind that I will not oppose your wish. The children have been longer at school than I had hoped for, so I will yield to whatever you decide upon."

"I don't see anything else we can do to advantage. The money wouldn't go far here, but if we got a free homestead in the North-West, it would give us a tolerably good start."

"I suppose so, but I am afraid of the Indians; and then the grasshoppers might come, and we should not gain anything."

"Those Indians are all right when they are honorably dealt with."

"Well, well; we will just calculate upon going to the North-West prairie," replied Mrs. Brock, reluctantly.

"When'll we need to give up possession?" inquired Frank.

"Not later than May."

"It's too bad that we have to leave such a comfortable home, where our grandfather lived; and to leave all the nice girls at school, too," said Martha, in an indignant tone. "What a shame for grandpa to endorse that note! I believe boys ought not to be taught writing. We shall not leave this place! I'll teach, and my salary, together with Maggie's, will keep all of us, while Frank can go to college."

But Eva was sorry for her parents, though she felt the blow as keenly as the others, and thought she would help them to bear up and build their hopes on higher things, so she remarked:

"Perhaps God saw that we were too comfortable here, to set our hearts upon things above. When we go to a new farm, among strangers, it may make us look to Jesus, for the happy home He has gone to prepare. We'll go to our prairie home as happy as can be, and if it should prove to be very unpleasant, we'll make believe we are travelling through the desert to the land of Canaan. Perhaps by breaking the ties that bind us to this beloved home, some of us may be led to think more of our home in heaven."

"There's our little Goody again, and I believe she is right," said Frank; "we can make a pretty good

start, and by being economical we may be better off in a few years than we ever were."

"I suppose we'll have to go," interposed Martha; "but I don't know what Eva means at all, for I've read and heard that the settlers out west cheat, swear, break the Sabbath, and have hardly any churches or ministers, so I think we may be worse off instead of better."

"No, no," said Eva, "we'll have the Bible, and we'll have papa—he's as good as a minister. Even if the people are not very good, we'll try and improve them, both by setting an example, with God's help, and by teaching the Bible to as many as we can. I've just now thought of a plan," and she clapped her hands for joy. "I am going to try and teach an Indian girl, and start her on the path to heaven. Then she could teach her people. She might be the means, through the Lord, of saving the souls of many poor Indians." She turned to Martha, and continued, "You may help by giving me your beads for prizes."

"That's all very well for you to calculate upon, after all my hard work getting them. But you won't send my beads prancing on horseback all over the prairie, associating with tomahawks and rifles. Besides, you'd only be encouraging a great tribe to come in the night and burn our shanty.

"Sure, it's me father's son that shall shtand fernent them and presarve the illigant shanty," said Mike.

"What do you think about it, papa?" inquired Martha, ignoring Mike's remark.

"Eva's idea is, no doubt, a grand one. If we spent the remainder of our lives in teaching and helping one of those degraded people to become a child of God, we should be doing well. The Bible says: 'Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.'"

Martha dared not reply. She knew Eva was right; but she felt it very trying to leave so many kind friends, and to take her pretty hat and stylish green dress away to a shanty to wear in the presence of Indians, or to leave folded in a trunk to be moth-eaten However, she subdued her feelings and inquired:

"How are you going to catch your squaw, with a lasso or with a Winchester?"

"I know you are making fun of me; but, seriously, it will be a most glorious work to teach those poor Indians the truths of Christianity. Papa will help me. If we could settle near an Indian reserve it would make it easier. I'd get papa to go to the reserve, and, perhaps, the Indian agent would select a bright girl, about fifteen, who would be likely to persevere in her lessons. She could come to our house, or, as you say, shanty, every day, where I'd teach her and aim to make her an excellent Sunday-school teacher for her own people. I might learn her language, and afterwards teach more Indians."

At this Frank gallantly sprang to his feet and offered his arm to Eva, saying:

"I'll be your champion; come along, little missionary.

You'll have the money I got for my colt to assist you in your Indian work. All aboard for the prairie," as he and Eva closed the door behind them.

They seated themselves in the cutter behind the colt which Frank had lately been training, and drove off, while the large feathery snowflakes bespangled their clothing with designs such as man in all his boasted skill might try in vain to copy. As Eva held her sleeve up to her brother, she exclaimed in rapture, "Frank, are not these flakes lovely? They show God's power; see that star, this diamond, and here is one like a cross. How are the snowflakes formed?"

"From what little I've read, and what papa has told me, when the temperature reaches 32° or lower, the moisture in the air freezes, and falls in these beautiful flakes."

"Isn't it wonderful?"

"Now, I'm going to surprise you by telling you that each of these flakes is composed of hundreds of most beautiful crystals. They are chiefly stars hav-having six points, but there are also many other patterns."

"If all the people in the world tried, they couldn't make one snowflake or one flower, and yet it is nothing for God to make millions of them. Are we not well off to have a God who is able and willing to do so much for us? But look at this odd one, Frank. Who has ever counted the number of forms?" inquired Eva, who in her enthusiasm forgot to wait for an answer to her former question.

"I think papa told me once that Scoresby and Glaisher made the discovery. They are not all flat, some are three-sided prismatic crystals, and some pyramids. The flakes in one snow-storm are generally alike."

"It's so funny. I suppose, when we go to our new home on the Manitoba prairie, we'll find the snow a great deal deeper, because it is nearer the North Pole," said Eva, again.

"Not necessarily so, for the farther north we go the keener the frost is. As the temperature sinks below 32° the flakes become smaller. Some flakes are only the fourteenth part of an inch across, while some are as much as an inch."

After Frank and Eva went out driving, Martha, who felt herself a full-grown woman since she had gone to church in her new dress, said:

"It's perfectly ridiculous the way Eva goes on about her Indian girl; we'll have to put a stop to it, for I believe the child is in earnest. She will disgrace the whole family, bringing Indians around."

"It does seem rather a wild notion," replied her mother; "but if we prevented her in her efforts to convert one person, it would be wrong. Indians have souls the same as we have. I think, however, she could find enough to do among white girls."

"We'll have a busy time, the rest of the winter, in preparing to go to our new home. There is little or no fruit, I believe, on the prairie; therefore we must take as much preserved and dried fruit with us as we can."

"Oh, I hadn't thought of that. What'll we do without apples and cherries and everything?" inquired Martha.

"We'll just use more vegetables, and if we have good crops we can buy canned and, perhaps, imported fresh fruit. We will try to dry all those apples in the cellar; and there are some fine pumpkins, too, which your father intended for the cows; we'll dry some of them to take along, for pies."

The work of the evening, however, banished unnecessary conversation, it being Saturday; for it was a rule with Mr. Brock to avoid Sunday labor as much as possible. Mike was brushing boots, the others paring and dressing a boiled ham, sewing buttons on buttonless articles, while outside the axe was doing double duty, as if to announce that the morrow would be the Sabbath and a day of rest.

After the work and tea were over, the children finished the preparation of their Sunday-school lesson by mutual questions and answers, until they considered themselves proficient in it; then they formed themselves into a class to be reviewed by their father. Mr. Brock could already see a slight improvement in Martha, since she had received her new clothes and had again attended church and the Bible-class.

For some mysterious reason, Martha's clothing usually became soiled so much sooner than Eva's, that the former was occasionally obliged to absent herself from church. But on this Sunday morning there was no occasion for this, so the Brock house was closed and

the whole family, with unruffled temper and with smiling faces, drove away to the house of God. Now they pass a group of children, in gay attire, hurrying, too, on their way to church; and again, a shabbily-dressed old man, Bible in hand, limping along, probably to be seated near the door, where he would be able to hear but little of the sermon. They fill their comfortable pew, and the children listen more or less attentively. The grand organ, under the delicate and practised touch of the organist, sends forth strains that appeal to the finer feelings of all, even those who were in other respects apparently most callous. Then at home favorite delicacies, sweet music and kind words, make the Sabbath a day to be remembered and looked forward to with pleasure.

CHAPTER VI.

MARTHA AND EVA MEET WITH TRIALS AT SCHOOL.

THE next evening, Mr. and Mrs. Brock advised their children to improve their time at school, as this might be the last opportunity for study they would have. Frank had been spared to attend school also, since they had resolved to move westward.

They all went quietly to their lessons, excepting Martha, who noisily grumbled:

"You can't expect me to study in all this confusion, for Eva is often practising her music, papa reading out loud, and Frank either whistling or tormenting the cat; so there!"

"Well," returned her patient mother, "we'll try and find another lamp, and let you sit upstairs after tea every evening, to give you a good chance. I wish you to learn all you can, for though we hope to prosper, our future is uncertain; and it may be necessary for you to support yourselves in case of reverses."

After some difficulty in fitting an odd burner on an odd lamp, and cutting a piece of wick from that of the dining-room lamp, Martha was cosily ensconced in a well-cushioned arm-chair. Her mother left her to work out wonders in grammar and algebra.

The others progressed more rapidly, for Martha was the most clamorous one in the family.

Half-an-hour afterwards her mother stepped softly into Martha's new study, and what should meet her inquiring gaze but ribbons red, ribbons green, ribbons yellow, washed and unwashed, beads, wire and sundry old hat shapes, with the giddy Martha seated in the midst, surveying them with admiration. She was sewing away at a bow for the hat, and did not hear the approach of her mother until the door opened, when she hastily swept the millinery into a large basket standing near. Her mother, in a tone of injured surprise, asked:

"Is this the way you are deceiving us, after allowing you to come here alone?"

"Oh, mamma," she stammered in embarrassment, "I did study quite awhile, and I just thought I'd make up a travelling hat to wear when moving to Manitoba; you see, my good one might get shabby wearing it a whole week."

"Yes, yes, but you did not need quietness to trim a hat, and if you are going to work at millinery awhile every evening all winter, you had better remain home from school and assist me with the housework. It is with the greatest self-denial that I spare you at all."

"Oh, well, I suppose I'll have to study hard. I wish I could be good like Eva, but the bad is in me, and in spite of all I can do it comes to the surface. I don't want to go to school, I'd much rather cook."

Upon Mrs. Brock's return to the dining-room, Myrtle inquired: "Mamma, will Maggie go with us when we move?"

"My dear, your papa and I have been thinking the matter over, and decided to leave well enough alone. She has a good situation, is comfortable, and grandfather will look after her. If we like our new home and can procure a situation near us for her, she may then come. I am very sorry to part with her, but feel it will be for the best."

"Well, that's too bad, poor Maggie will cry when she hears it, and Martha will scold," said Myrtle, with tears in her eyes.

At intermission the following day, Eva said to Martha:

"I'm afraid you may be kept in after four to-night, as you spent considerable time at your crochet lace in school-hours, under cover of the desk. Let me help you with your lessons?"

With an indignant toss of the head, she replied:

"I don't think I could know my history and literature any better."

"Yes, but wait until the statics come, and we'll see."

"No danger. What would you say if you reached home ten minutes behind me, Miss Perfection?"

"I only wished to help you."

True to Eva's prediction, Martha was sentenced to solve three difficult problems in statics after school was dismissed. But when all had departed save the few offenders, the teacher, being only human and therefore subject to human weakness, began to be moved by visions of his chubby three-year-old swinging on the front gate, straining her bright little eyes for the first peep at her papa turning the corner, and perhaps his wife watching from the window ; in addition to these attractions might be enumerated the comfortable warm room, and an excellent tea which he knew to be awaiting. These gentle influences increasing every minute in their effect, so far overcame his sense of justice, that he ultimately relented, and the exasperated pupils were soon slamming the doors and stamping on the stairs as noisily as they dared, without affording *exactly* sufficient proof that their conduct was prompted by any ill-feeling.

When Martha reached the sidewalk she scanned the street for her sisters, and to make the situation more unpleasant, she caught a glimpse of them in a buggy driving homeward. In Martha's haste the thought of the oft-forbidden railroad track with its narrow bridge across the surging waters, tempted her to take that short cut to her father's back door. She could see no train, and soon her nimble feet were carrying her along the plank footway, forty feet above the deep, treacherous stream, while she prided herself with the expectation of reaching home almost as soon as Eva. A shrill whistle and the roar of an approaching train, however,

sent through Martha an indescribable thrill, and as she looked behind and saw the train, she nearly fell through the skeleton bridge. It was a terrible moment. At first, she thought she would lie flat down at the side of the track and thus escape, but frightened at this idea, she carefully crept out upon the projecting end of a stick of timber, where she had only about fifteen inches square to rest upon. With her feet swinging below in the awful space, and her arms hugging another timber with the tenacity of despair, she thought:

"This is all I can do, and my only chance is to keep cool and hold fast. What if the engine should shoot out steam while passing!"

The steaming and snorting train came up to her, with trainmen and some passengers stretching their necks to catch a view of the terrified girl. The watchful engineer, who had taken in the situation as soon as he rounded the curve, whistled "down brakes," and reversed the engine, fearing that the girl would be run over. As the train slacked up he called to her:

"Come here, and I'll take you across."

On looking up, Martha recognized in him an old acquaintance. He took her in the cab and started again, relieved at the fortunate termination of what a few moments before had threatened to be a serious disaster, but provoked that the mischievous girl had caused him so much delay. He felt that he should take her to the next station, which was ten miles dis-

tant, but upon referring to his watch, slacked up and handed her off as they crossed her father's back lane.

During all this time the girl was scarcely herself, as she had not recovered from her fright, and she feared the anger of her parents.

She ran breathlessly into the house, and related her marvellous escape to her mother, who listened intently with a grateful heart, but who was annoyed that her daughter had disobeyed her in walking along the railroad track.

Shortly after this the other girls came in at the front door, and Myrtle said:

"Is supper ready? Needn't wait for Martha, she's kept in again. I 'spect she won't be home for—"

She was interrupted by Martha entering the room, having her sleeves rolled up, preparatory to making biscuits for tea. The two girls could scarcely believe their eyes, upon beholding this apparition, for had they not left Martha pondering over her slate at school? But it was a slight check to Myrtle's tale-bearing. Martha, however, felt that she had done wrong, and for once in her life did not attempt to defend herself.

During the last two years at school, Eva had shared her desk with Miriam Harkness, the pampered daughter of a wealthy merchant, whose influential position as a school trustee caused the teacher, Mr. Rogers, probably as a matter of policy, to show Miriam no small amount of favor. The strong friendship which had continued so long between these two girls, at once so different in disposition and circumstances, had

created not a little comment on the part of many of the other scholars.

For some time previous to Miriam's entrance to the High School, her father had promised, as she was naturally rather dull, that he would give her a handsome present if she succeeded in passing the entrance examination. After close attention to her studies, in which she received considerable assistance from Eva, she at last succeeded in passing the examination, and in winning the prize, which was nothing less than a necklace and locket set in diamonds. When her father clasped it around her neck, he told her that as she had earned it at school, he intended her to wear the prize every day. More than once Eva had held this costly jewel in her hand and admired the brilliant lustre of the diamonds, as she swung it swiftly back and forth. Little did these girls dream that it would bring anything but pleasure to its owner and admirers.

One day in April, as the girls sat together in school, Miriam was playing with this article of adornment, when the teacher, noticing her inattention to her lessons, sent her to a distant seat for a half-hour.

She, fearing he would sentence the jewel to temporary imprisonment among other miscellaneous, forbidden articles that annoyed him, placed it stealthily behind a book in a corner of her own half of the desk, before going to her newly allotted place. During the time of Miriam's punishment, Eva had been up to her class, thereby leaving the jewel unprotected. Miriam, upon receiving permission to return, failed to find the

necklace and locket in her desk, and inquired of Eva, who had also returned:

"Where's my necklace?"

"I've not seen it since you had it," Eva replied.

Miriam took her books out, and made a thorough but futile search; then Eva assisted her, but with the same unsatisfactory result.

At this Miriam laughingly inquired:

"You're teasing me. Haven't you got it in your pocket?"

"No, Miriam," was the reply.

Then Miriam, losing all patience in her desperation, exclaimed quite angrily, and in a tone above the usual whisper:

"I believe you have it. Indeed, you must have it."

Eva made no reply, but her pale face and quivering lip showed how deeply Miriam's suspicions had wounded her.

Mr. Rogers, being disturbed by the loud remarks of Miriam, said:

"Miriam, were you speaking to me?"

"No, sir, but Eva Brock has stolen my diamond locket and chain."

Had a flash of lightning struck the roof, it could not have caused greater astonishment than did this unwarrantable accusation. Eva was looked upon as the most strictly honorable pupil in the school, and her exemplary conduct had been publicly referred to, time and again, by her teachers. Not another pupil entertained a thought of believing it, not even the teacher, who, in

deference to Miriam, began the investigation with the appearance of belief. And, to speak metaphorically, the other indignant pupils looked daggers at Miriam.

But he, once more weighing the importance of Mr. Harkness' influence, gave a petulant jerk or two to his vest, and said:

"Eva Brock, I'm astonished. Come here."

Poor Eva was thoroughly bewildered, the hot blood mounting to her forehead chased away the former deathly paleness, her great brown eyes flashed, and when she stood erect to comply, feeling all eyes fixed upon her, she feared she should drop to the floor. But she felt relieved by the imagination that the floor was gradually rising up before, behind, and on each side of her, not only supporting her, but it seemed to be sailing away with her beyond school-room criticisms into space indefinite. In this half-unconscious state, she sank into her seat and rested her head upon her folded arms on the desk. But this was only for an instant, for she was aroused by the command:

"Do you hear me? Come to the front this minute."

She sprang up as if electrified, and walked at once to the platform, biting her lips to keep back the hasty words that seemed pressing for utterance.

"It looks rather suspicious to see you hesitating in this manner. Hand me the necklace without further delay."

"I have not got it, Mr. Rogers. Nor have I had it to-day."

"Miriam, be so kind as to step this way and tell me

what reason you have for thinking that Eva has your jewellery."

"I left it in my desk and told Eva to watch it in my absence," said Miriam, inventing a reply that she thought would justify her charge; "and Mary Ann Downy said she saw her putting it in her pocket, besides she has always fancied it."

"Oh, such—," and Eva suddenly checked herself.

"Mary Ann Downy to the front."

When Mary Ann, who always avoided meeting the glance of another, advanced to the edge of the platform, Miriam cast a scornful glance at her and moved away, as Mr. Rogers asked this repulsive-looking girl if she had seen the jewel in Eva's possession. With her eyes fixed upon the floor she hesitatingly replied:

"Please, sir, I saw her put it in her pocket and take it out three or four times, and I forget sure if it was taking of it out or putting of it in her pocket the last time or no, sir."

"Where is it now, then?" inquired the teacher, unable to understand her last remark.

"Eva had it the last time I saw it," replied Mary Ann, not without showing some signs of nervousness, which might be attributed to her sorrow for being compelled to inform on a girl whom she, in common with the others, respected and loved.

Next Mr. Rogers commanded:

"Take your seat, Mary Ann." Feeling in justice to Miriam and his own salary, that he should not appear to regard Eva's word, though he himself really

believed it, he turned to Eva, whose eyes calmly and unswervingly met his, and demanded:

"To save further trouble, give me the trinket at once."

"I can give you no other answer; I have not had it to-day, sir."

"There is some mystery about this. Place the contents of your pocket on the table."

She replied, "There is nothing in my pocket but what is my own, and I do not feel justified in thus humiliating myself."

The attention of the school being arrested by so unusual an occurrence, silence reigned supreme. Then, as the teacher's rage increased, he stamped his foot, excitedly ran his fingers through his hair, and actually shouted:

"You must have it. Empty your pocket this minute or leave the room, I say."

Eva, trained to obedience, placed on the desk the contents of her pocket, which comprised some pencils, an apple, an ink eraser, a handkerchief, and a letter which Miriam had written her, during her temporary absence from school. Had he taken the trouble to read the flattering missive (which temptation he may not have resisted) he would have been enlightened in this style:

"GERANIUM GARDEN,
"BRADWARDINE, ONT.,
"2nd April, 18—

"MY VERY DEAR EVA,—Thank you for your kind letter, which cheered me up, while shut in with this

sore throat. You see, I am trying to reward you by answering immediately. I am just as well pleased that I missed that horrid exam., in fact my throat might not have been so sore had it not been a pretty trying time at school. As the examination is over my throat feels extremely better, so I'll be back Monday to try the temper of Mr. Rogers again. I do not know how such a dear, good girl as you are can remain in favor with such an 'inquisition' as he. I hate him. Doesn't he look princely in his fashionable coat? I wish he had engaged me to trim it. It would be somewhat after this fashion: The buttons in front would be large Scotch thistles, those on the sleeves bitter acorns, those on the back burdock blossoms, while there would be a wreath around the edge of dandelions and goose-grass, and a bouquet of thorns under the Napoleonic chin. I think if this would not satisfy his fastidious taste, as well as bespeak his character, we might give him up as beyond all reason. Now, my dearest Eva, I must close, though I am ashamed of my letter.

"Your loving friend while life lasts,

"MIRIAM HARKNESS."

Now that Eva had obeyed her teacher, she felt utterly disheartened, and in an injured yet dignified manner, turned and walked to her seat, where she dragged out the weary moments until school was dismissed.

The annoyed teacher said to Miriam:

"Take your seat for the present, but this matter must be investigated, and she will be punished as she deserves." Then turning with seeming unconcern to the school, he said:

"Attention to your books, all—attention—ahem!"

But the scholars, having the management of their eyes, ears and tongues under the control of their own individual wills, and feeling the presence of rebellion in the air, they looked about for the instrument of ebullition. This proved to be no other than the loquacious Martha. She stood erect at her desk, and looking unflinchingly into the flashing eyes of Mr. Rogers, began with feeling and emphasis, and with her books packed ready for flight.

Mr. Rogers was too much astonished to speak, for he did not utter a word until Martha had finished her harangue.

"Mr. Rogers, Eva has been treated most shamefully by you. You have represented her to the pupils—who believe her innocent all the same—as a thief. Because Miriam's father is a trustee and a rich man, you pretend to believe anything she tells you. But Eva never stole that or any other thing in her life. You'll be sorry for this day's conduct, for Eva shall be proved innocent." (A whirlwind of applause.)

Martha, having somewhat expended her wrath, picked up her books, walked deliberately to Eva, and in a loud whisper, said:

"I'm leaving school, Eva, but you are doing right to stay until school is dismissed. I'll wait in town for you," and she, for the last time, walked defiantly out of the room. Mr. Rogers would before this have ordered her out, had not the silent sympathy cast upon her by admiring eyes, and the fear that Martha's speech contained too much truth, humbled him to such a degree that he only muttered:

"Impudent girl. Attention to your work."

A short time before school was dismissed Mr. Rogers caught a glimpse of a caricature in the possession of a girl celebrated for her dexterity in drawing. He took possession of the slate, upon which was depicted a hardened looking man, much resembling himself, even to the few bristling hairs on the upper lip, which constituted, in his own opinion, a moustache. The figure lay crushed under the expansive foot of a giantess, who held in her hand a balance, and had written upon her brow the word "Justice."

He doomed the artist to temporary punishment, and during the remainder of the afternoon he exercised his tactics to the best of his ability, in keeping the school in tolerable subjection.

After Eva and Martha had reached home and related to their parents an account of the missing ornament, Eva cried, "I did not take the necklace, but people will think I did. We are just going to move away, too, which will make it look suspicious. Papa, will a policeman come here to-night?" and she glanced nervously at the window, as if expecting that terrifying official to come.

Though this news was a great shock to her parents, her father calmly replied:

"No, no, Eva. I feel you are innocent. I have never known you to tell a falsehood or to take the least trifle that did not belong to you. It would not be well for the one who might authorize a policeman to come here for you. I shall endeavor to investigate this affair before I go to bed."

Mike, under the pretext of keeping away any policeman who might intrude upon the premises in Mr. Brock's absence, took his stand on a gate-post, and uttered extravagant threats, causing a smile to pass over even Eva's troubled face.

Mr. Brock drove away to town, spent some time in finding Mr. Rogers' rooms, and then learned that he was not at home. He next went to the residence of Mr. Harkness, and was informed by a servant that he and Mr. Rogers had walked out together a short time before. He then proceeded to see the Chairman of the Board of School Trustees; but alas! upon looking towards the corner where he had left his horse, Mr. Brock found he was missing. His thoughts were now directed into another channel. He was comforted in his haste along the street by being repeatedly told what he already knew too well—that his horse had broken loose and run away. The tired man in his homeward course was somewhat retarded by picking up in various places his whip, robe and buggy cushion. The truant horse and buggy had arrived home before him, little the worse for the adventure.

In the evening, Mrs. Brock, knowing that idleness was not apt to lighten a heavy heart, gave Eva some sewing to do. As Eva sat lamenting her situation, the text, "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," came to her mind. She was somewhat comforted by the assurance that earthly trouble was by no means a sign that her Lord also had forsaken her, and she thought that the reproach upon her name might prove to be a blessing in disguise.

After the girls went to bed, Eva imagined herself at church, with the people staring at her; then she thought that her future neighbors in Manitoba would hear that she was a thief. She wondered how her mother and father would bear it, if she should be imprisoned. With these unpleasant thoughts she cried herself to sleep. In the night she awoke Martha by clinching her arm and frantically shrieking: "He has arrested me. Look at the handcuffs!"

Martha succeeded in dispelling her midnight alarm, and Eva, after prolonged meditation, resolved henceforth to mention her trouble as seldom as possible; it not being a cheerful subject to inflict upon the other members of the family. The school course of these two girls was thus abruptly closed, for Mr. and Mrs. Brock felt so keenly for them, that they were allowed to remain at home.

. . . . . .

Miriam walked home bearing even a sadder heart than Eva did, for the former feared she had been guilty of breaking the ninth commandment. But in the first desperate moment she had thought, "Eva must have taken it." After having once accused her, she was too proud to retract, always expecting the lost article would be immediately found, when she might renew her friendship with Eva. But her wrath increasing with the charge made by another girl, and with the surrounding excitement, she allowed Eva to go home without giving her one word of anything but distrust. Upon reaching home she kept the loss

of her necklace a secret from her parents. In the evening, however, Mr. Rogers visited her father to discuss the subject. Mr. Harkness was indeed sorry, but was too prudent to take any criminal proceeding without sufficient evidence to enable him to win the suit.

Mr. Brock again went to see Mr. Rogers, but as he acted very obstinately, and the trustees supported him, Mr. Brock received no satisfaction.

Therefore, the incident was, for the present at least, allowed to lie dormant, except in the active minds of those most interested.

CHAPTER VII.

WESTWARD.

THE eventful time when the Brocks were to remove from their delightful home at last arrived. Mrs. Brock's love for the place had been almost unfathomable since the day her husband proudly proclaimed her its mistress. Little did any of them think how bare, in comparison with this, their next home would be; or how different this home was fifty years before, when Grandfather Brock, axe in hand, first claimed as his own this forest-covered soil. The members of the family were strangely silent on this the last day they were to spend in their old home, never so much appreciated as now; but little expression of these thoughts was uttered, perhaps owing to a choking forlorn feeling, which unsummoned made its temporary abode within the heart, or lest the sentiment expressed should bring to another's eye the unwelcome tear. The clear brook, which had reflected

their faces as they, having left their shoes and stockings on the brink, paddled in the cool waters; the choice flowering and fruit-bearing shrubs which had been gathered, proudly planted and tenderly cared for; the ornamental fences, almost unknown on the wild prairie; and the orchard, where many a swing had girdled the fruit-laden limbs—these were all to be left behind to strangers.

This afternoon Mike had been sent in haste with a message to Mr. Gladstone. But he, regardless of the message, directed his steps townward. When he left the gate at the road, he knelt down and crept on the grass for some little distance, with the object of escaping the observation of Mr. Brock and his family; but Johnny Thompson—a neighbor boy—suddenly jumped over the fence beside him, saying:

"Halloo, Mike! You needn't be hiding from me. What's the matter?"

Mike was surprised, and felt that he was suspected of his attempt to run away, but with seeming indifference to the charge, he drew on his memory sufficiently to relate a thrilling story of a buffalo hunt, and thus diverted Johnny's thoughts from the channel he feared they had been beginning to run in. They talked and played until Johnny felt disposed to go home. After waiting uneasily until he was out of sight, Mike moved slowly along, and on reaching a clump of raspberry bushes in a fence corner, drew out from under the bushes a bundle containing his best clothes, and proceeded less stealthily, as he was now

descending a small hill, which made it impossible for those on the old farm to see him. After looking backward, and satisfying himself that he was unobserved, his mind became moderately composed, and he began to speculate upon his anticipated new life. Though sorry to leave Mr. Brock's family, who had treated him with extreme kindness and consideration, he felt life dull with them, and had accepted an offer to join a theatrical troupe then playing in Bradwardine. He now longed for the hour of midnight, when he expected to meet them at the railway station and take the train for Montreal. Then he recalled the words of praise and look of admiration the manager had bestowed upon him one afternoon, on his way from school, when he sang and performed some athletic exercises at a street corner. He thought of the long rides he would have on the train, of the immense fortune he hoped to make, of the thousands of dollars he would send to Mr. Brock, of the fine clothes he would wear, and the fame he would merit. But he failed to look on the dark side of that toilsome life. Upon reaching town, he pawned his clothes for a trifle, and proceeded to spend the intervening hours until midnight in some secluded spot. But it did not prove to be what he had anticipated, for he was there seen by a man who knew him and afterwards informed Mr. Brock. He immediately stole away to more remote parts until after 11 o'clock, when he crept stealthily and hungry enough to the station, and sat down to await the arrival of his new master and the departure of

the train. He now shuddered at the thought of going away among strangers, but was ashamed to return to the kind Brock family. However, Mike was destined never to become an actor: for, as he did not return when expected, and as the message he bore was important, Frank was despatched; and, upon reaching his grandfather's house, he learned that Mike had not been there. Meanwhile the discovery that his best clothes were missing increased the surprise of those at home. Mr. Brock hastened to town, and found that he had sold his clothes. This was sufficient reason for him to employ the chief of police for the recovery of the truant boy. Telegrams, descriptive of Mike, were sent to all the neighboring towns.

During the course of his search Mr. Brock was confronted by Mike's aunt, who, when sufficiently sober, went out washing, and who gave Mr. Brock considerable abuse because Mike was missing.

"Why didn't ye watch the child betther," she said, "and not let him git lost? Ye're not givin' the by no eddycation, for I axed him the other day the popylation o' Tipperary, and he didn't know where it was itself, sure; his own native birthplace. His own blessed mother when she was a-dyin' sure she rolled up thim purty blue eyes o' hers, and she said to me, says she, as she looked in me own honest eyes, 'Kathleen, take care o' me by,' and I vowed, sir, wid tears in me eyes, I would see him safe through this worrold, even if he had to travel many a rocky road. And now he's after bein' lost, more sorrow to—" and as Mr. Brock

moved away she drew a black bottle from under her arm and took a draught of its contents.

Among other researches, Mr. Brock had made two futile visits to the railway station, but he thought as it was approaching midnight, that he would go there once more. He had little expectation of finding the boy, but on entering the quiet room, he found Mike sitting on a hard form looking very lonely and nervous. When he beheld Mr. Brock so close to him he hung his head with shame. All Mr. Brock's interrogations were met with "Nothin'," "No place," and "Dunno;" but as Mr. Brock was leading away his charge, he noticed what he supposed to be a theatrical party entering the station, and as Mike was in the habit of reciting and acting, and talking about theatres, he concluded that in a few minutes more Mike would have been away on the train with the troupe. Mr. Brock gave the boy a sound lecturing, and at last gave him his choice to remain with him or to go among strangers. But to all this Mike only cried and muttered a desire to remain in his adopted home.

The others were in bed when they reached home, and they had only a short time to rest before beginning their fatiguing journey. They had been very busy sorting, packing and preparing for their long trip and their new home. They had never moved before, therefore it proved a very trying time to the elder, though amusing enough to the younger, members of the family.

Very early next morning, Martha alarmed the tired sleeping inmates of the house by shouting:

"All aboard for Manitoba! Frank, Eva, Myrtle, Mike!"

"What time is it?" inquired one. But Mike was too much ashamed to reply.

"Clock's packed, but it's time you were up. Come, rouse yourselves. I fancy I hear the train whistling now," as she sprinkled water on the faces of her sleepy sisters.

After breakfast, their father did not neglect family worship, but fervently asked God to be with them during their journey. One after the other, wearied and worn, dropped off to sleep again, and awoke to find the bright sun well up in the heavens.

After a great deal of bustle and hurry and lost temper, they found themselves at length seated in a comfortable car, anxiously trying to remember if they had left any household valuables behind them. Martha was all life and mirth, while Eva was thinking, "We might easily be all killed if only a switchman or an engineer failed the least in his duty. What faithful, reliable men there are in the world! How much people are dependent upon each other!" and then, in the midst of all the clanking and whistling and chatting, with motionless lips, she offered up a silent prayer to her God, putting her whole trust in Him to take them all safely to their new home. She felt relieved after thus casting her burden on the Lord, and smiled and chatted away quite merrily.

Mr. Brock had decided to sail across Georgian Bay and Lake Superior, as he wished his family to enjoy

the scenery of Sault Ste. Marie. As they were to sail early next morning, they were to go aboard the boat in the evening. During their passage on the boat Eva kept a diary, in which we find the following description of their trip across the lake:

"Friday, 5th May, 7 a.m.—I am ready for breakfast. The boat is rocking gently and the sun is shining gloriously on the deep blue waves. There was a tremendous noise all night, made by men loading the boat.

"I have been reading the chapter about the storm at sea, when Jesus was asleep, and how He afterwards calmed the wind and the waves. I have asked Him to make them calm for us, too.

"Evening.—We had nicely begun breakfast this morning, when a lady took very sea-sick and hurried away to her stateroom, leaving two little children alone, in danger of falling down stairs, so I helped them get their breakfast and took care of them until their mother again appeared on the scene. She felt very grateful to me.

"We called at a harbor, and several town people came aboard our grand steamer, and admired it. While coming out of the harbor our boat stuck fast several times on sandbars, and we were pulled off by a little tug. Some were afraid the engine would break, it worked so hard.

"There is a table in the cabin which is heaped with goods for sale, books, maps, photographs, daily papers, as well as oranges, lemons, maple sugar, etc.

"6th May.—I went to bed at 9 p.m. Martha slept in

a berth high up, while Myrtle and I had the one under hers. Martha was afraid that she would roll out, if the sea became rough. Papa and mamma were in an adjoining stateroom. We were all afraid to sleep on the water, and Martha intended to wake up several times through the night, to look after the boat, but by some slip she never woke until daylight, and was surprised that the captain had managed very well without her. We passed an island about 6.30 a.m. Next we passed a steamer towing two vessels.

"All the singers among the cabin passengers gathered around the piano, and we had a pleasant time singing.

"Between 11 and 12 o'clock, we came among hundreds of islands of different sizes. As we entered the Ste. Marie River, we took a pilot aboard, to guide us through the channel. He was a tall, gray-haired old Indian, wearing goggles. I asked the mate if they stopped only to take that old man on, when he told me that he was a pilot. Then I felt ashamed of myself again, for although his face was brown in color and scarred, his hair long and tangled, *all our lives* were going to be entrusted to him for the next six or seven hours. He was educated, spoke our language, and was very familiar with the rocks and shallow places for about sixty miles along that dangerous part of our journey. His skill and faithfulness made me feel more and more the neglect of so many tribes of Indians, and I made up my mind more firmly than ever to try to teach, and be the means, by God's power, of converting at least one Indian girl.

"Mrs. Long's baby fell out of bed while we were at dinner, and as that lady had much trouble with her children, I took care of the baby during the meal. This kept me a little longer from seeing the grand scenery, but I found I had not missed so very much of it; and it made me happier to let her enjoy her meal, than to see ever so many grand sights.

"I almost believe I'm a little pet on the boat, for after I went on deck, the captain told me that if I wished I might come up a flight of steps above the deck, where he and the pilot were, that I might get a better view. I was delighted, but did not know whether mamma would like me to go. However, when I glanced towards her she nodded, and I sprang up the steps. The captain seated me in his large easy chair, and even gave me his powerful glass. The pilot stood beside me, watching very earnestly, and nearly every minute he called out his directions. We seemed to be in great danger of striking rocks. The deep passage was narrow, our boat long, and we required to make frequent turns between the islands, while there was not much deep water for that purpose. Some of the islands had piled upon them huge pieces of ice and snow. The captain pointed to a barren looking spot on the shore, and said:

"'About eighty years ago some sailors were wrecked, and they were obliged to remain there all winter. We call it the sailors' encampment.'

"Large islands formed the background of the scene, while smaller ones stood out near us. Some of them

were not larger than a table, some about the size of a garden, and others we could not measure with the eye. The boat kept turning every few minutes; the strip of water looked wide enough, but the *deep* channel was narrow.

"There were a few poor-looking buildings dotted along the shore. Sometimes we saw no outlet ahead of us, but after winding among islands, our way always became clear again, and when we looked back, we could scarcely see the passage through which we had come, as the land appeared to close up behind us.

"All the land just here seemed to slope gently to the water's edge; the timber was chiefly balsam, and there were a few Indians, some log-houses and a church to be seen. In some places, huge rocks lined the shore. The passage had been buoyed, the rocks taken out, and the channel dredged. We entered a beautiful large sheet of water, dotted with tiny islands and boats.

"When we came to the boundary between the United States and Canada, the sailors decked our boat with flags, which floated gaily in the breeze.

"In dangerous places, there were signboards set low on the ground, to guide the boats in turning. The trusty pilot guided us safely through, received his pay, and left us. Next we entered a canal, to avoid the rapids.

"Sunday, 7th May.—I awoke this morning just at daylight, as the boat was starting up the canal; then we entered a passage which led us out into the deep

water of grand old Lake Superior. The surface of the water was like a sea of glass, with the sunbeams dancing delightfully upon it.

"As it was Sunday, papa wished us to try and keep it, as well as we could. So I gathered six dear little children of about four and five years old into our stateroom, and had a little Sunday-school in my own way. They could not read a hymn—even if they could have read, we had no books—so we sang what we knew by turn. I began with, 'Pull for the shore, sailor.' A boy, after considerable coaxing, sang:

"'Dare is a 'appy 'and,
Fah, fah away,
Wha taints in dowy tand,
Bite, bite us day;
Oh, how dey petely ting,
Worthy is a Saviour ting,
Loud 'et us payses wing,
Pays, pays fo' way.'

"This encouraged more of them, and a brilliant little girl snapped her fingers and said:

"'Let me, it's my's turn,' and regardless of the little boy's unfinished hymn, she started up 'Little brown jug,' at a pretty lively speed. I told the little girl that it was God's day, and that as she could sing so well, she might sing something about Jesus, after the little boy had finished.

"'Oh, yes,' she said, and began with, 'Jesus loves me, dis I know.' After they had all sung their 'very bestest,' I told them about Jesus being born in a

stable, and that He grew in favor with God and man. That we were all wicked, and could not take the sin away ourselves, but that Jesus died to take away the sins of all those who love Him, and let Him do it; then we will try to be good like Jesus. If we lay our sins on Jesus, we will go to that lovely place—heaven. Then I told them that heaven is a beautiful place, where people are always happy, we shall have every thing we wish, and that there is nothing bad there. I asked them if they would like to go to heaven. Some of them lisped, 'Yes,' while one five-year-old girl looked doubtful, and asked:

"'Will there be weasels in heaven?'

"I scarcely knew what to say, but at last, answered: 'I don't think there will.' This appeared to console her, for she finished with:

"'Well, if you are sure there's no weasels there, I'd like to go, 'cause the weasels bited and killed seven of my's hens.'

"The other five children were listening very intently to the weasel discussion, with ten searching eyes fixed upon the girl's face. They grew very free and chatty, and asked me questions about heaven that I was not able to answer, such as:

"'Will my mamma and papa go wiff me?'

"'Will there be horses there?'

"I asked them if they prayed to God. One answered, 'Me don't, me say payers to mamma.' So I told one boy to pray to God, and he lisped:

"'Now I lay me down to s'eep,
'Ittle Bo-peep, 'ost her s'eep.'

"I put the little manny right, and told him that he had mixed two verses, that 'Bo-peep' was not for Sunday, while 'Now I lay me' was for all days; and when he had done, another repeated 'Gentle Jesus.'

"I told them that God listened to their prayers, and was pleased to have them ask Him for what was good for them. He would give them what they asked for, if it would be for the best.

"I asked them all to kneel down with me beside the bed. After the Lord's prayer, I asked God to be with us in crossing the water, to make us good, and at last to take us all to heaven, for Jesus' sake.

"I believe this hour was the happiest in my life. They were innocent, believed every word I said, were not jealous of me, and had no hatred, but only love, in their young hearts. I believe I did wish they were little Indian children, because most civilized people, in North America, hear about Christ from their parents and the Bible; while most of the Indians cannot read, and many of their parents do not know about Jesus.

"When we again entered the cabin, we found a large circle of passengers at the piano singing.

"My pupils scampered about in different directions, while I joined the band of singers.

"Monday, 8th May.—About 6.30 a.m., we sailed into Port Arthur, the situation of which is grand and picturesque in the extreme. There are some odd-looking islands in the bay, one resembling a man lying on his back; there are also some bold promontories and quite high mountain peaks, while the beautiful Kam-

inistiquia River winds its course down to the lake not far from the Port. This river has a grand fall not far from its mouth. We went ashore and walked about the town; even the bank was a log building. We saw some agates and amethysts from neighboring mines.

"A number of visitors came aboard here again to admire our splendid boat.

"A newly married couple embarked with us from Port Arthur, and amused us very much by their ostentatious dress and manner. Martha, who makes a hobby of Latin roots, says that 'Honeymoon means a sweet time for lunatics.' Now, I am convinced that she is not far astray, and that the moon must surely have struck this couple.

"The bridesmaid and groomsman came aboard also, under the pretence of saying 'Good-bye' to their friends, but evidently to show themselves. They all wore white kid gloves, while the ladies wore white bonnets and veils, garnet dresses and gold necklaces. Dear me! I do wonder where Miriam's necklace can be.

"The groomsman had a violin, and the quartette spent some time in dancing and singing—even one of the ladies played on the violin.

"A negro servant who had brought into the cabin a pitcher of water, seemed to have caught the infection. For in passing out he stealthily popped behind the open door, and thinking to outshine the party in dancing, adroitly went through some scientific steps

and rattled a pair of bones with the cleverness peculiar to his race, rolling his eyes and drawing the most comical faces; the whole performance being reflected life-size in the large tell-tale glass opposite, much to the amusement of the other passengers.

"Mike, prompted outside by the promise of an orange from the steward, and having a high opinion of his athletic skill, began to turn a series of somersaults, which commenced at the cabin door and were stopped somewhat abruptly by his coming into collision with the bride.

"The spectators smiled and exchanged amused glances. If the wedding party could have seen the whole picture as it appeared in that comprehensive glass, they would, I think, have felt rather foolish.

"Martha vowed, that if she ever were so foolish as to marry, she would dress in black, and be escorted solely by herself on her wedding trip.

"After awhile the captain happening near, in his genial way entered into conversation with them, when the bride tittered and laughed, and uncovering a band-box lifted out a small story of the bride-cake, gave him a piece 'to dream on,' and tittered again.

"Then recollecting themselves, the assistant pair began their prolonged adieux, which were in keeping with the rest of their exhibition.

"As we sailed out at 1 p.m., we passed a party of men working at the silver mines. Then we took to deep water, and saw nothing more of interest to-day.

"Wednesday, 10th—During the twenty-four hours

previous to our arrival at Duluth, we were detained by a dense fog, which was followed by a storm of wind and rain. Owing to the dangerous rocks surrounding the port, the captain kept the boat in deep water until it cleared up. The fog whistle sounded almost constantly for several hours. The boat rocked very much, but I was not frightened—knowing that our boat was strong and well built—until I listened to a group of passengers, who were talking about the danger of our situation.

"One remarked, 'We'll be safe enough if we can land her before the coal runs out, but if we have to take to life-boats, we'll have little hope, for they would soon be swamped in such a raging sea.'

"'And,' said another, 'they say the compasses are not working correctly on this iron boat, and that the captain does not know where we are in the fog and storm.'

"I began to feel cold chills creep up my back, and I glanced hurriedly around for my brother and sisters. But another person composed me a little by saying:

"'We have masts and can do without coal, if that is all the trouble.'

"My hopes were raised, only to be shattered the next minute, for a man gruffly replied:

"'What good will your masts do, I'd like to know, without the sails, for they are not aboard?'

"I offered up to God a quiet, short, trustful prayer, for I felt He was the All-powerful Captain. I felt less anxious and nervous after this.

"Several of the passengers were sick, and unable to leave their rooms. Mike, noticing the bounties on the table almost untouched, remarked to me, 'It's a quare thing if I couldn't larn to be a captain, I'd have a dozen males to meself on stormy days, spruce-apples (meaning pine-apples), and all.'

"As the boat was tossed by the billows, the chairs were knocked over, and the dishes rattled and were broken.

"At last we saw land in the distance; this cheered us so much, that we began to admire rather than to fear the grand dashing of the huge white-capped waves.

"About this time, word came up from below that a woman was there whose baby had just died of measles, while her other children were ill with the same. The captain told the mother that he would keep the baby aboard, and see it buried at Duluth.

"A little tug came out to tow a distressed steamer into port, and the raging waves washed over it until at times we could only see the top of the smoke-stack. And again, when we lost sight of it, we thought it had sunk, but it always reappeared; at last it led the large schooner through the rough sea to the wharf.

"We hurried through a terrific thunder-shower to the railway station, and entered a car crowded with all sorts of men and very, *very* few women.

"We rode close to the St. Louis River for some miles, sometimes half-way down its grand banks, sometimes crossing bridges which seemed to be hung in the air; while at our side, away down, dashed the foaming

yellow water over the great black rock bottom. The jolting of the car prevents me from writing, and I'll lay aside my diary."

Owing to the great number of emigrants travelling at that time, Mr. Brock and his family had a tiresome night, for the car was so crowded that they could not stretch their limbs or change their position. They spent the night nodding and trying with little advantage to release their feet from the confused mass of baskets, valises, umbrellas and bundles. In the morning they ate their breakfast from a basket containing chicken pies, and many other good things, that Grandmother Gladstone had packed.

At last the wearied travellers were left, unknowing and unknown, at Buffalo Horn Station, Manitoba. All around them was the usual hurry and bustle in searching for trunks that were perhaps only held in shape by cords, while socks and coats peeped out, as if to spy out the land. In all directions the sound of the busy hammer was heard.

This town was mainly composed of tents pitched on the prairie; one being occupied by a family, a cook stove and a piano; another filled with agricultural implements; a third with dry goods for sale. Frame buildings appeared to be too expensive for some, while others found a tent a more convenient place of abode, until they had chosen a building site or farm, as the case may be. There were no sidewalks yet, and men thronged the streets in crowds; many of them reading manuscripts, while frequently the words

"Land office," "Section," "Homestead," and "Lot," fell in irregular cadence upon the ear.

It was almost useless to inquire of a pedestrian for a respectable hotel, for the reply generally came, "Don't know, I'm a stranger here," and "Just landed."

There were Indians and squaws standing about wrapped in their blankets that hot day, watching and wondering at the intrusion of their white brethren.

The next morning found the Brock family, excepting Frank, somewhat rested, and driving in their new green lumber waggon along an irregular fenceless trail across the quiet, wild prairie.

"Oh, see there! Is that a funeral coming, papa?" exclaimed Myrtle, who was glad to see any one on the motionless prairie.

"I should not wonder if that's a band of Indians; now is your chance, girls, have a good sight," said their father, quite pleased to see these dusky aborigines in their native land.

"Do please turn round and drive back to town, papa, until they pass," and "We'll be killed," were some of the exclamations amidst the rumbling of the waggon.

At last they met the procession of natives, whose ferocious appearance terrified Mr. Brock's fair young passengers.

Leading the procession was a tall, bare-headed Indian, attended by three dogs. His body was enveloped in a gray blanket. His hair hung in two long plaits down his back, while his feet were clad in

embroidered moccasins. He did not appear to notice Mr. Brock and his family.

Next came an ox, drawing a conveyance formed of two poles, resembling rude buggy shafts, with the rear ends crossed, tied at the crossing and dragging on the ground. The part between the ox and the crossing of the poles was laden with gray-colored tent-cloth and bundles, while a squaw, with a papoose on her back, walked and drove the ox.

A pony followed, wearing on its neck a strip of red flannel, from which a bell dangled, and drawing a cart, the wheels of which were remarkably large. In this cart were soiled bundles, some poles, and an Indian wearing a scarlet blanket, and carrying, with an air of great dignity, a new blue silk parasol. Another squaw and three colts walked beside this cart.

Mr. Brock remarked:

"This shows the absence of the Bible; it appears to be customary among most savage nations to treat their women as beasts of burden."

"Look at that young squaw in the fourth cart, I believe she would make a scholar," Eva said; "papa, do stop, and ask them if they would let me teach her."

"Never mind, we shall have other opportunities nearer home."

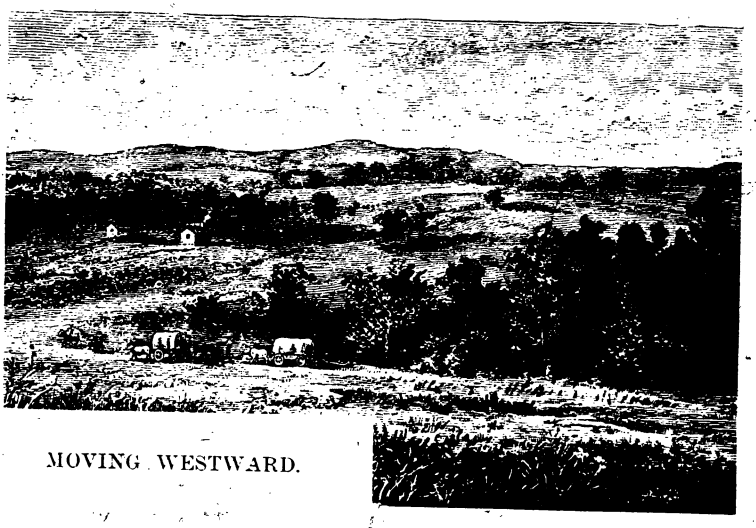
"What's this next performance?" inquired Martha, as she saw several horses and a few men at work in a hollow.

"I fancy these people have got fast in one of those sloughs we have heard about."

"I hope we'll get through it all right."

Eight horses were pulling at a load of telegraph poles, the waggon wheels having stuck fast in the soft mud.

"There are more of your pets, Eva," said Myrtle, as



MOVING WESTWARD.

they drove past a number of Indians sleeping on the ground, surrounded by seven carts. "See that little codger; jump out and give him a kiss. He won't bite you."

"I think there ought to be more houses than there are; and those we do see, seem to be almost as small as a little bed-room at home," said Martha, in a disappointed tone.

"They are small," replied her father, consolingly, "but it is better to build a small one and keep out of debt, than to incur expenses beyond one's means, to build a large one. After they get a crop or two of good wheat you'll see the fine houses."

"If we could get a dollar a bushel for those lovely flowers we pass by, we could put up *a nice house*," exclaimed Myrtle, in delight.

"I am afraid it'll end in *an ice house*," said Martha.

"I hope Frank will get the cattle through those sloughs without any difficulty."

"I think we ought to be pretty near our place by this time,' said Mrs. Brock, in a wearied tone.

"Yes, we cannot be far from it now; I'll drive up to this shanty and inquire:" and he turned the horses' heads off the trail.

"Sure it's an illigant counthery wid no gates fornent the houses," remarked Mike.

Before Mr. Brock had time to alight, the door opened, and a bachelor appeared, bearing a smoking skillet in one hand, and a fork in the other.

"Will you be so kind as to direct me to section six—a homestead I have lately taken," inquired Mr. Brock.

"I beg your pawdon, sir, but—ah—awh, I was not expecting to meet ladies. Pawdon me, please, until I put this bacon inside," and the much-abashed young man disappeared behind the convenient door of his single-roomed abode.

As he did not return immediately, Martha whispered:

"He said he was going to put the bacon *inside*; he might have invited us to share it, instead of leaving us out here, with nothing but the savory odor to satisfy our hunger."

By the time the girls had recovered themselves, the embarrassed gentleman reappeared, giving the finishing "jerks" to the once white linen coat, for which he had been searching behind the door; and which in all probability his mother had given him clean and glossy the previous summer, when he departed from "Merry England" to make his home in the Far West.

"Did you say section six?" inquired the bachelor.

"Yes."

"Ah, yes. You are Mr. Brock, I presume? I am pleased to meet you as new neighbors."

"Feelings are mutual," returned the traveller.

"I feel assured you all have an appetite for your dinner. I—ah—I will do my utmost in my present humble position to entertain you, if you will condescend to dine with us," and the gentleman glanced nervously about him, at the unwashed porridge pot and hash-kettle adorning both sides of the door-steps.

"Thank you very much, but I think we will drive along, in order to get things unloaded and set up this afternoon," said Mrs. Brock, politely. "We'll be pleased to have you visit us whenever you find it convenient."

"What do you think of the country?" interrogated Mr. Brock.

"Well, it's a rare country. If the governor did not

send me an occasional remittance I could not live here. You are going! Well, just cross the slough, and when you reach the brow of the hill you'll see your new frame-house to the left. Good-bye, ladies; good-bye, sir," and he raised his tattered straw hat, as he bowed with the air of a Chesterfield.

Before they reached their house that appeared to be so near, Mr. Brock's waggon became fast in a slough. A kind man passing along rendered him valuable assistance, and sent them on their way rejoicing at their escape from the too friendly embrace of the mud. A drive of a few minutes brought them to the door of their own new house, and all were glad that their journey was now ended.

As Mr. Brock drove away, their new acquaintance, after watching them out of sight, returned to the house, which was shared with him by a friend named Mr. Long, as their farms were adjoining. More than once these two lonely young men had speculated on the probability of the surrounding country being settled up with whole families, in whose homes they might occasionally spend an evening enjoying music, literature and chess, not to mention the pleasure of a properly prepared tea.

As Mr. Bradshaw re-entered his shanty and confronted his housekeeping partner, who was busily engaged in cleaning their pine table by the ingenious process of planing off the soiled surface of the wood and hammering down the nails at the corners, the former remarked:

"This is a piece of luck. We're going to have some neighbors at last, and ladies in the family, too."

"I hope," returned Mr. Long, "they'll be friendly, and not slight a fellow when his linen fails to attain perfection. I wonder, now, how it would do to send it by mail to a good laundry in the metropolis."

"Now you have it," replied Mr. Bradshaw. "We'll gather up our linen and mail it. We could send it to-morrow morning, and receive it back in a fortnight. I wonder what they thought of my get-up? I must have made a decided impression. I left my best coat on that hook. What have you done with it, eh?"

"I am sure I can't tell you. But wait; I believe it was your coat I had for a pillow last night."

"If you weren't so well armed with your plane and hammer, I'd feel inclined to annihilate you. If I could have laid my hand upon it, I should have jumped into Mr. Brock's waggon, and assisted him in setting up his furniture upon reaching his house."

"We might go yet," suggested Mr. Long, as he surveyed his handsome but neglected face in the cracked glass. "Just throw the saddles on the bronchos we've been breaking, and by crossing that plowing we can be there in time yet. I'll put those vegetables in a bag, and take them along."

Soon the two adventurers were guiding their unwilling steeds towards the new residence of Mr. Brock.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NEW HOME.

"WELL, we are here at last," remarked Mr. Brock, and as he tried to shake off his fatigue and be cheerful, he clapped and rubbed his hands in his old familiar way. "Now, girls, fly around and try to make your mamma as comfortable as possible, while I attend to the horses and unload the goods."

Mr. Brock had sent sufficient money to a reliable friend for the erection of a small house, and for putting in fifteen acres of wheat on an adjoining farm which he had rented.

The house was a frame one, and consisted of a sitting-room and kitchen on the ground floor, three small bedrooms upstairs, and a good cellar underneath. It was neat-looking, being lined with planed lumber. On entering, they noticed how beautifully clean the floors were; they were surprised at this at the time, but they soon afterwards learned that it had been voluntarily done by some neighboring bachelors, who

had heard of the prospective arrival of the young ladies, and perhaps hoped to cultivate their good graces. While waiting for their father, the girls persuaded their mother to walk through the house with them. When Mrs. Brock and the girls returned to the kitchen, they were agreeably surprised to see two stalwart young men—one of whom they readily recognized as the proprietor of the shanty and bacon lately referred to—carrying in their cook-stove. Mrs. Brock smiled and was about to speak, when Mr. Long, who happened to be nearest to her, said, as he offered his coarse hand in a hesitating manner:

"You are Mrs. Brock, I suppose. We are pleased to meet you; there are very few women round here. My name is Long, Dick Long, but not so long as this fellow happens to have. This is Mr. Arthur Wellington Dudley Bradshaw, but for short we call him the Duke."

"I am very glad to find we are among friends so soon," returned Mrs. Brock, as she cordially shook hands with the second young man, and referred to his assistance in directing them.

"Can you tell me where the stove feet are?"

"They were put inside of the stove."

"Here they are. Now, Mike, you slip in the feet, while we hold it up, and we'll have a fire before your father comes in, I assure you."

And certainly, there was a crackling fire by the time Mr. Brock entered. A pile of vegetables, consisting of beautiful, clean potatoes, parsnips and turnips, were

lying on the floor. With reference to the vegetables, one of the young men remarked:

"We thought you would have no potatoes along, so we brought these over, and two or three brace of ducks for your dinner."

"Oh," "Thank you," and "How kind," resounded from different parts of the room.

"We have some baker's bread and cheese in the waggon," said Mrs. Brock, "and we intended to make a cup of tea; but I feel so hungry, and these ducks and vegetables look so tempting that I believe we'll cook a real good dinner, girls."

"If you have a pail handy, Mrs.—ah—oh—What is your name again?—yes, Mrs. Brock, I will get some water," said Mr. Long. "We should have roasted the ducks at our 'dig-out,' only we didn't know if you'd like them cooked by us fellows, I assure you." And judging from the artificially dark color of that gentleman's wrists, Mrs. Brock was as well pleased that they had not cooked them.

"Did I understand you to say there are no other women in the neighborhood?" inquired Mrs. Brock, when they were seated at dinner.

"Well, I did not exactly mean that; there is Mrs. Turner, on the next section," replied Mr. Bradshaw; "but, poor woman, I fear her days are numbered. She is in bed most of the time, but makes an effort now and again to attend to the children and do a little cooking and washing. Then she goes to bed worse than ever."

"Poor thing!" said Mrs. Brock, in a tone of mingled pity and surprise. "And is there no one to nurse her and do the work?"

"Oh, no, I assure you," said Mr. Long. "There are very few women, and where there is one, she generally has her hands full at home."

"Could her husband not have hired a nurse in town?"

"I don't know; maybe he could, but it would cost so much. He has done what he could for her, but a man isn't so handy about a sick person, I assure you. He got no seeding in at all, just helping around the house."

"I presume they had a doctor?"

"He went for a doctor once," said Mr. Bradshaw. "He said she had consumption, needed great care; and, in fact, gave him little encouragement. He charged thirty dollars, as he had come twenty-five miles, when the water was high and before there were any bridges. So they never sent for him again. They were obliged to sell their cow to pay the doctor, and I believe they can't afford to benefit further by his advice. You see, she caught cold living in a tent before they built their house."

"What distress!" exclaimed Mrs. Brock; "some of you girls had better go down, as soon as you feel a little rested, and see the poor woman."

"Yes, Martha and I'll go this very afternoon, when we get the load unpacked and things settled up a little like home, for mamma," replied Eva.

"You are good girls, now, and I know you are tired, too; but you have good health."

"Look, mamma!" exclaimed Myrtle, as she sprang into the house, showing her hat filled with flowers and also a large bunch in the other hand, "the ground is covered with them, I could scarcely keep from stepping on them, but they are nearly all alike." And she, unheeding her mother's reply, wondered, as she picked the petals from a flower, where heaven was, and how God had time to scatter so many of these charming flowers over the ground, besides attending to the wants of people. Then she wished that when she went to heaven she would be allowed to make some of the flowers. She would paint pictures of ladies on white lily leaves, and make a beautiful bouquet grow on her mother's bosom, and she even thought that she would make a bunch of thistles grow under Mr. Rogers' chin, for accusing Eva of theft.

"They are lovely. We noticed them as we drove along this morning. Is there a name for them?" addressing Mr. Bradshaw.

"The settlers call them crocuses," replied that gentleman. "This is nothing; after awhile the prairie will be covered with a great variety. The cattle actually feast on flowers and tender grass in their boundless pasture field. Mr. Brock, if you wish, we'll unload the waggon for you before we go"; and, suiting the action to the word, their willing hands soon carried everything from it to the house.

The girls somewhat refreshed after their hearty dinner, unpacked and arranged the things which were brought in. Next they all took a walk out to view the surroundings of their new home.

"Why," remarked Eva, "we are not so badly off for neighbors; look at all those houses around."

"Yes; but, Miss Brock, they are a long way off," replied Mr. Long. "Owing to the state of the air, and the level tract of country, buildings appear much nearer than they actually are. That house straight over that little bluff is fifteen miles off."

"I should not take it to be over two miles away. Are we near any Indians here?" inquired Eva, anxiously.

"I am sorry to inform you," said Mr. Bradshaw, "that we are just bordering on their reserve; but they are quite harmless and honest, they are afraid of the police. There are some of their tents near that prairie fire."

"Eva is not afraid of them," said Mr. Brock; "but she wishes to teach an Indian girl."

"I would not undertake it. They are not fit to come within a rod of a white person. You see the end of a white-washed log-house up there?" said Mr. Long.

"Yes," said Mrs. Brock.

"There are some girls there—the only young women for six miles round. The preaching is at their house, four miles off, every two weeks. I believe it is next Sunday, at three o'clock, and Sunday-school is every Sunday."

"I am glad we are within reach of Christian services. I presume you always avail yourselves of the opportunity?" inquired Mrs. Brock.

"Oh, yes," resumed Mr. Long; "we are rough-looking

about here, but we like to hear a sermon. It reminds us of home." But turning towards his companion, he concluded, "I can't often persuade the Duke here to accompany me; he says there is no object in his going, while there is no pipe-organ and surpliced choir."

Then as the twins, Martha and Eva, started away to visit the sick woman, Mrs. Brock called after them:

"Be sure to be home before dark."

"Yes, dear mamma," said Eva, with a loving smile, while Martha whispered:

"I wonder what she takes us for?"

"Hush!"

"Really, Eva, I don't fancy this job. In place of ladies calling on us, we are starting off, first thing, to wait upon other people. Very likely there'll be a pile of dirty dishes to wash, and some dirty, sticky children hanging around, too."

"Oh, well, cheer up, my darling Martha; look at that lovely flower smiling at you from the dirty ground, too."

"It's all very well for you to sermonize, but look at the *shadow* that very flower casts on the same ground," argued Martha.

"If we can't stand being in this poor woman's house for an hour or two, think how trying it must be for *her* to lie helplessly by and look at work undone."

By the time they reached the door they had large bouquets of flowers.

A faint voice from within said, "Come in," in response to their knock; and upon entering the girls

beheld the most forlorn sight they had ever witnessed. There was only one room in the house; the walls of it not being white-washed, showed the dark, bark-covered logs. The sun struggled to throw a light upon the scene through one small finger-stained window. The fire was out, and two or three dirty pots almost covered the rusty stove. There was a home-made, cross-legged table, laden with the dirty dishes predicted by Martha. The only seats in the house were a worn high chair, in which the baby was tied, and in which it had apparently cried itself to sleep, and a long, low box, covered with a piece of old carpet. In one corner was a wash-tub half-full of clothes ready to be rinsed.

Upon the straw bed lay the unfortunate woman. She smiled, then looked ashamed, as she pointed to a seat, coughed, and reached across the bed for the baby's soiled apron to use as a handkerchief.

The girls walked to the bedside and shook hands with her, Eva telling her who they were, and that they had come to see what they could do for her. They showed her the glass of red-currant jelly they had brought, and which had been placed in the basket by their grandmother, but not opened on the trip to the North-West.

"I am much obliged to you," she said, in a low voice, "but it is too dirty a place for you in your clean dresses. Oh, I am so ashamed!" and she turned her face to the wall, and cried like a child.

"Never mind, my dear friend, it is all right, and we

are glad we found you out. We shall try to put things to rights a little," replied Eva, trying to smile through her sympathetic tears. The only picture that adorned the wall was the photograph of a large brick store, bearing the name of the owner of this log hut. Eva could not help contrasting the former circumstances of this poor woman with her present situation.

"Oh," the poor woman sobbed, "I have the kindest mother and father that ever lived. They are at home away in the east; and if they only knew, they'd come and take me home and cure me. But I am ashamed to have them find us so poor. I am ashamed, ashamed," but after a fit of coughing she continued: "I think we'll have plenty of money after we thresh this fall, and then we'll send for them."

"Poor thing!" Eva thought, "she is not able to stand a journey home; while her thoughtful husband has not let her know that he failed to get in his crop in consequence of her illness."

"Ask the Lord to make you better," Eva faltered; she could have said this to children without hesitation, but felt rather young to talk so to a woman. But she thought:

"I may be the only one who will have a chance to speak to her of Jesus."

"Yes," she answered, "I am trusting in Jesus, and He is all the hope I have. Would you kindly look round the end of the house, and see if the other two children are near. I am afraid they'll wander away."

While the girls were out, Martha said:

"Come on home, Eva, I can't stand this."

"No, no, Martha, you may go if you wish, as mamma may be lonesome and tired, but I'll remain and do what I can."

So Martha slipped away home, feeling a little selfish, while Eva re-entered the shanty, leading a child by each hand. She washed them and combed their hair, then put on a large apron which she found, and went to work. She built a fire, made a cup of tea and some toast; these, together with some currant jelly, she took to Mrs. Turner, whom she had previously bolstered up in bed. She really enjoyed the meal, and looked much brighter afterwards. While she was enjoying the jelly, which was something she had not tasted since she left her mother's home, Eva hurried and rinsed the clothes, hung them on the line, washed the dishes, gave the children some supper, read a chapter of God's Word to her sick neighbor, and sang that sweet hymn by Sarah Adams, "Nearer, my God, to Thee." As the sun was disappearing beyond the western horizon, leaving the beautiful red and golden sky above it, as a sign that it would be fair on the morrow, Eva hurried away, promising that her mother would come and see her the next day, if she were sufficiently rested. The grateful pressure of Mrs. Turner's attenuated hand afforded Eva much happiness, but added to this was the approval of God, who said:

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

As she closed the door gently after her, she noticed her father approaching the house. He turned and walked home with her, listening meanwhile to Eva's pitiful tale of their new neighbor.

"My good little girly, it is rather sad to have children like you see so much suffering and distress, but we must look after this family."

Before they retired Mr. Brock, as in his old home, conducted family worship, only, if possible, in a more dependent spirit, committing his family and himself into God's care, and not forgetting to ask God to care for and watch over the sick neighbor and her household. God seemed to be nearer to them all, when they were in a new country among strangers, and so far away from their old friends and relatives.

They all slept soundly through this their first night on their prairie farm, and awoke in the morning refreshed and ready to begin work. There was not much to be done inside, as the goods were nearly all at the station, and the house needed very little cleaning; accordingly they went to gardening and potato planting, as it was time the seed was in.

Mrs. Brock visited Eva's patient, did what she could for her, left her more cheerful and comfortable, and brought the pretty, plump, dirty baby home, much to the delight of Myrtle and Mike. They took much pleasure in drawing it about the garden in their little express waggon.

THE NEW HOME.

After the little thing was washed, fed, fondled, rolled in a shawl and sound asleep, its clothes were also washed, dried in the pure prairie wind, and ironed ready for it when it should awake from its peaceful slumber, the next morning.

Eva and her mother visited Mrs. Turner nearly every day, and did all they possibly could for her. It was wonderful how bright the patient's eyes grew, and how the hollows under them and in her cheeks disappeared. She continued to improve, though slowly, until she was able to walk out in the lovely warm air among the wild flowers. Her cough still lingered, but it was less distressing.

At length Mrs. Turner's mother, a refined, well-dressed lady, arrived from her eastern home.

One evening, as she walked home with Mrs. Brock, to see her baby grandchild for the first time, she asked Mrs. Brock's opinion in regard to the safety of taking her daughter home with her for a month or two.

"I believe," suggested Mrs. Brock, "that if she were able to stand the journey, she would improve more rapidly at your home; for she would be under the care of a good doctor, be relieved of the charge of the house and children, her appetite would be improved by the change of food and air, while the sight of old, familiar faces and cheerful company would cause her, in a measure, to forget her own troubles."

"You are right, my friend. I shall lose no time in preparing clothing for her and the children, and in

giving her every opportunity to gain strength. Do you know if there is a dressmaker in the neighboring town?"

"I don't expect there is; at any rate, dressmaking would come expensive here. Just bring the goods over to our place, the sewing machine is in good order, and the girls and I will help you make them up."

"You are very kind. I really do not know how to sufficiently express my heartfelt gratitude; for my only daughter might have died in need but for your timely attention. I am sorry to trouble you further, but as I see no alternative, I shall be glad to accept your generous offer."

Then followed a busy week at Mr. Brock's, which pleased the girls, for they were all helping to make pretty new clothes (Mrs. Turner's mother having liberally provided the material) for the sick woman and her children. Myrtle insisted upon making all the baby's clothes, which she did with remarkable neatness, and with only a little assistance from her experienced mother.

At length the day of their departure arrived, and Mrs. Brock, Eva and Myrtle all went over to assist Mrs. Turner, her mother, and children, in preparing to start. The children looked quite pretty in their new dresses, and even their mother appeared to look better in her well-fitting new suit.

With many thanks and kind "Good-byes," Mr. Turner drove them briskly away to catch the daily train.

A few weeks later Mr. Brock's family were delighted to receive a friendly letter, informing them of the improvement in Mrs. Turner's health; while a rich dress for Mrs. Brock accompanied the letter.

. . . . . .

The attention which Eva had paid to her patient did not divert her thoughts from her old plan of securing and training an Indian girl; on the contrary, her quiet walks back and forth were productive of thought and speculation, which generally settled on that momentous question. She had made various plans as to the manner in which she would induce an Indian girl to come to her for lessons. She had also looked years into the future at the harvest she hoped to be reaped from the little she might be able to sow.

"Now," she thought, as she tried to place her foot where it would not crush a flower, "if I can only teach a young Indian girl sufficiently to enable her to read the Bible and to understand me, I'll have advanced well in my work. I'll tell her about Jesus and heaven, and teach her to pray to God. If I could get her to love God and to rest her sins on Jesus, I would be happy! happy! happy! because if I did no more, this squaw would teach her friends, and perhaps open a Sunday-school. If at the end of two generations there should be ten Christian Indians, as the result of my teaching that squaw, it would be enough; and as 'their works do follow them,' the number might continue to increase, until away in the future the whole

tribe might be Christianized. Of course, as Martha says, they are not noted for cleanliness, but that fact leaves more room for improvement."

"Papa," said Eva, one evening as they were resting in the twilight, "when can you help me to get my Indian girl?"

"I am pretty busy yet, but I'll soon have a day to spare, if all's well, and then we'll see what can be done."

"Eva, my dear," pleaded her anxious mother, "I was in hopes you had abandoned that foolish idea. The Indians are treacherous, and may steal you away from us, and that would be the end of it."

"Oh, no, my dear," said Mr. Brock, laughingly, "they would never attempt anything of the kind; for, they are aware of our telegraphic system, that the mounted police are scattered over the land, and that consequently they would be taken prisoners in a short time, if they attempted such a thing."

"Mother, if you'll only give in, I'll promise that I'll never go near any other Indians than the girl I teach, without either papa or Frank, and that I will take your advice in all I do in this matter. Christ told His disciples to teach all nations, and we are so near this tribe in heathen darkness! See how many good men were martyrs for Christ," and Eva threw her arms lovingly about her mother's neck, and almost smothered her with kisses.

"Will you? Will you now, mamma?" she said, while her brown eyes sparkled with love and eagerness.

"Very well, I'll leave it to your father; but we'll always feel anxious about you."

"You see in one way it would be easy to teach them, because the Bible would be new to them; while some Christian children get tired of it before they understand it, or feel the need of it. Even if I never succeeded in teaching her to read, if I taught her to sew a button on her dress, it would be doing good; for that would teach her that our ways are better than theirs in one respect. And knowing that might lead her to believe that we are in advance of them in other ways. So she would be ready to believe the story of Jesus when any Christian told it to her."

"You are foolish to bother your head about them," said Martha.

"I'll see you through with it," came from Frank.

The sudden light of the lamp which Myrtle carried in and placed on the organ, was a silent intimation for less Indian talk and more music. They gathered about the organ and sang until the prairie might have wondered—if it could—what great change had taken place, for instead of the trampling and lowing of the buffalo, there was the sweet music of girlish voices. The organ, table, and indeed every available place, was decorated with prairie flowers. The hopes of this family were as bright as the flowers, even though parents and children alike missed old friends and associations.

On Sunday they all went several miles to church and Sunday-school, which were conducted in a farm-

house. The house consisted of two log apartments, whitewashed without as well as within, while before the door was a large flower-bed which, so far, showed no signs of competing with the surrounding prairie. The floor was carpeted with hooked mats, the walls were embellished by brackets hung with lambrequins made of brown duck and red yarn embroidery, a number of books on home-made shelves, and some frameless pictures held in their places by pins. These plain attempts at decoration gave the family an appearance of importance in the eyes of their less fortunate neighbors. Everything about the house was scrupulously clean. The Sunday dresses of the girls were made of blue-and-white striped cotton shirting, trimmed with pretty, white crochet edging.

Eva expected the sermon to be in keeping with the appearance of the houses, but she was agreeably surprised to hear a grand, searching discourse. It caused her to think that though all else changed, God remained the same.

The congregation was chiefly composed of young men, whose ages ranged from about seventeen to thirty.

After the service the minister's beautiful and accomplished wife offered each of the strangers her hand, and spoke cheering and kindly words to them.

The Sunday-school consisted of a single class, conducted by one man, and comprising pupils of both sexes and all ages. The teacher was not inferior to the minister in earnestness, and he showed a thorough acquaintance with, and appreciation of, his subject.

After the school was dismissed, he told Mr. Brock that he would be pleased if one of his family would take charge of the younger pupils, as their number was increasing. Mr. Brock replied that he thought Eva would undertake the charge, and do the best she could. Accordingly she was installed a Sabbath-school teacher, and she earnestly endeavored to discharge her duty in a conscientious and painstaking manner.

The next day, Myrtle came running in much excited, saying:

"Mamma, here are Indians. Where's papa? Let's hide." As she said this she, prompted partly by fright and partly by mischief, opened the trap-door and hurried half way down the cellar steps, leaving the door slightly ajar to admit of her peeping out and watching proceedings. Martha, thinking the door was closed, and expecting Myrtle to grow tired in her seclusion and soon come up, drew a chair quickly over the door and seated herself thereon. But alas! the tips of poor Myrtle's fingers were pinched when the door was tightly closed. As she was too much alarmed to scream, knowing the Indians to be near, she pressed the injured members to her bosom and rocked herself back and forth in agony. As the pain grew less severe, the cellar seemed less dark, and her eyes fell upon the jars of fruit; so she treated herself to some preserved pears to ease the pain and occupy her time.

It was not until the departure of the visitors that Martha allowed Myrtle to escape from her hiding-place; and it was not until a fortnight had passed

that her fingers were quite healed. However, one day in Martha's absence, Myrtle thought she would "get even" with her; so she put on Martha's best dress, and jumped on a horse and rode slowly about for some time, then she allowed the horse to go, and promenaded up and down the road, looking over her shoulder meanwhile, at the skirt trailing in the dust. Then, feeling that she had had her revenge, the naughty little girl, with a satisfied air, put the dress away.

CHAPTER IX.

INDIANS.

A NUMBER of Indians had temporarily pitched their tents on the outskirts of Buffalo Horn, and all day the dusky aborigines were walking and standing about the town and noticing closely very many strange articles and customs of the new residents.

Among these natives was a young squaw, of about fifteen, accompanied by her mother. The younger, when her pretty red-and-blue shawl slipped down from her head, revealed rather an intelligent countenance. Her dark eyes wore a mischievous expression; her teeth might have been envied by many a city belle; her nose, though a trifle broad and flat, was rather well formed; the rosy hue of her cheeks struggled not unsuccessfully to peep through the brown; while her bead-strung hair fell in tangled locks over her shoulders and face. Several strings of large yellow and black beads adorned her neck; but,

like the greatly abused peacock, she was so much absorbed in the decoration of the upper part of her body, that she had quite forgotten that the only covering of her feet was one of mud. They had trudged along from one back-door to another, trying to sell their prairie-chickens. At length, a kind-hearted and curious lady bought the birds, and invited the squaws into her kitchen to have some dinner. The shy, awkward pair edged their way in and seated themselves at the table, while the lady placed some substantial food before them. They ate it with apparent relish. The hostess pointed from the elder to the younger of her guests, saying, as she raised her eyebrows inquiringly:

"Papoose? Papoose?"

The elder one laughed and nodded an acknowledgment. The lady continued to ask questions and make signs, but the trouble was so much greater than the information obtained, that she soon tired of it. The visitors sidled their way to the door, where they stood for some time, seeming rather reluctant about taking their departure. Finally they stepped outside on to the first step and sat down. Their hostess, who had now appeased their hunger, satisfied her own curiosity, and grown tired of her tardy guests, quietly closed the door and turned the key. Quite ignoring this action, they sat until they themselves felt like moving, when they deliberately arose, grunted, and stole away.

Now that they had disposed of their produce and had obtained some money, they began an inspection of

some goods exhibited at the store doors and windows. They occasionally entered a store and asked the price of articles which they fancied. Sometimes they picked up an article new to them, examined it, talked and laughed heartily, replaced it, and moved quietly along. They again entered a store, examined several ornaments, and finally settled upon a brass bracelet, the price of which was seventy-five cents, as the merchant succeeded after some difficulty in making them understand. They reluctantly replaced it, walked out and discussed the subject, then re-entered and bought the bracelet. The young squaw placed it on her wrist, when they again admired it. They at last relieved this merchant of their presence, entered a grocery and bought twenty-five cents worth of flour, passed out and entered an alley, and stood erect with their backs against the wall of a machine shop. After leaning here to their hearts' content, they moved through to the back of the buildings, gathered up some tin cans, which still bore the colored portraits of their former contents, to the great admiration of their new proprietors; picked up some broken crockery, examined it, and threw it down again. They then saw a cast-off board that would be very useful to them, and after talking about the ownership of it, glanced suspiciously up at the windows, picked it up, and started for their tent with more agility than they had before displayed that day.

They reached their tents as the sun bade good-bye to the golden-lined clouds that illumined the western

sky. After they had built a fire in the centre of their tent, and dug their favorite roots, they broiled some fish, squatted unceremoniously on the ground, and ate their evening meal. Then they threw their wearied bodies on a rude pallet and slept soundly. They spent the next day very much in the same manner, and again visited the lady who had given them their dinner. This lady's fervor having somewhat moderated, she only treated them to a piece of bread, without allowing them to enter. They were still less fortunate on their next visit, as the lady's husband met them, ordered them gruffly away, and set his dog at them. They then hastened away to their tent to make preparations for the coming pow-wow.

Mr. Drury, a prosperous farmer some distance from Buffalo Horn, became much interested in the Indians. He upon one occasion remarked to a neighbor that he had often tried to describe their appearance and manners in letters to friends in Ontario, but felt that he had failed. The reply came:

"Why not treat them to a feast at Buffalo Horn, and have them photographed?"

This idea pleased Mr. Drury; so after making inquiries from several who were informed on the subject of a pow-wow, he provided nine hundred and sixty pounds of pork, and one hundred and fifty loaves of bread, basing his calculations as to quantity upon what information he was able to obtain concerning the number of Indians in the reserve, and the average capacity of a red man's appetite. He also engaged an

artist to photograph the Indians at different times during the ceremony.

The news of this pow-wow was circulated among the whites and Indians with equal rapidity. Straggling Indians were gathered in, and white people for some distance around made preparations for a trip to town, with the double object in view of doing their trading and seeing the pow-wow.

Mr. Brock's children heard of the coming event with great delight.

"Will you take all of us, papa?" inquired Myrtle.

"I should like to go and take you all, if we are not too busy."

"I'm glad," "I'll wear my pink muslin," "Sure'n if they've any trouble gittin' thro' wid the dinner, I'll help them to eat it," were a few of the children's remarks.

But Mrs. Brock, who had always dreaded these savages, even before she reached this country, said:

"I think you had better all stay at home. I'll prepare an extra dinner and give the children a holiday at home. I am afraid that the Indians while in a body, armed and excited, may dash in among us and do some mischief."

But Mr. Brock, who was as anxious to see the pow-wow as his youngest child, said good-humoredly, "Nonsense, we will all go, to be sure. We may never again have so good an opportunity; so you had better make up your minds to go. The day needn't be lost, as I have a good many matters to attend to in town, and you will all be the better for some recreation."

Mrs. Brock reluctantly consented to go, and to take the children.

On the morning of the Indian feast, Mr. Brock and his family started away early, but when they arrived on the scene, a large body of white people were eagerly watching for the commencement of the performance. A huge sugar kettle was boiling over a fire. This kettle was full of soup, thick with chopped onions, turnips, carrots, potatoes and cabbage, and was tended by a big Indian, smeared with paint and decked with feathers and bells. It was not long until a great number of basins were filled from the contents of the kettle and distributed among the Indians. They began to eat the soup, which was a great treat to them. These hungry beings laughed and talked about it, and received a second, followed by a third, fourth, and some as much as a fifth allowance, after which they attacked the pork with equal avidity. At length they prepared for the dance which was to follow. The faces of the Indians were painted red and other colors, while their long tangled hair was strung with beads, and some further embellished with a feather standing erect from the crown of the head. Some of them wore gay ornaments embroidered with many-colored beads. A few favored individuals carried resplendent red silk parasols, while the fingers of not a few of them were encircled with brass rings.

A large drum was placed on the ground, then a number of Indians squatted around it, beating in a steady monotonous way, while the whole party repeated

such syllables as "Tum, tum," in a dreary, chanting tone.

Outside of this centre were dancers, one of whom had strings of bells around his ankles, and up the outside seams of his leggings. Some of their faces wore most hideous expressions.

As Martha leaned forward to speak to her mamma, who, with Mr. Brock, occupied the front seat of the waggon, she said:

"Do you notice there are scarcely any middle-aged or elderly people in the crowd of white settlers? Isn't that strange?

"Yes, your father was just now directing my attention to a number of ladies, who, he thinks, are newly married. They are nearly all richly dressed. I suppose when they were married they started right away to make their home in this new land. I sincerely hope they may always be as happy as they are now. Why! there's the very bride who was on the boat."

"And see," said Mr. Brock, "that band of envious looking youths, evidently bachelors. There are three, six, nine; there, they are scattering; but I believe there are fifty of them."

"Mamma," said Myrtle, "I saw one tall lady with gray hair."

"Where, my pet?" inquired her mother, who longed for the companionship of a graver and more mature mind than she had yet been able to meet with among her new acquaintances, who were mostly of an age which still retained some of the manners and customs of giddy youth.

"Yes, I see now, and I believe she is looking at us. She is coming this way. I wonder if we ever saw her at home. She looks lively and contented. Do you see her laughing and talking with that young couple? I believe that couple are married, and neither of them looks to be over eighteen. See, they hold each other by the hand like school-children."

"Here she is. I do wonder who she can be?"

"Are you not Mrs. Brock?" the stranger inquired, as she offered her hand. "My husband said he did not think it was you; so I said I would find out, and that a hearty hand-shake wouldn't hurt any one out here."

"Yes, that's my name. We also have been wondering who you were. Have we never before met?"

"No, we've not; but I've heard of you. My name is Drury. Your second cousin married my husband's niece; so I suppose in Manitoba we may almost count ourselves sisters. I think we were not more than twelve miles from you at home."

"I am much pleased to meet you, Mrs. Drury."

"To be sure," exclaimed Mr. Brock, offering his hand; "I remember hearing of you, and I met your niece upon one occasion. You see, we could not keep track of all our relatives at home, while we should go a long way to visit even a chance acquaintance here."

Mrs. Drury gave her new friends a cordial invitation to spend a few days with them, holding out as an extra inducement, the prospect of a camping-out and

fishing expedition on the shore of the charming lake, amid the wild and picturesque scenery in the hills near which their home was situated.

A general movement among the Indians now attracted their attention, and they were not long in discovering that the beginning of the photographic operations was the cause of considerable excitement and consternation among the primitive children of the prairie, the greater number of whom had never seen a camera, and were consequently made very uneasy by the mysterious and apparently threatening pantomime performed by the artist as he adjusted his lenses and prepared to take the picture.

Here a chief might be seen gathering his men, preparing for defence, evidently under the impression that he and his brave comrades had been allured hither by the treacherous whites, only to be mown down in masses by some newly invented species of cannon, possessing infinite destructive powers.

There a terrified party of squaws bearing their papooses away from the scene of anticipated carnage.

Confusion reigned supreme for several minutes, causing a little panic among the more timid of the whites, who feared reprisals on the part of the frightened Indians.

While Mr. Drury and the interpreter were occupied in soothing the excited imaginations and calming the fears of the natives nearest to them, a venerable warrior, who had won great distinction among the brethren of his tribe by his indomitable courage and

cunning, stole round behind the knot of spectators assembled by the instrument, and with a face expressive of fierce determination mingled with awe, seemed to have formed the tremendous resolve of destroying the dreaded apparatus and saving his people from what he feared might be total annihilation. Fortunately for the property of the photographer and Mr. Drury's much-desired pictures of Indians, he was detected in time to frustrate his designs; and the interpreter with some difficulty soothed his apprehensions, and endeavored to explain the use of the camera. The old chief was thoroughly puzzled, and his curiosity aroused by such a wonderful invention; and on being promised one of the photographs, quickly went around among his brethren and restored order.

During this interval of disturbance a variety of emotions animated the occupants of the waggon, and Mrs. Brock in a tremulous voice pleaded:

"Do please drive away home; the poor things, not understanding the photographic apparatus, may kill us;" while Myrtle cried, "Yes, do, papa; the very next pow-wow I go to, I'm going to stay at home."

But Mr. Brock, who had not the least intention of losing the sight of the closing scenes, and had no apprehension of serious results, remained perfectly unmoved by these appeals, and replied:

"There is no danger. Try and be calm, and enjoy the day. You may never again have the privilege of a sight like this. See those two squaws hiding behind the scrub yonder."

INDIANS.

"Sure enough, papa," said Myrtle, "we *couldn't* see another sight like this if we were killed now."

"Yes, and look, here is a squaw climbing into the back of our waggon," said Martha. "It's too bad that we can't tell her she is safe."

So, by way of explanation, Eva offered her hand to the terror-stricken woman, and by friendly gestures tried to reassure her.

"Now they have them almost reconciled. This brave," pointing to one conspicuously ornamented, "is anxiously waiting to have his image imprinted upon paper. Surely, Mike 'll be photographed among them if he remains there much longer."

"Look," said Myrtle, who was again enjoying the novelty, "that little one will be taken with his mouth wide open and a bone in his hand."

Martha, who had considerable pride regarding her family, and who considered Mike a firm member of it, left the waggon and went to bring him away, fearing his photograph would be taken with the Indians. But Mike, not feeling the least dissatisfied with his position, replied:

"Now, Martha, ye'd betther be afther kapin' back yersel', or ye's'll be taken."

"There," said Mr. Brock, during Martha's absence, "he has one taken, and this young one is still pluming herself for the event. I presume she expects the operation to be somewhat lengthy. I'll not be surprised if Martha and Mike both appear in the picture."

"Do you think so?" exclaimed Mrs. Brock, with a shudder.

After a favored few had seen the negative, there was no difficulty in persuading any of them to stand individually; and, to Mr. Drury's great delight, the artist succeeded in obtaining a large number of different views and portraits.

"Well," said Mr. Brock, "I purpose purchasing a number of those pictures for our eastern friends, as well as for ourselves."

The crowd began to disperse, Martha had again seated herself in the waggon, and the Brocks repaired to a store to make their purchases previous to their return home.

The whole party of Indians prepared to return. Now also among them the Brocks noticed the intelligent-looking young squaw whom they had met on their first arrival. This was the same one who had bought the bracelet, as previously described, and who was called Winona. They took their tents down, put them and their contents on the carts, and quietly began their progress back to the reserve.

The procession consisted of nineteen conveyances; chiefly large carts, each drawn by a pony or an ox. Besides these, there were a number of colts and dogs, the former being ornamented with bells and ribbons or other trifles. There were old gray-haired Indians, papooses, and others in the prime of life, travelling homeward.

Their reserve was a tract of good land, set apart by the Government as their own property and home, where a few of them tilled the soil to a limited extent,

and built small log-houses, though the majority of them occupied tents.

The novel scenes and sensational incidents at the pow-wow made a lasting impression upon the minds of our new settlers; and for several days afterwards the children kept up the excitement by describing the most comical looking Indians whom they had especially noticed. In due time, these diversions began to lose their freshness, and their interest in the coming visit to Mr. Drury's increased in proportion; for Mr. and Mrs. Drury had called upon them on their way home, the day after they had met in town. They insisted upon a visit from the whole family, even appointing a day for them to go; Mrs. Drury's daughters having seldom met a young girl during their life on the homestead being an extra plea on the part of Mrs. Drury to induce Eva and Martha to go.

After considerable planning, it was decided that Mr. Brock, Martha and Frank should comprise the party; leaving Mrs. Brock, with the other two girls and Mike, to keep house. Mrs. Brock dreaded the drive, and insisted upon Mr. Brock going, as she perceived by the twinkle of his eye when talking about it, that he would highly enjoy the visit. The appointed day at last came, and the trio drove away in a buckboard, with the continual breeze playing pranks with the hats, as well as invigorating their possessors. They had thirteen miles to go. But the high-spirited horse, which, under Frank's extra care and generous feeding, had recently developed an alarming fondness for rapid

motion, tossed his head, expanded his nostrils, as he snuffed the fresh breeze, wildly shook his mane, and finally, clinching the bit between his teeth, started on his own account for an exhilarating gallop, regardless of the frail vehicle which he mercilessly whirled along behind him, over mound and hollow, through scrub and ravine. The occupants found their time fully occupied in holding on with both hands to the buckboard as it bounded along, and swung from side to side. At length their equine tormentor, having to a certain extent satisfied his insane desire to annihilate space, and having exhausted his surplus stock of breath and energy, slackened his speed, and consented to return to the trail and finish the journey in a rational manner. After thus traversing about half the distance, the trail led them, to their great delight, through a tract of thickly wooded land. As they wound round a curve in this shaded place, they beheld a graceful deer, which bounded away into a thicket. Still they travelled onward, out on the open country again; now for a short distance chasing a fox, again passing a badger, while the saucy little gophers sat erect as if holding all humanity in derision. At length they saw, at the foot of a range of loaf-shaped hills, a handsome, massive house, which, indeed, might be called a mansion, between two beautiful poplar groves.

They were soon seated in this grand home, where the attention of Mr. Drury and his family seemed to be devoted to the entertainment of their guests. When the scorching heat of the mid-day sun began to

abate, Frank and Charlie Drury led four plump bronchos up to the gate—for the house and garden of this farmer were enclosed by an ornamental iron fence. Upon two of these ponies were firmly buckled side-saddles; while Martha, in a borrowed riding habit, and Alice Drury swept the gravel walk with their dark blue skirts.

Upon starting, all four allowed their ponies to walk, on account of Martha's inexperience, until she began to have some confidence, when she attempted to persuade her pony to strike a canter. But it unfortunately reached that undesirable gait, a trot, which caused Martha's confidence to desert her. Happily, though it was a trying moment for Martha, Frank gave her pony a cut, which brought it to a canter, and then she rode along over the fenceless prairie in perfect composure, accompanied by the others. They rested a short time in the shade of some trees, when Martha collected her scattered senses, readjusted and settled her hat firmly upon her head preparatory to another equestrian effort. Then summing up her courage, she gave her steed a cut with the whip, a mode of treatment which apparently afforded him little pleasure, and settled any remaining doubt he may have had in his mind as to the necessity for carrying about such a bouncing bundle of humanity. With a most creditable display of agility he leapt about three feet into the air—all his feet leaving the ground at the same moment—then bounded wildly forward, and landed Martha upon the ground, con-

siderably shaken, but unhurt. After some persuasion, she was induced to mount again, and the pony, seemingly satisfied with this demonstration of superiority, cantered quickly along with the rest of the party. They rode out to see the herd of about two hundred head of cattle, some sheep and horses, tended by one of Mr. Drury's sons, who rode a good pony and was accompanied by a dog. Then they went around Mr. Drury's six hundred acres of growing grain. Lastly, they visited a cool spring bursting out from among the roots of a clump of bushes, until the music of the evening bands of mosquitoes, accompanied by their frequent biting, drove both horses and riders to seek protection in the smoke, which was already spreading its volumes near the house for the benefit of the cattle.

The evening passed pleasantly along with music, accounts of the experiences of pioneers, and plans for the coming camping expedition.

In the morning the procession to the camping-ground was headed by the two girls on horseback, followed by Mr. and Mrs. Drury, Alice, and Mr. Brock in a carriage; while in the rear were Frank and Charlie, driving the waggon loaded with tents, fishing tackle, some hammocks, and provisions.

The spot selected by our friends was close to the shores of a charming lake, set like a sparkling gem in the bosom of the surrounding hills, whose verdant sides, in some places thickly covered with woods and in others brilliantly carpeted with rich grass and all

kinds of prairie flowers, sloped down almost to the water's edge.

Martha found the Misses Drury very pleasant companions, they having completed their education under the care of excellent teachers, and nature having endowed them with ability and amiable dispositions.

They fished, and not unsuccessfully, sailed about in the boats, gathered flowers, and counted the different varieties, until tired of these pursuits, they mounted their ponies and galloped about the untenanted land.

When it was time to prepare dinner, they fried fish, made tea on the little camp-stove, and brought pickles, apricots, roast fowl and pies from the various baskets, then laughed and joked while dining in the large tent. Then they climbed hill-tops to see the finest views, gathered shells, listened to the birds, and watched the little gophers as they stole into the tent to pick up crumbs.

Towards evening the party, wearied with their exertions, stayed to rest in a glade of romantic loveliness. The sun was touching the line of the western horizon, and all nature seemed to be lulled in a sweet repose. The cool green grass and sweet flowers, the stately trees, the calm beauty of the lake, and the serenity of their surroundings, afforded a sense of peace and ease which seemed to arrest the step of the wanderers and dispose them to idleness and reverie. With mutual congratulations upon their good fortune in finding this haven of rest, they sat down under the

trees, and gave themselves up to the delightful influence of the scenery. Ere many minutes had elapsed, however, they were recalled to a recollection of this world's troubles by the attack of a numberless host of enterprising mosquitoes, whose vigorous bites were so annoying as to drive them to their tents.

They spent an hour preparing for the night, and before the gentlemen repaired to their own tent they were urged by the timid ladies to chain a favorite dog to their tent door.

After two days of this delightful life they returned to Mr. Drury's house, and the following day Mr. Brock and his family returned home.

CHAPTER X.

MISSIONARY WORK BEGINS.

"WELL, Eva," said Mr. Brock, as he came in tired, "I have news for you to-day. The barley is finished, and I had a chat with the Indian agent as he passed on his way to this reserve."

"Oh, I am glad," said Eva. "And what did he say? Is he an Indian, too?"

"One question at a time, if you please. He said a good deal, and is not an Indian, but a white gentleman. Strange to say, his father and my father lived within a stone's throw of each other when they were young. He was accompanied by an Indian half-breed, who is his interpreter, and who speaks a number of Indian dialects. They had a fine span of horses, and indeed a complete outfit, in the shape of a tent, robes, stoves and provisions. They live well, these government officials, having their expenses paid, and a good salary."

"But did you say anything to them about teaching a girl?" inquired the impatient Eva.

"Yes, I told him we had newly arrived, and that I had a daughter who had set her heart upon teaching at least one Indian girl what she could of the Bible. 'Oh, indeed,' the agent replied, 'a noble resolve.' I asked him if he could aid us in selecting and persuading a young girl to come to you for daily lessons. He replied that he would be only too glad to assist us, but that they were a strange, shy tribe, who were hard to persuade. He further said that he would see what could be done to-night, and that, if convenient, I might drive over to the reserve in the morning, and bring you along, as the girl might take more kindly to you than to a man."

"So we are really to go in the morning, are we?"

"I think it will be our best plan. If we leave at ten o'clock we can be back for dinner."

The following morning, Eva and her father started for the reserve; the former taking a basket containing some choice pastry, a picture-book belonging to Mike, and a red cotton handkerchief, for the future pupil.

"What a lovely drive we are enjoying straight across the prairie, no dust and all these pretty flowers! It will not be far for her to walk, will it, father?"

"No; I should say not more than a mile."

Upon reaching the reservation, the agent, true to his word, met them, and told them that he had talked with several Indians, and the parents all seemed averse to anything of the kind; that there was one girl, of

about fifteen years, who was, if anything, less shy than the others. She appeared to be remarkably intelligent, and some other Indians described her as the smartest one of the tribe.

"Do you not think her parents could be persuaded to allow her to come?"

"There is only her mother, and she does not appear to appreciate your offer. Kindly walk this way, and we will try and get a peep at her. You had better propose to buy some fish or a basket from them," replied the agent.

When they reached the tent the mother and daughter were picking ducks outside, and while they were addressing the former the latter slipped into the tent out of sight. Eva, however, had a sufficient view of her face to be able to recognize her as the girl whose intelligent look had attracted her attention when they met the procession of Indians, on their journey to the Brock homestead, and whom she had lately noticed at the close of the pow-wow.

Mr. Brock held two twenty-five cent pieces towards the mother, and said, "Basket, basket?"

She shook her head and was turning away, when he again inquired, "Fish, fish?"

She then procured for him a half-dozen nice fish and was again retreating, when Eva tapped her on the shoulder, and gave her a cake. This pleased the squaw. Eva held up the open basket and pointed into the tent. The mother laughed, and went in to try to induce her daughter to come, but returned alone,

shaking her head. Then Eva stepped to the entrance and held the handkerchief towards the shy maiden, who at last became tempted to accept the gifts. Eva took her hand, led her to the old squaw, and pointed towards the Brock home, but the mother persisted in shaking her head.

After spending some time apparently in vain, the agent thus addressed Mr. Brock and Eva:

"You had better not push the matter any further to-day, but as I think the presents will have impressed them favorably, I will try what I can do while I remain, and on my return will drive in and let you know how I have succeeded."

"Very well; thank you."

They bade the agent "Good-bye," and did not neglect shaking hands with the two squaws; which act of courtesy the Indians regard as a great mark of condescension and friendship on the part of white people. In due time the agent returned, and told them that, after considerable persuasion, the mother promised that the young squaw might come for two lessons on trial, if she—the mother—were permitted to accompany her. The agent gave Eva and her father much valuable advice in regard to teaching and managing the pupil. Then, promising to call occasionally, that he might learn how she succeeded, he drove away, leaving the family in quite a state of excitement. Some of them were teasing Eva about her objectionable pupil, while others were planning to help her.

Mrs. Brock had placed some worn articles upon the

table for mending, and Eva noticed a parasol among them. Upon opening it, she exclaimed:

"What's happened your parasol, mamma?"

"Why, it had been packed so that it touched the side of the trunk, and the rubbing on the journey has worn those holes in it. I was wondering how I could mend it for the summer."

"It is too shabby for you," and Eva glanced slyly at Martha, "you had better let me have it."

"If it's too shabby for me, it is for you, also."

"Try me with it, please."

"I believe I cannot do anything with it, so you may as well have it," said her mother, at last.

Eva walked triumphantly to Martha, carrying the worn parasol over her head.

"Martha, dear," she began, in a persuasive way, "we are succeeding very well in my missionary work; now, you are a good milliner, and have heaps of gay treasures in the shape of ribbons, beads and feathers; will you please mend these holes in the parasol, and put some bright bows, beads and tassels on it? Then I'll give it to my squaw, the first time she comes, to entice her back again."

The praise pleased the vain Martha, who loved Eva dearly; so she laughed merrily, took the parasol and ran upstairs, saying, as she left the room:

"I'll soon show you a sample of my millinery."

"Yes," shouted Mike, "your *millingry* will plase Injins betther nor foin ladies, faith."

She at last returned with the parasol, which caused

a general laugh. It had a red woollen tassel attached to the top, a green bow here, a yellow one there, some large, bright-colored beads dotted promiscuously over the silk, while a peacock feather arose from the top, and waved gracefully over the parasol like a Bombay palm-tree over a Parsee palace.

"Martha has opened her heart as well as her treasury," said Frank.

"Thank you," cried Eva, "I believe that will captivate her."

"I wonder if this Indian agent would not get Martha a government situation as milliner to the Indians?" exclaimed Frank, again.

Here, Mike, recognizing the red tassel, tried to snatch it off, saying:

"Bad luck to yes, I was goin' to hev that tossel sewed on me cap agin, sure."

After Eva had looked in vain for the arrival of her pupil for a few days, she began to lose hope of her coming.

However, one day, when she and Martha were engaged in washing, Myrtle, who was usually on the alert, bounded into the house, saying:

"Here are your squaws, Eva."

The poor girl blushed, grew excited, and said:

"Mamma, what shall I do? You help me will you, please?"

"Very well, compose yourself."

When the squaws reached the door, the elder one held up a basket and asked, in broken English, for some butter.

Mrs. Brock accepted the basket and gave her some, while Eva bade them to be seated, and gave them a piece of bread and meat. Then, with a great effort to control her impulse to laugh, she produced the gaudy parasol, and walked a few times across the floor, carrying it over her head.

"Well," exclaimed Martha, laughingly, "you are a comical looking missionary; you had better put your sleeves down and take off your wet apron."

The squaws did not understand Martha's remarks, but they also laughed heartily. After a sufficient display of the parasol, Eva presented it to Winona. She accepted it, nodded her thanks and laughed again, and the strangers then conversed for some time in Indian. The pleasure this afforded Winona led Eva to believe that she was winning the friendship of her girl.

Mrs. Brock kindly remarked:

"I'll lead them to the sitting-room door, and you slip in and play a tune for them on the organ."

This encouragement from her mother pleased Eva quite as much as the tune pleased the squaws.

Eva next produced an atlas, and commenced to show the maps to Winona. The girl looked at them attentively for a short time, then apparently thinking there was a trap in connection with the book, walked silently out, followed by her mother.

"What shall I do now, mamma?"

"I do not know how to advise you, I am sure. If they were any relation to me I might know; as it is, it might be as well to let them alone. You have

treated them well this time, so I think they will return. If she understood English you might ask her to come back to-morrow, but under the circumstances you may save your trouble." With this unsatisfactory reply, Mrs. Brock sat down, perfectly discouraged with the Indians.

"Very well, let us return to our work. Why do you make fun of them, my dear mamma?" said Eva, in perplexity.

"I don't make fun of *them*, they are all right in their place. But I cannot help laughing at the idea of you trying to do anything with them while they are so ignorant and dirty."

"I intend to try and persuade her to wash herself the next time she comes."

"Not in our wash-basin, I hope," cried Martha.

"Oh, no. I'll give her a piece of soap, if mamma will allow me, and take her to a pond. After she practises washing herself, perhaps I may prevail upon her to wash her clothes regularly."

"You have your hands full, I fear. If you would take my advice, you would give up the idea and set your mind on improving yourself, gardening and other things," advised her mother.

In about two hours, no less than thirteen natives visited the house, bearing fish, baskets and ducks, and all trying to trade their produce for parasols; the men being, if possible, even more desirous of procuring them than the squaws.

Mrs. Brock shook her head and said, "No more parasols," in vain; for they remained about appar-

ently expecting a number of specimens of that fashionable article to sprout from the ground, in the same manner as its model, the mushroom. Eva, not to be daunted, showed a book to Winona, and said "Book," then looked at her pupil hoping to hear the word repeated, but she only laughed, glanced at her companions, and turned her back. Eva next showed her a bouquet of flowers, and said "Flowers," apparently with as little success as before. The persevering young teacher then led her to the sitting-room door, sat down to the organ, played and sang a hymn very slowly, then motioned to Winona to join her in singing, and began a line slowly.

Finally, Eva persuaded her to approach the instrument and press a key, but when the sound followed, she gave one bound, accompanied by a wild shriek, and in this unceremonious manner betook herself to her comrades, who had seated themselves upon the grass, and to whom she related her escape from a mysterious chest wherein resided a spirit with white teeth and many voices.

Mrs. Brock, feeling rather unsafe, had previously signalled to her husband, who was at work some distance from the house. He walked leisurely home, shook hands with two or three of the Indians, and laughed, to which they responded with the usual grin, notwithstanding their disappointment regarding the parasols. Mr. Brock good-naturedly entered the house; and, after some time, the dusky travellers gathered up their bundles, and silently took their departure.

"My prophecy is being fulfilled, Eva," remarked Martha; "they will come in the night some time, and there's no telling what mischief they may do. I believe I'll sleep in the daytime, and keep watch at night, in order to give the alarm, if necessary.

"There's no success without trouble," said Mr. Brock, consolingly; for Eva's eyes filled with tears, while she thought:

"I don't mind it myself, but mamma and Martha don't like all this annoyance."

Although Mike took pleasure in boasting of his bravery, he was found trembling with fear under a bed, waiting until the Indians went away.

When Mr. Brock unlocked the door quite early the next morning, he stood face to face with Winona, who held her parasol closely over her head with one hand, while she drew her warm blanket about her with the other.

"Halloo!" came from the proprietor of the house, then a grunt and a laugh came in response.

"Come in," and he pointed to a chair.

She walked in and seated herself, still holding her parasol above her.

"Eva, Eva," called her father, "you have a visitor, jump up and see."

"There, there," cried Martha, "I knew you'd get sick and tired of your task. What will you take and sell out your interest in the tribe?"

"I may as well get up," said Eva, ignoring Martha's query; "but she might have waited until after breakfast."

After Eva had given Winona some elementary instruction, the latter began to examine the silk of her newly-gotten parasol, and then stripped it all from the skeleton, which she committed to the fire. She

SQUAW AND PAPOOSE.

then carefully doubled the silk and tied it over her head, smiling meanwhile with a look of satisfaction. Eva looked disappointed, and gently shook her head, but Winona did not seem to care. However, Eva thought she would endeavor to teach her to be more cleanly, and with some trouble succeeded in persuad-

ing her pupil to accompany her to a convenient pond, where she hoped she would wash herself. She took the soap from Eva, made a hideous face, pushed her thumb through it, crushed it out of shape and threw it into the centre of the pond, and then walked slowly away towards the reserve.

However, she came along quite happy just at breakfast-time the following morning. She brought a piece of birch-bark, on which she had written, by means of berry juice, several small words similar to those Eva had taught her on the slate the previous day. Her quiet appearance, together with her work, gave new courage to the dejected teacher, and she began her task afresh. For some time after this the pupil came with fair regularity, conducted herself tolerably well, with the exception of a few outbreaks, and began to learn with a readiness that would have been a credit to her white sisters.

One rainy day, when the girls were lonely and unoccupied, Myrtle said:

"Let's all write to Maggie."

"Dear child, mamma wrote to her only a few days ago," replied Martha.

"That's nothing, she is always glad to hear from us; besides, mamma writes about different things from what we do. So, come on, girls. I guess papa 'll give us a stamp."

"All right, get the paper and envelopes, and we'll have a juvenile bee at letter-writing, and send a great budget."

The letters ran as follow:

"DEAR MAGGIE,—Us girls are havin' a bee ritin' to you, and I want to tell you the most. Some weighs we like this continent better than America. But some ways we don't. Papa bought a lot of ruberb and it was far bigger than we yous to have in our garden with the picket fence which we made pies of. We don't have so many pies here as we did at home, but we have more flowers, they are not so pretty as the roses and tulips at home, for they are not double, but there are ten times more of them, and we don't have to weed them. There are no little girls to play with near us, but I saw 4 at church one Sunday, they looked at me and laughed and I laughed at them, so I guess we are relationed now. One day Martha was sittin' knittin' and I put wild roses in her hair, until you couldn't see hair, and it looked like a hood made of roses. She looked real purty, and I wanted her to put on her green dress, but she wanted to save it? Every night and morning when papa prays he says, and 'bless our absent one, guide and guard her thoughts, words and actions, unite her to us again if it is Thy will, and at last take her to heaven.' You see he said it so often that I know it off by heart, and sometimes when he is prayin' it mamma wipes her eyes with her apron, and it get intagious, and we all wipe them. I have a garden of my own and you ought to see the great big radishes in it, as tender as anything, and their was a few strawberries but they are hard to pick after our great big ones in the garden. Oh, Maggie! we have great circuses here, and free too, with Eva and a squaw girl, she is learning to be good; poor Eva cries and tries her best, and the squaw cuts up wonderful. One day Eva was givin' her words to spell before a visitor, and a little gopher (a gopher is

like a squirrel) came along and sat strate up on the door-step. Winona through her slate and sprang at the gopher. It got the start and she chaised it, and we lost sight of her and thought she had gone home. But after Eva got nicely settled at work in she popped with her skin turned wrong side out on a peace of stiff bark. Only she dose learn like fun, she can sing 'Jesus, Lover of my Soul,' all through. But Eva says she don't know what it means yet. its quit different hear, no trees, no cherries, little wee houses, no fences, but as I *con*formed you preveously before their are flowers. I wish they would make pies, and Frank is measuring the wheat every day, and thinks it is grand. I wish I could stretch my arms down to your house and hug and kiss you to pieces?

"Yours reverently with love,

"MISS MYRTLE BROCK."

"PRIVATE.

"MY DEARLY BELOVED MAGGIE,—We three girls have decided to send you a budget of letters to cheer your drooping spirits, and to give you some general information regarding the vast prairie, its products, appearance, and inhabitants (as they say in the geography). Our farm is beautifully situated on a gentle slope facing our market-town, which is several miles distant, and where our minister, Mr. West, resides. You will be amused when I tell you that Eva is trying to tame and Christianize a young squaw. Sometimes she seems to succeed a little, when all at once the wild girl flies off, and plays some awful trick on her. But Eva perseveres, and the squaw is temporarily reclaimed. Sometimes our house is literally surrounded with Indians, while at other times the

pupil comes alone. Confidentially, I think Eva is going a little wrong in her mind on the subject; the great change of country and climate may certainly have lent its assistance. Fortunately there is an asylum in this part of the country, though you know I would be the last one to wish her there. I was reading a work treating on the different kinds of monomania, and I am almost convinced that she must be suffering from that disease of the mind. I hinted as much to Eva one day, to which she replied, 'You are a bead-and-feather monomaniac.' However, I hope she will recover before it grows serious. The dress you gave me is the prettiest I have seen out here, some girls admire it exceedingly. I lent it to one girl to wear to a wedding. Mamma is sometimes very homesick, and I think papa feels so, too, but he says nothing about it, though he often draws a long sigh. I feel that I ought to try and do better. Don't you know, I am going to ask Eva to tell me exactly the way she trusts in Jesus, so I can be as good as she is. We call our house Balmoral Castle; and many little log bachelor halls have high sounding names, such as Folsom Mansion and Naworth Castle. I wish you could step into our tidy little house, and take tea with us. We girls do the housework, and mamma only superintends and does some sewing.

"Believe me, your loving sister,

"MARTHA."

"DEAR MAGGIE,—I scarcely know what to write to you, for the other girls have written first, and they would not let me read their letters, therefore I may write much the same as they. We study almost as hard as ever, and papa teaches us in the evening. We

have still Bible lessons, and we practise our vocal and instrumental music. Frank now sings bass very well, and he can read a new tune right off. We do not let mother work much, and sometimes when father is very busy we help him a little. I think it no more than right, when he is busy. I believe I am pursuing a worthy course in teaching a young Indian girl; she is really learning very well. I should like to see her converted, and also pass the teachers' examination. She could teach the Indians in her reserve, and she might lead several of them to Jesus. Papa thinks I am succeeding very well in the matter, while mamma does not say much about it now. When I lie awake at night sometimes I cannot help but plan about building a little school-house in the reserve. I may write you a little begging letter if my plan meets with success. I suppose grandpa often drives over for you, and entertains you. Give my love to all of grandpa's, and keep enough for yourself.

"Your affectionate sister,

"EVA BROCK."

Each girl read her letter to her mother, when Martha sealed them in one large envelope, and gave it to their father to post when convenient.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BLIZZARD.

A PERIOD of several months has elapsed since the events chronicled in the preceding chapter. The Brocks had passed through the usual vicissitudes of doubt and hope respecting their crop of wheat as the season went on from June and July, with heavy rains and warm sunshine, which produced a luxuriant growth of both grain and vegetables, until the critical time—the August full moon—had been safely passed without the slight, though ruinous, frost which then occasionally occurs on the North-West prairie, and does so much harm to grain, more especially wheat.

Then came a joyous harvest-time, when every man worked with all his strength from sunrise to sunset, with the happy knowledge that the toil necessitated by such a plentiful harvest meant many hours of comfort during the coming winter, and a promise of future ease and independence, if followed up with prudence and perseverance.

The grain was stacked and threshed, after which the elevators and stations were daily surrounded by numbers of farmers bringing in loads of the choicest grain. Then the winter's provisions were laid up, primitive benches and stools, which had until now done duty instead of chairs, replaced by comfortable furniture, and even some skates, hand-sleighs, books and Christmas turkeys brought home, and the faces of the people wore a contented smile of prosperity.

Mr. Brock's crop was good but small, owing to its being their first year in the place. They never before saw finer flaky loaves of bread than those made of the flour produced from their first crop of Manitoba wheat. The money realized from the sale of their surplus grain sufficed to buy all necessaries for the winter, paid their portion to the minister, and bought a little lumber (which was very dear) to make a garden fence and to repair the buildings.

They then settled down out of debt for a quiet winter, tending the horses and cattle, reading, and sleigh-riding when the weather was mild enough to make outdoor excursions pleasant.

One bright day in November Mr. Brock, accompanied by the busy Myrtle, was inspecting the buildings with a view to putting them in order for winter.

"Won't you need more lumber than that to build the new stables?" said Myrtle, pointing to the little pile.

"I could use considerably more, but I see the neighbors do without stone or frame stables, so I will try

their way, as they say they are warmer than frame buildings."

"That's a good thing. How do they manage?"

"They use the young poplar trees which grow in the bluffs on the prairie. With these they make a framework, which they bank up all around with earth and roof over with straw at the time the grain is threshed."

"It's so dreary now, when there are no flowers to gather; I would like to learn to play chess. Will you have time to teach me to-night, please, papa? I know the men, and I'll coax Frank to make a board," pleaded Myrtle.

"I'll see, my girl, perhaps I shall."

"Goodie, good!" and Myrtle jumped straight up and down and clapped her hands.

As November and December wore along, the men were teaming grain to market, putting buildings in repair and banking earth around the house, even as high as the windows, while inside the knitting needles and sewing machine were making tolerably fair speed in preparation for the severe frost of a northern winter.

The young people had many a gay time sleigh-riding behind a span of dogs, skating, and even snowballing, until, as the weather grew severe, the snow became so dry and powdery that it could not be converted into those favorite missiles of childhood. Mike never was happier than when harnessing and driving the dogs.

Whenever a letter from Ontario was read, Eva never failed to remark:

"There is no word of Miriam's necklace being found yet."

Winona still came every day. She had now learned to attend near a fixed time, and gave her teacher less trouble than formerly.

One day a note came from a neighbor five miles away, who had settled on his farm soon after Mr. Brock came to the Province. This neighbor had formerly lived near Mr. Brock's uncle, and he had even seen some of that uncle's family. The note ran thus:

"MR. AND MRS. BROCK.

"DEAR FRIENDS,—Mrs. Daniels concurs with me in cordially inviting you and your children to take dinner with us on 28th December. There are so few families here, that, to make amends, we should try and be very sociable.

"Yours faithfully,

"G. DANIELS."

When Mr. Brock read this in presence of his family, the poor, lonesome children sprang to their feet and clapped their hands with such vigorous manifestations of pleasure and enjoyment, that their mother exclaimed:

"You make my head ache."

This reduced them to order, and they resumed their work, but kept asking, "May I go?" "Can I go, too?" while Myrtle in earnest sympathy ventured to say:

"Mamma, if you was going to school and got a

headache, and pick up a stone and spit on it, and put it down in the same place, the pain will go away. Try it."

This remark caused a smile to hover around the mouth of the amused mother, which caused Myrtle to remonstrate.

"You needn't laugh, I did it once, and it cured me. I never thought we should have another Christmas-time after coming out here, since we've no grandfather or relations, or turkeys, only the wild ones we can't catch," and Myrtle clapped her mother's round shoulders, until that worthy lady's spectacles fell on her lap upon the balls of grey and red yarn.

"I'll tell you how we'll settle it," remarked Mrs. Brock, "if it is agreeable to your father."

"Oh, yes," returned the loving husband; who often said *yes* to his wife's suggestions, whether he heard them or not.

"We'll take Myrtle and Eva, because their two girls are about the same age, and also because I am afraid to have Eva out of my sight on account of the Indians. Then we'll prepare a good holiday dinner for those who remain at home."

Several again expressed their delight, more gently, however, this time, and ejaculated: "Good!" "Hurrah for our side!" "All right!"

The morning of the 28th came, clear and bright, with the thermometer at about 23° below zero.

"My dear," said Mr. Brock, when he came into breakfast, laughing and rubbing his hands as usual, "how

does this Manitoba weather suit you? Is it more than you expected?"

"Well, you and Frank have the worst of it, but as for me I have seldom felt cold, for I do not go out on bad days, and the house is always warm. It is almost insufferable."

"It is exceedingly cold, but there is no wind, so it is not so searching."

"I suppose it is too cold for our visit to-day."

"Well, I don't know that it is, you see it often goes down to 40°, so we may as well get acclimated," as he smiled and glanced at Frank, while bending over the stove thawing the icicles from his heavy moustache and beard.

"I shall leave it to you, you will suffer more on account of being the driver; so perhaps we had better wait for a mild day."

"I shall be rather sorry to have their turkey neglected."

"Faith and it's afther starvin' me father's son would be, when he'd roide so far freezing for his dinner, he could git at home fernent the foire, sure," muttered Mike, as he scraped the frost from the thickly coated window-pane.

"For my part," said Mrs. Brock, "I am not counting on a turkey. I think they will have a very good prairie dinner if they have a roast of nice fresh pork or a few prairie chickens, as people have not yet got into the way of raising turkeys here. I see you feel inclined to go, so I'll not object. There's no danger of a blizzard, or of being lost, is there?"

"No, no. These tales we have read about blizzards and people being lost were exaggerated, while those who were lost must have been intoxicated. Wrap up well, we'll drive quickly, and be there in forty minutes."

"Good! good again!" came from the expectant children.

Shortly after one o'clock the Brocks were cosily seated about the large stove in Mr. Daniels' parlor, which was the only room on the ground floor of the little log-house; above the parlor were the tiny bedrooms, separated from each other by screens covered with various pretty and amusing pictures; while underground were the warm kitchen and cellar.

Mrs. Daniels had been organist in a leading city church in the east, while her worthy husband was leader of the choir, consequently the Brocks enjoyed a musical treat. Mr. Daniels was very well informed, and entertained Mr. Brock much better than he expected. The little girls brought out some of the Christmas presents they had received from their relatives at a distance. These presents consisted of a box of raisins from California, some pretty handkerchiefs, a fur cape, and some fruit.

By the time they were thoroughly warmed Mrs. Daniels came bustling up the narrow stairway, and invited them down to dinner. In that neat little cellar kitchen was set as sumptuous a repast as they had ever partaken of in the east. The linen was faultless, while there were served in a graceful manner

turkeys, cranberry sauce, vegetables of many kinds, pickles, pies, fruit-cake, an excellent plum-pudding, and fruit in variety. "Now, guess who made this pudding," said the friendly hostess, when her guests had enjoyed the dinner remarkably well.

"Perhaps Miss Julia," as Mrs. Brock cast a glance of approval upon Mrs. Daniels' elder daughter.

"Now it is your turn, Mr. Brock, as Mrs. Brock has failed."

"I should say Mr. Daniels, since it is made by some unexpected personage."

"Well, it was made by my dear old mother away in Ontario."

"It is really delicious," remarked Mrs. Brock. "You may be sure loving thoughts are thoroughly beaten into the pudding."

After the girls had gone away to look at some pictures, Mr. Daniels remarked:

"Is this the daughter of whose perseverance in squaw-taming I hear so much?"

"I presume so; Eva has been trying her hand and head at it since we came, and the dark girl is taking quite a notion to it also."

"The minister, Mr. West, was round here the other day, and was telling me that she is learning even faster than the whites, and that Eva shows promise of being a noble woman. Her experiment has created much interest among the white settlers. Encourage her by all means. If we all practised the same self-denial, and tried to do some good among these poor

savages, it would not only benefit them, but make for us more safe and peaceable neighbors."

Meanwhile, the girls were enjoying a talk of their own.

"I got some news the other day, but it was to be a great secret," said Julia. "However, as we like you, I'll tell you, if you promise not to say anything about it. Ida German is going to have a birth-day party next week, and intends to ask Martha, and Myrtle, and us."

"Is she? I hope it will be a mild day," replied the unsuspecting Eva.

"Yes, but is it not mean, she's not going to invite you, Eva?"

"Oh, I don't care," replied Eva, trying to appear indifferent; "but likely she forgot about me."

"No, she didn't, either; she said her mother wouldn't let her associate with a girl who didn't hold her head above Indians."

"Is that all? Very well. But I don't think mother will let Martha or Myrtle go. I don't associate with Winona for the sake of her company, but to try and improve her. I think it is no harm to go with people if the object is to make them or myself better; but if it were only for amusement I would not go with her at all, because our tastes differ;" and though Eva could not help feeling the slight, she tried to banish the thought from her mind.

So the chat went on from one topic to another until the sinking sun, guarded by a rainbow-hued sun-dog at each side, warned them of the approach of evening,

and their five miles' drive, with no fence to keep them on the trail, should the horses deem it right to turn their backs to the wind, which had arisen. Seeing this indication of an approaching storm, the kind host and hostess made all haste to speed their guests.

They started at a good pace, facing the wind, which, as it came and went in fitful gusts, seemed to take up the loose snow in its light embrace, gently carry it in many a spiral turn, and then violently hurl the shining crystals in all directions.

"Why," said Eva, "it is getting dark, and the sun is not yet out of sight; it is not snowing, either, but drifting furiously. Shall we reach home by dark?"

"Well, I think we shall; we shall need all the time, though."

Soon the flakes whirled about them so thickly that Mr. Brock stood up to see the trail ahead of the horses.

"If we were once across the bridge right here, we could scarcely get off the trail, even if it were dark." These words appeared to have been addressed to the wind, for the others had abandoned the seats and covered their heads with the fur robes. But he could not find the bridge, which was, on ordinary occasions, within sight of Mr. Daniels' house. He could scarcely see the horses, though he leaned over the dashboard.

"This is something uncommon," he said. "I believe we had better return to Mr. Daniels' before our track is blown over." He jumped out and turned the horses, and in turning about, lost his bearings, and could not

find the track he had left not a minute before, so rapidly does the snow drift over the prairie. The women, seeing that Mr. Brock appeared to be somewhat at a loss, anxiously inquired if he had missed the way; and he, unwilling to believe that he could so quickly go astray, replied, in a bewildered manner:

"No, I am not lost; it must be Mr. Daniels' house that's lost."

After considerable effort to find the trail, the west, or any other guide, he reluctantly admitted, as he raised the corner of the robe:

"My dear, I am afraid we are out for the night."

"Do you think so?" Mrs. Brock anxiously inquired, as she dashed the robe aside, and, in her excitement, attempted to spring out into the snow.

"Be calm now, keep your places, and cover up with the robe; if you get your feet in the snow you will feel the cold much more," as he gently and with presence of mind pushed them together again in the sleigh. Then he left the horses standing and tramped back and forward in the snow in search of the trail, so easy to lose, yet so difficult to find. Eva thought, though she said nothing:

"It's so long until daylight here in the winter, and so cold in the night that I fear we shall hardly live through it. We were foolish to leave home at all. Mike was more sensible than we were. Frank and Martha will be out searching for us, and perhaps they will be lost," and her mind grew confused. But in her helplessness she asked her heavenly Father to be

with them, and keep them in safety throughout the night.

After Mr. Brock had done all in his power to find the trail, and to determine the points of the compass, he set about making his wife and daughter as comfortable as possible. His first proceeding was to tie one end of a long piece of binding twine, which happened to be in his pocket, to the sleigh, and the other end to his wrist; then as there were no bluffs near, he walked around in search of a drift of snow, which he succeeded in finding. He dug a hole in the drift until he nearly reached the surface of the ground, leaving the walls as high as the depth of the snow would permit. He spread one fur robe on the floor of the impromptu hut, turning the edges of the robe up against the walls, then escorted his wife and daughter from the sleigh and seated them on the soft fur, surrounded on three sides by firmly packed snow, threw the other robe over their heads, carefully excluding the air as far as possible; then, with great exertion, took the box off the sleigh and, dragging it to the drift, placed it upside down over their heads, thus forming a moderately sheltered place for such a night.

"Are you not coming in too, father?" inquired Eva.

"No, no, dear; I must look after the horses and keep you awake. I'll be all right, don't fear. I am asking our Lord to keep us," and he closed the little aperture he had made to look in at his nestlings. He turned away amid the earnest pleadings of all to enter the

hut and save himself. He threw the blankets on the horses, unhitched them and, making the sleigh the centre and the twine the radius of a circle, drove them round and round the sleigh, thus keeping awake and his blood in circulation. He occasionally visited the snow hut, when he was eagerly entreated by the affectionate inmates to remain under cover, and to allow them to take a turn at watching. Mr. Brock, however, persisted in being sentinel himself, though his hands and feet became extremely cold; the others, however, did not suffer much.

The weary hours of the night dragged themselves slowly along, and at last, yes, at last! it began, slowly, too, to grow less dark in the east.

The storm had subsided, and at daybreak Mr. Daniels' house and the bridge appeared quite near. They drove home through some drifts to their little warm house, which was as highly appreciated by the belated travellers as even the original Balmoral Castle could have been. The weary Martha met them with, "Did you meet Frank? Let me help you in; I have the stove red-hot."

She gave them hot ginger tea and delicate food, then slipped away to the stable with the horses, as Mike had not arisen, and hastened back again to assist the exhausted party to bed.

After sunrise Frank came home, having spent part of the night with a neighbor, who advised him not to make matters worse by losing himself.

When the family, somewhat rested and refreshed,

assembled in the afternoon, Mr. Brock conducted family worship, and thanked God more heartily than he had ever done before, for their deliverance from death.

None of the wanderers were much the worse, save Mr. Brock, whose nose, cheeks, fingers and toes were more or less frozen.

Martha and Myrtle received an invitation to Ida German's party, which, it is needless to say, was not accepted.

CHAPTER XII.

MR. AND MRS. WEST VISIT THE BROCKS, AND MR. AND MRS. BROCK VISIT A DYING SQUAW.

THE winter had now fairly set in, and Mr. Brock, who had suffered from a severe cold on his lungs since that terrible night on the prairie, was advised by the doctor and his anxious family to remain in the house, except on very mild days. He devoted himself more to the training of his children, and encouraging Eva in her teaching.

"Now, Eva," he remarked one day, when she and her mother were sewing beside him, "it might be well for you to assist Winona to commit a portion of Scripture to memory every day, in case she should ever be deprived of her Bible, or in case of sickness, when her memory could recall the verses to comfort her in times of trial."

"You dear, blessed father, you!" and Eva threw her arms about his neck. "I think you are too good for this world. If any good ever comes from teaching

Winona, it will be owing to your help and encouragement. I should like to see her educated so that she could teach her own people. If she continues to learn as well as she has done, it will not be long until she will be able to give some instruction to others of her tribe. I'll take the list of studies for teachers, and drill her on those very subjects and the Bible. I shall also try to teach her instrumental music as well as vocal; she may find that useful in winning her people."

"I believe you are going to succeed, my daughter," said her mother; "though, I must confess, I had little hope of it at first. The girl is not so repulsive now; she has learned more cleanly habits, combs her hair, and has discarded her blanket in favor of more civilized attire. Poor thing, her jacket is thin; I'll go this minute and gather up some clothes to give her the next time she comes." Eva smiled her thanks and worked away.

While Mrs. Brock was upstairs, bells were heard approaching the door, and the clergyman and his wife entered the room, and received a hearty welcome. Shortly after this, Mrs. Brock returned, bringing a quantity of warm clothing, not too much worn to be remade for the use of Winona. She cordially saluted her guests, and seeing Mrs. West's inquiring gaze towards the clothing, explained that the miscellaneous assortment was to serve as an addition to Winona's wardrobe.

"Oh, how kind!" returned Mrs. West. "Get me a needle, girls, and I'll help your mother. No, no, don't lay them away."

"How is Winona progressing, Mr. Brock?" inquired Mr. West, who was quite enthusiastic over the work Eva had undertaken; he had even assisted her to collect money, and promised a good sum of his own meagre salary for the erection of a school-house in the reserve, where Winona might, in the near future, impart her newly acquired knowledge to the Indian children.

"She is steadily improving. If Eva notices her interest flagging, she searches for some little present, which always gives her new courage. Eva even goes so far in her imagination sometimes, as to prepare a programme for a public opening, should the school-house ever be built."

"Her mind might be employed in a less worthy way. Indeed, should the imaginary school-house become a tangible reality—which there is no reason to doubt—and if it would please you, I shall invite some other ministers and bring our church choir to the opening."

Eva listened attentively, and bashfully expressed her thanks. Her father also thanked him, and said:

"We shall certainly remind you of your promise, should we so far succeed."

Mrs. West then asked:

"Can your pupil sing?"

"Oh, yes, Mrs. West, she sings two hymns correctly," replied Eva.

"Well, I would have her sing at the entertainment, too."

Then the conversation drifted away to the subject of settlers' hardships, and Mrs. Brock said:

"We have been much annoyed by our cattle getting at the grain, as we have no fences."

"I expect you have your hardships, too, but I think we have had our share; though I try to think of our trials only with the object of lessening my affection for this world."

Mrs. Brock's sympathetic, inquiring look and remark, "I hope your trials are light," encouraged Mrs. West to proceed.

"Well, Mr. West, the baby and I drove thirty miles the last day of our journey, when moving to Buffalo Horn. The day was wet, he was not as well as usual, the baby fretful, and the last ten miles the rain fell heavily; but we tried to cheer each other with the hope that we should receive a warm welcome when we reached our new friends and place of abode. At last we arrived at the town, just at dark, all wet and hungry, but no one noticed us. Mr. West made some inquiries about a house, and about members of our church, but the little town being new, people knew very little about one another. He succeeded in finding a wealthy leading member of our church, who said that we would have trouble in procuring a house, or even a room, owing to the great tide of immigration, but that he would try and find the key of the church for us. After an unsuccessful search for the key, we went alone in the dark, climbed through a window, and lay down in our wet clothes on the floor."

"I wish I had been there, I would have given you our warm, soft bed in a hurry," interrupted the kind-hearted hostess; "I wonder you were not all seriously ill, after such exposure."

"There was an hotel," continued Mrs. West, "but it was full. In the morning my husband rented one room at a distance from the village. He resolved to build a little house behind the church, for rent was high; so he began digging the cellar, thinking that some of our members would assist. But no one seemed to notice him while he laboriously persevered in a task which his delicate health made doubly hard; but it was a case of necessity. I knew that it was too much for him, and so I took the baby, sat him on a board beside us, and helped him to dig. I am pretty strong, and must say," as she cast a sly glance at her husband, "that I believe I accomplished as much as he."

"Did no one become ashamed and take your place?"

"Not one. They stopped, looked at us, smiled in derision, and walked away. My husband bought lumber, we put up the frame of our little kitchen and pantry, worked together until we had the building enclosed, then we moved into our own house. Mr. West was so ill and exhausted from exposure and overwork, that he was confined to his bed for a week. After he sufficiently recovered, we proceeded at our leisure to complete boarding the inside of the house.

"It was not until we appeared at church, somewhat respectable looking, that we were welcomed to the place."

"I do feel sincerely sorry for you," said Mrs. Brock, whose eyes were blind with sympathetic tears.

"Oh, never mind, we are comfortable now, and happy in spreading the Gospel."

After dinner, Mr. and Mrs. West were pleased to see Winona coming. When she was introduced to the visitors, she acknowledged the introduction more by a broad smile than by the almost imperceptible stiff bow. Before she went away, they prevailed upon her to sing her two hymns, which she did, with credit to herself and her teacher.

Mr. and Mrs. West took their departure in time to reach their home at Buffalo Horn before dark, and left Eva much encouraged in her missionary work.

A little after sunrise the next morning, Frank hurried in, calling, "Come and see the mirage, mamma; it is the finest we have yet seen. It has played pranks with all the buildings round, and has set the Indian tents down quite close to us."

"Faith, Miss Ava, if you would be afther spakin' to Winona, and appintin' her lesson *now*, she could step over here in less than no time."

"Oh," exclaimed Myrtle, "the granary looks lower and broader, and that house is in full view, for all we never can see even the roof of it at other times. How do I look, Frank? Hasn't the mirage stretched me up tall and slim, like a lady?"

"I never before noticed that wood to the west!"

"Why, those trees are twenty miles, and those river banks resembling mountains are fifteen miles distant. It is a grand sight, but it will likely soon disappear."

Winona had been telling Eva about a squaw named Wheata in the reserve, who was very ill; Mrs. Brock had frequently sent her little delicacies, and upon one occasion she sent a warm quilt. One morning, when the snow was nearly all gone, Winona said:

"Poor squaw going die, she ask Eva go see her."

Eva said to her mother:

"Couldn't you and papa go, and Winona will interpret for you?"

So one raw morning, Mr. and Mrs. Brock drove over to the reserve, and went to the cold, miserable tent, where the squaw lay shivering on a bed composed of loose straw, upon which was spread a buffalo robe, her only covering being a quilt, amidst the patchwork of which Mrs. Brock noticed pieces of familiar dresses. She was suffering, and looked thin and wild, with her iron-gray hair tossed upon the buffalo skin; but she smiled when told who her guests were. Winona could not yet speak very good English, but she could make herself understood, though she spoke slowly, even stopping frequently to think, and making up for her scanty supply of language by numerous gestures.

Mr. Brock asked the sick one—Winona interpreting:

"Are you a good squaw?"

"No, me bad squaw; Winona say all bad."

"Do you know how to have the bad taken away?" She turned away her face, and moaned: "Poor squaw die bad, bad."

"Jesus was punished for our sins, lay your trouble

upon Him, and He will make you happy." She looked a little relieved, but could not understand very well. With a piteous moan, she called, "Eva, Eva." She had never seen Eva, but felt she was her friend by hearing Winona tell about her, and by the marked improvement in Winona herself.

She pointed to a pair of new moccasins hanging up in the tent, and asked that they should be brought to her. Upon her request being complied with she handed them to Mrs. Brock, saying, "Eva, Eva." Then she told Winona to tell them that the moccasins were to induce Eva to come to her. She had the idea that Eva possessed some supernatural power, and could cure her.

After Mr. and Mrs. Brock had done what they could for her, they told her that they would soon bring Eva, and came away. Eva was delighted with the pretty moccasins, covered with roses of bright-colored beads, but she looked sad, and remarked:

"Mother, I don't like to be paid to go and see the sick woman."

"We did not care about taking them from her, for the same reason, and because she might sell them for food or medicine; but it would have hurt her feelings very much if we had refused them. We'll take care that she has plenty to eat, by sending something with Winona every day."

"Mamma," said Myrtle, "do squaws have feelings? you said hurt her feelings."

"Yes dear, they *have* feelings, and any one who is

kind to them will be kindly remembered not only by that one, but by many or all the tribe; while if their feelings are injured, they will remember it, and perhaps have revenge on the offender many a year afterwards."

"Then," said Myrtle, laughing, "I expect Eva will be kindly remembered by them. See, they have already begun; and maybe they will give her a robe of gopher skins, one of badger skins, a jacket of mink, and a bunch of feathers from the tails of wild turkeys."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PRAIRIE FIRE AND A LETTER FROM OSCAR.

THE following day, Mr. Brock drove Eva over to see Wheata, and on the way he told her what to say. She did not need an interpreter, for she had learned to speak Winona's language well enough to converse a little. The squaw was much pleased to see Eva, and to hear her speak in her own language.

Eva gently told her the loving story of our Saviour and His work on earth, and how He suffered on the cross for our sins, begging her to pray to Him to take her sins away.

Wheata asked feebly: "What is pray?"

"Let me pray for you," said Eva, kneeling reverently; and in a few simple words commended the poor creature to the mercy of our Lord, with a touching petition that she might be brought to see the light. The squaw was evidently impressed by Eva's earnestness and air of devotion, but seemed to be vacillating

between hope and doubt. After a pause of a few moments, she abruptly turned her head away, saying:

"The great Lord will not make me good; for I've been bad too long."

Eva explained to her that all can be saved, even the most wicked, both Indians and white people, by believing in Jesus. She seemed to grasp the truth, for Winona had also been telling her what she could, during the winter, of the wonderful Saviour. Mr. Brock prayed for her in his own language. When they arose she pointed upward, and said:

"Jesus loves me."

They bade her "Good-bye," and came away.

After they had driven a short distance, Eva asked:

"What smoke is that to the north?"

"I had not noticed that before. I believe it must be a prairie fire; we had none last fall, consequently the prairie is covered with dry, heavy grass, ready to make a tremendous conflagration. Fortunately our buildings are in the centre of the ploughed land, so they are quite safe."

"See it blazing up those bushes! It would look pretty at night."

"A grand sight it would be. I wonder if Mr. German's buildings are protected from the fire! The wind is driving it right towards his house, It has started very suddenly. I believe we had better drive over and see; possibly they have not noticed it," as he turned his horse in the direction of Mr. German's house.

Mr. German had purchased this property from Mr. Arthur W. D. Bradshaw, and built a new house on it; while that young Englishman had taken his great herds to a larger farm farther west.

"People should be punished for starting these fires."

"They would pay pretty dearly for it, if they were caught setting them out, as there is a heavy fine."

"What makes people start a fire?"

"Oh, different reasons. In the fall they often plough two rows around stacks and buildings, leaving about a rod of grass between the furrows, then they burn between the ploughing, making a good fire-guard; but sometimes the fire, getting beyond control, runs in all directions over the prairie. Some men when lighting their pipes, thoughtlessly throw burning matches on the dry grass. Farmers, too, often burn straw-stacks to get them out of the way, and allow the fire to spread."

"Everything is quiet about the house; maybe they are away."

"I should not wonder. They have not a foot of ploughing, by way of protection to the buildings; I wonder they can be so careless. The fire will be here in twenty minutes. We will not drive to the house, but out on this ploughed field, where we will unhitch the horse and tie him to the back of the buckboard, so that he will be safe if the fire does come up. You run to the house, now, and rouse them out, if there is any one at home."

Eva followed the trail as fast as her feet could carry

her, knocked loudly twice; and on receiving no response, opened the door and walked in. The kitchen was unoccupied, but she found two children (one two years old and the other nine) asleep in the bedroom.

"Tommy, Tommy!" she called, as she gave him a good shake.

He sat up, rubbed his eyes, and said, sleepily:

"Do you want Julia? She won't play with you."

"Where are your father and mother?"

"They're all gone to Buffalo Horn."

Eva took the children outside with her, telling the boy to remain there and take care of his sister, then met her father near the house.

"Papa, they are away to town, and these children were asleep on the bedroom carpet. They might have been burnt to death."

"Where are your oxen and plough, sonny?"

"Guess the oxen is in the stable."

"Eva, get some tubs or boilers filled with water and two bags, or some cloths; and as soon as I plough a piece, set a tub down at the furrow, so that you can wet the cloths and extinguish the fire, if it leaps over at any place. Put the tubs in their places while empty;" and he went as fast as his age would permit to the stable, hitched the oxen to the plough, and was soon turning a furrow around the house and out-buildings.

The great clouds of dark smoke were rolling along the sky, towards them, while the vast prairie was left blackened behind. Then, as he watched the fire, he thought:

"It is coming very fast, and if I don't get this ploughing done shortly, I must turn the cattle and sheep away from the stable."

Soon he so far completed his work, that it would help him, at least, to save the buildings, unless at the corner nearest the fire, where the furrows ran round the edge of a willow-bordered pond. He could not drive the plough through the roots of these bushes; therefore it would be necessary to closely watch this corner.

To his great dismay, he then for the first time perceived another fire stealing insidiously towards them, from behind some rising ground, on the farther side of the farm.

Hastily telling Eva to bring her wet cloths and accompany him, he rushed away to meet this new enemy, and, if possible, check its dreaded advance. The smoke was almost suffocating, but Eva bravely kept her place inside of the furrows, ready to wipe out every little blaze that jumped the fire-guards. Her vigilance and activity were taxed to the utmost, to combat the devouring flames, which the fire-break only partially arrested in their destructive course.

A mere spark, if unnoticed, would in a few moments kindle such a blaze that the property, which they were taking so much pains to save, would inevitably be reduced to a pile of smoking ruins; the straw and hay-stacks close to the buildings increasing the danger a hundredfold.

After some minutes of intense anxiety, they were

relieved to see that the fire had there burnt itself up to the ploughing; another side of the premises was sufficiently protected by a wide trail running at right angles to the guard which they had so gallantly defended.

They were thus enabled to devote all their attention to the quarter in which lay their weakest point. The conflagration was here beginning to assume serious proportions, the fire having made some headway among the willow bushes; and a furious wind which was blowing from that direction towards the house, seemed to urge on the angry flames in their wild career. The scrub blazed and crackled, and the fiery element shot up its forked tongues, as if seeking more food for its raging appetite, and leaping for very joy at the havoc it was causing. There was no time for talking. Eva helped her father awhile, then she thought:

"The fire is inside the guard, and the house cannot possibly be saved, I must see that the children are safe;" and with that she ran away in search of them, and found the boy, but not the little one. With a throbbing heart and nearly wild with excitement, she at last found the little thing sitting on the floor upstairs, nibbling at a cake. She picked her up, and running with her to the block of ploughing, said to the boy:

"Now, watch your little sister; don't let her away from here, or she may be burnt."

Then she hurried back to her father, who had not relaxed his efforts for a moment.

"Well, Eva," he said, wiping the black smoke, ashes and perspiration from his brow, "it is mastering us; but we will not give up. I'll plough nearer to the buildings, and you follow me with a switch, and put out any fire that crosses *this* ploughing." They worked in silence for some time, only to see that the stealthy fire had crept up to a pile of straw, barely thirty feet from the hay-stack, which leaned against the stable. At this sight, poor, tired Eva said:

"The house cannot be saved now; I'll run and carry out anything of value I can."

"No, no," said her father, "although that straw-stack *is* on fire, I'll plough between it and the stable, and you smother any burning straws that may fall within your reach."

With unabated vigor, they continued to fight the relentless foe, while Eva sent up many a short unuttered prayer to her Father in heaven, to quench the flames.

The burning straws were carried over their heads by the wind towards the stable, only to blacken and fall at the verge of the hay, and Eva thought:

"God is putting out those straws in answer to my prayers."

They worked here in the heat until the risk from the burning stack was somewhat reduced, and then they turned their attention to the remaining side. The fire was some distance away from here, so Mr. Brock put a match to the grass outside of the fire-guard, and taking care that it did not jump the break-

ing, watched until the prairie was all burnt round the outside of the guard.

"Everything is safe but the hay. I wish Mr. German would come home and relieve us. Of course, the straw-stack is burnt down; but there will be fire smouldering in the ashes all night, which a gust of wind might carry to the stable."

"You are tired, father. What time is it, please?"

"Just half-past six, and it was three when we reached this house. But it was lucky we drove in, or they would certainly have lost their buildings."

"Yes, and the children, too, for they were asleep."

"You are right there. Well, we had better take them home with us."

"There's a team now, coming at full speed."

"Yes, that's their team. I'll get the horse, and we will be ready to start upon their arrival."

"I'll bring the children back to the house."

When Mr. German reached the house, he coolly said:

"I thought by the smoke awhile ago, that the buildings were going, but they are all right."

"They are all right *now*," returned Mr. Brock, so tired that he was scarcely able to step into the buckboard; "but they were nearly on fire several times."

"I am much obliged to you. I'll do as much for you some day."

"Good-night."

"Good-night."

Mr. Brock and Eva drove away home, without even being asked in, to wash the ashes from their faces.

"I am very hungry," said Eva, "our tea will be over, and I can scarcely wait until the tea-kettle boils. Papa, whip up the horse, he has had a rest. I am afraid you will be the worse for this. Mr. German did not appear to be very grateful for our work."

"Oh, I'll be all right. Your mother will soon treat us to a good supper and clean clothes."

"See, I have burnt two holes in this good dress, although I had it pinned up."

"That's nothing compared with what they might have lost."

That evening Frank received the following letter from Boston:

"DEAR COZ. FRANK,—The rest are off to church, and the time hangs heavy on a fellow's hands, so I just got thinking of you; for we have spent weeks together, not so awful dull either, considering the place. I cut myself short of a visit at your place that time I was such a fraud as to let go that old sweep. Now the trouble was, I was preparing to spring to the roof and entirely forgot the importance of sticking to my seat. I could do it now all right, though I'm not just as supple as I was before that smashing up. By the way, that doctor of yours wasn't such a greeny after all—think we'll have to get him over in the States; you have no need of such good men in Canada. Well, my chum—Jim Osborne—and I have been planning a trip to the coast next summer. We go by San Fransisco, and come back by your little one-horse C. P. R., and may take a run up to see you. How far are you from Calgary? I was thinking we'd get off there, and take in a round-up, and possibly buy

out two or three ranches, and set up business on our own account. So, if you would just drive over to Calgary and meet us, we could have a jolly time up with you. I was just looking at some fine revolvers and bowie-knives down town, yesterday, and think a fellow would be safe enough with two or three of each. We intend fetching down forty or fifty buffalo, a score or two deer, and some bears. I s'pose you don't bother much with such small game as ducks and chickens. They say it's a fine country for horseback riding, so we can do some tall fencing on your ranche. I guess people felt pretty blue when they got up that morning in harvest, and found their wheat lying frozen flat on the ground. I hope you are all well and prospering.

"Yours, of sweep notoriety,

"OSCAR."

"H'm," came from Mr. Brock, "I'm afraid that young man is not going to be a credit to his parents."

"Dear me!" cried Martha, "one-horse C. P. R., indeed. I wonder he didn't say he was about buying it out, and putting it in his pocket. I wonder how he'll get money to take such a trip. He never keeps a situation more than a few months at a time."

"Sur'n if he got that owld injine in his pocket that pulled us up here, he'd forget about the swape business in a hurry," said Mike.

"What amuses me," said Frank, "is that some people who have not been here, think it is only a day's drive from Winnipeg to the Rockies. Perhaps they have the idea that we are so near the north pole that we are all crowded together. And how he boasts! if he

really were rich he would not recognize us as cousins at all. And where are his fences? I suppose he'll order us to drive the deer and buffalo up for him to fire at. But he'll never come, though I wish he would. What a number of letters we get out here!"

The following morning Winona told Mrs. Brock that Wheata had passed away a few hours before, and that she had talked about Jesus and happiness as long as they could understand her, and she appeared to be resigned to depart.

"How little," remarked Mrs. Brock, thoughtfully, "the wealthy know what hardships part of humanity endures."

CHAPTER XIV.

DEATH.

THE songs of robins fluttering merrily from spray to spray and bush to bush, the frequent flight of wild ducks from pond to pond, the racing and scampering of the cunning and mischievous little gophers, together with the warm weather and the coming of April crocuses, were sufficient inducement for Myrtle, as well as the waiting farmer, to spend less time indoors and more in the warm sunshine.

Mr. Brock and Frank had broken and backset a large portion of their homestead the previous summer, and they thus found themselves in a position to sow a very large crop in good season.

Their prospects with regard to a bountiful harvest were very encouraging; but Mr. Brock, the loving Christian husband and father, was not enjoying good health. Frank, with some assistance, managed to get the whole of the prepared ground sown, and in a month's time the crop was looking well. But the

family could not fully appreciate the appearance of the growing grain, for the sympathy and fears which his state caused. Then the cold which he had caught the night of the blizzard had, with much nursing and care, almost left him, but the heat, caused by the exertion he underwent while fighting the prairie fire at Mr. German's, followed by a chill, brought on an attack of inflammation of the lungs, which, in its turn, left him weak and suffering from a chronic cough. However, the pure fresh air and bright sky, together with the unabated care which his family continued to give him, assisted in strengthening him; and all hoped that he would yet regain perfect health.

Though the family felt sad, yet they enjoyed his beloved companionship more than ever before. He talked and read to them, and occasionally assisted the girls with their lessons.

When the weather was favorable, and a horse at liberty, he frequently drove over the prairie, accompanied by one of his family. The fragrant wild roses and brilliant tiger lilies, dotting the tall green grass, gave him a feeling of happiness. He remarked to Martha upon one occasion, when they were admiring the surrounding landscape after a refreshing shower: "When God sends these charming flowers, and sets such grand and beautiful rainbows in the sky to cheer sinners here, what must it be like in heaven, where there is no sin! I would not wish for a more magnificent highway to the gate of heaven than that glorious rainbow."

When walking alone, he occasionally sauntered as far as the Indian reserve; where he talked and motioned to any Indians whom he met. He told those who understood a little English about God and the blessed Saviour, while they in turn gave him roots and herbs, which they said would cure his cough.

Winona continued to improve in her lessons and conduct, while she loved her Saviour with unwavering steadfastness.

Mr. Brock gave her a short Bible lesson every day after Eva had finished, and she could repeat a number of verses, and also explain the meaning of many.

One day when Winona had left a little pail full of large, juicy raspberries for Eva, Martha said:

"Mamma, shall I throw these out? Those dirty Indians have picked them, and I do not think we could relish them."

"No, my dear girl, they are so scarce that none but the Indians find many. They look tempting, and the poor girl has been a long time picking them."

Then Eva spoke in an injured tone:

"She washes herself carefully, for she tells me so; besides, she looks as if she did."

"I beg a thousand pardons of your ladyship. However, it will not do any harm to give them a rinse in cold water."

The children had heard so much of the Indian language since Eva began to learn it, that their conversation, when alone, had in it a frequent sprinkling of that strange tongue, which afforded them not a little amusement.

"Father," said Frank, one day in August, "don't you think we had better buy a self-binder? The agent told us that we need not pay more than ten dollars down, while our great crop of wheat will leave us abundance after the balance is paid. The wheat requires to be cut immediately on becoming ripe, and all the neighbors will be using their own machines at the time we shall wish to hire one, consequently I am afraid our crop may suffer."

"That's all very well, my son; but on the other hand, if anything happens to our wheat we shall have no way of paying for the binder."

"I don't see how anything can happen, for it will be ready to cut in ten days, and should be worth twelve hundred dollars."

"Better be on the safe side."

This conversation led Mrs. Brock to remark:

"The last day we were in town the merchants were in high spirits in regard to the prospects of the farmers. Two or three of them were very anxious to sell me more goods, saying that they would wait for their money until we threshed. I thought that my mind would be easier and the pleasure greater if I waited and bought with the cash. So I thanked them kindly, but decided to run no risks."

"Very wise, *very* wise, indeed, my dear."

"It is all very well to be cautious now," said Martha, "but when the threshing is over I am expecting to make up for last year. I think I ought to get two new dresses, a pair of overshoes and a set of furs. I have worked hard this summer, haven't I, mother?"

"Yes, you deserve all those things, and we'll try to get them for you."

A look of satisfaction was visible on Martha's countenance, as she went to work with renewed energy.

But one night, shortly after this conversation, when all were sleeping peacefully and some dreaming pleasant dreams, there came a slight, indeed, a very slight, frost. It was scarcely felt by the cattle that were contentedly resting in the light of the full moon, but the wheat, the main dependence of the Manitoba farmer, was blighted, though Mr. Brock was not aware of it for some days subsequent to the frost. There were to be no new dresses and furs that year; and it would require the strictest economy to furnish the table through the approaching winter and long spring.

Startling reports were flying through the neighborhood to the effect that the wheat crop had been injured by the recent frost.

Mr. Brock carefully and frequently examined his wheat, but it was not until several days had elapsed that he detected tiny wrinkles in the coating of the grain, and a slight change in the color; while to a casual observer it retained its former promising appearance.

"Mother," said Frank, one day, as they were admiring the brightly blooming convolvuli and fragrant mignonette which the frost had not injured, "the threshers gave me their account. It will take all of the salable wheat to pay it. I don't like to give it

to father, as our prospects are so dark it may worry him," and he handed her the account.

"The future appears discouraging, but we must be cheerful for his sake."

"There's one good thing," remarked Frank, trying to look at the bright side, "we have feed for our horses and cattle, and no rent or interest to pay."

"Yes, but I am afraid," replied his mother, "we may be obliged to sell one of the cows to procure necessaries before another harvest, and the other cow will not furnish the table with butter."

That evening, while Eva was preparing the tea, she thoughtlessly remarked to her mother:

"We'll need more tea, the next day you go to town."

"I don't know where the money is to come from; the coal oil is nearly done, and there's only another baking of flour. I had been trying to make things spin out until we sold the wheat, but you see there'll be nothing over the threshing bill. I suppose we should not complain, but it is very trying."

"New prairie farms are quite bare, mother. There is no fruit, or even wood, to sell. Our prospects have changed so suddenly that we have scarcely become acquainted with our situation. But don't fret, we will all help in some way. If we had a school here, and I were not too young, I believe I could teach."

"You are kind, Martha, but you see you used two ifs. There's one thing we should be thankful for—we are not in debt."

During the few weeks that the family, or indeed,

the whole community, was realizing the situation, Mr. Brock's cough was not improving, and he wore a slightly sad appearance, but said little regarding the scarcity of money. One day, however, he remarked:

"We should be contented, for the Lord giveth all, even the atmosphere we breathe, and He can withhold more than He has done. If we have not the wheat we expected, we have many blessings, for which we should be thankful."

"Oh, yes," replied Frank, "I'll get plenty of wood to keep a roaring fire; we have our own pork, and I'll see that we do not want for any necessary. We'll put in a large crop next spring, which may be good; then we'll know how to enjoy it. Eh, Myrtle?"

The poor boy, stimulated with the hope of a rich harvest, and with the hope of the returning health of his father, had almost done the work of two men during the past summer.

One morning, when the work was over, Eva took her geometry upstairs to study, but she could not fix her mind upon the meaning of that thirteenth proposition, book II., and while she was repeating the words:

"In every triangle, the square on the side subtending either of the acute angles, is less than the squares on the sides containing that angle by twice the rectangle," etc., the sound of her father's distressing cough caused her mind to wander away after the following strain:

"Papa's cough is growing worse instead of better,

and there are deep dark lines under his eyes! I am afraid he will never be better. Poor papa! put under the cold frozen ground, away here in a strange land, where the savages have been buried for ages past. He may suffer, too, a great deal before he goes. I wish I could help him. He will fret about leaving us among strangers, who are not like our uncles and aunts and cousins, and the neighbors who were his old school-mates at home. Then he will be anxious about our future livelihood; as he has discovered that wheat is uncertain here, and he knows that Frank is young and inexperienced, though he works hard. What should we do, if anything happened to him! Mother would give up. She would seldom smile, and how could we get along without her encouraging smile! She is the most cheerful one among us. The sadness of her countenance would cast a gloom over our household.

"But I am wasting my time. I am neither learning nor working. I could teach school, if I were older. I wish I could get a situation as governess. Again, no family near us can afford to pay one; besides, I wish to be at home to wait upon papa, and to learn to be good while he is with us. If we had yarn, I would knit mittens and socks for sale, but we need all that mamma brought with her.

"Now, I have thought of it! Mrs. McFadden taught me to plait straw hats, when I was visiting there one time. We have a great stack of poor, unthreshed wheat. I shall go now and prepare a

quantity of that straw, before the cold weather sets in. Martha and I can plait every odd minute, and have a great many to sell by spring. The money thus obtained will buy delicacies for papa, groceries, and, perhaps, some spring clothing."

She went quietly downstairs, slyly induced Martha to accompany her, on the way made her plan known to her sister, and won her approval of it. They placed the bright long straws evenly together, cut off the heads, and bound them into sheaves again. After they had worked some time, Martha remarked:

"They may need us, Eva. We had better leave our straw until the dinner work is over; we have considerable ready to bring in now."

"Very well, let's go to the house. Do you think we can keep the straw in the granary until we need it?" asked Eva.

"Yes, that's the very place for it. It's an ill wind that blows no good, for if the granary had been full of wheat, there would have been no room for the straw," and Martha laughed as though she had solved a problem.

"That's poor logic," returned Eva; "if the granary had been full, we should not have used the straw."

"I believe you are right; but every one knows that my mind is shallow, so there is not much expected from me."

When they quietly entered the house, their father remarked:

"You look very rosy and bright after your exercise

in the fresh air, but I thought you were upstairs at your lessons. Where were you ?"

They were obliged to reveal their secret, to which he replied :

"I am sorry you are doing this. If I were well, I could earn sufficient, some way. It may all be for the best. The work you propose is honest, though you will expend much labor and receive very little remuneration. I think I am a little better to-day." The wish to be at work had deceitfully prompted this thought.

"But," inquired Myrtle, thoughtfully, "will you not be ashamed to sell them in spring ?"

"No," returned Martha, decidedly, "I shall be proud of them; and if Eva and Frank are ashamed, *I'll* drive to town with a whole sleigh-load, and the merchants ought to think that I made the best of a bad crop, by using the straw when the heads are no good. Besides, we did not steal the straw, we raised it on our own good soil—so there," and she gave her head a few decided nods, as if to settle the question.

"Eva," inquired Myrtle, "why do you and Martha come down to hat-making, while you can teach music?"

"Kindly tell me where I can find a pupil, Miss Myrtle," said Eva. "I have thought that all over; there are only two or three children for miles around whose parents could afford to pay for the tuition, and they have no instruments."

Myrtle did not feel like being outwitted, so she proposed :

"Let them do without practising, or practise on the knives and forks stuck in the seam at the side of the table. They could give them the names of the keys, and learn to be nice deficient players."

Time had worn slowly along, the snow brought good sleighing, while many a morning in early winter every blade of grass, every twig, and even the unassuming clothes-line, were decorated with beautiful feathery moss-like hoar frost, quite two inches in depth. The bright sunshine caused every one of these frost-clad objects to sparkle as if set with numberless diamonds. But, as time glides away, so certainly does the table require replenishing; and the frost and snow, though so beautiful, being of no intrinsic value, Mr. Brock had some time since been obliged to sell one of his horses, as the least indispensable commodity he possessed, in order to procure necessaries.

Christmas came once more. The dinner was almost as bountiful as on former occasions; if anything, it was more tastily prepared, for Mrs. Brock and the children had previously struggled, and saved, and worked, in order to cheer Mr. Brock, and to afford all at least one more bright Christmas-day.

The conversation at dinner was lively, and all seemed to enjoy themselves. Mr. Brock tried particularly to be cheerful on this occasion. The effort wearied him a little, and he soon after retired to his warm room to lie down.

When Mrs. Brock noticed that Myrtle also had disappeared, she sighed and drew a letter from her

bosom, and said: "It is too bad to burden your young hearts with trouble and sorrow, this day above all others, but my own heart is aching," and she wiped away a tear. "It relieves me to talk to you. I received a letter from Maggie when in town yesterday, and I could not show it to your father, for different reasons; it is the first time that I have ever kept a secret from him. In the first place, Maggie seems to have the idea that your father is even worse than he is; therefore, it would discourage him to read it. She has enclosed fifty-five dollars and some change in stamps, which I believe I should lay away in case of any unforeseen occurrence. Your father"—here her voice faltered—"is not improving, and the doctor does not give very encouraging replies to my questions; therefore, we should be prepared for the worst. Eva, you may read the letter out, but not so that he can hear it. I have not the heart to read it again."

Then Eva began, in a faltering voice:

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—I thought it better to address this letter to you, and it will not be necessary for you to show it to father. When I received your last, I was very much surprised, for you had never mentioned in a previous one that there was anything serious ailing dear papa. And you formerly stated that your wheat was a grand crop, and would soon be ripe. I really do not know how to write about father, as you thought the warm spring weather would restore him to health. On the other hand, a young man remained here over night lately, and, upon being questioned by Mr. Cameron, he stated that he had been out to Manitoba

and was now returning; that he had spent a few days with one of your neighbors. He said that *papa was dying* of consumption when he left. It is almost intolerable to think that I am away here, and comfortable, too, while you are in such trouble; but I hope the young man was mistaken. I at first determined to take the train for home the next morning, to help you and to see poor papa once more; but, after some consideration, I concluded that I had better remain at my post, because it would take the most of the money I have to go, while I should not have sufficient to bring me back. I should probably lose my situation, and be an expense to you. I thought that if I did not go I could send you the money, and remain in a position to assist you in the future. I enclose a draft for fifty-five dollars, which I hope you will receive before Christmas. I wish you would permit me to tell grandpa the extent of your wheat failure, as he might send you some assistance. It is almost impossible for me to go to school and teach all day while thinking so much about papa. There is only one comfort about it, and that is the greatest consolation of all: that he is a good man, trusting in the Saviour, and that our loss will be his gain. I hope he will not suffer much in his illness. After I am in bed I think about you, and how good and kind papa always was, and of the happy vacation I spent at home two years ago. Then I cry myself to sleep and dream of him. But God knows what is good for us, and we must be resigned. Try and bear up under your sorrow, dear mamma. I should like one of the girls to send me word very often how he is. I always try to live as papa taught me; and if—oh! if I should never see him again in this world, I will try to meet him in heaven.

"My love to you all.

"Your loving daughter,

"MAGGIE."

Eva paused more than once to wipe away the tears which dimmed her eyes, and as she finished reading, all four were weeping. A cough and a footstep in Mr. Brock's room aroused them. The mother dried her eyes and tried to smile, while the younger ones passed quietly out-doors.

The bracing air cheered them up a little, and they felt somewhat relieved of their sorrow. It was cold standing about until their eyes lost their red, swollen appearance, so they went tobogganing to warm themselves.

When they returned, their father was sitting in the rocking-chair, eating some grapes which a neighbor had brought to him. His cheeks were flushed, he looked happy, and smiled upon his children, as he said.

"I am glad to see you enjoy yourselves in this frosty climate;" and as he turned to Frank, he asked:

"How are the horses and cows doing? I have not seen them for some time."

"Very well; they are warm, and I gave them an extra dinner."

"Please pass the Bible to me, Frank. I will read what is told us about the happy home in heaven, so that you may all learn to set your minds upon securing an entrance there."

While he read the 21st chapter of Revelation, his face wore a bright and enraptured look and his voice indicated a joyful heart.

When he reached the fourth verse, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall

be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away," he repeated it. He also repeated the following:

"And the building of the walls of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold like unto clear glass.

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Then he remarked:

"My cough troubles me more when I read, though I love to give you these precious truths. Please sing that comforting hymn, 'Art thou weary, art thou languid.'"

Eva sat down to the organ, her brothers and sisters gathered round her, and mingled their young voices in the hymn, trying to hide their trouble.

Their feelings led them to sing it with more expression than many a trained city choir does. Their father enjoyed it, and they all felt comforted.

When they left the organ, he drew Myrtle to him—his family was becoming more precious—and said, tenderly: "My baby Myrtle, try to remember this Christmas, dear." Myrtle felt there was a shadow falling upon them, though she could not comprehend it, as she whispered:

"Yes, papa."

He gently pressed her tiny hand in his fine but thin one, and said:

"Jesus loves you. Never forget to read your Bible, little pet." A few days after Christmas, Mr. Brock was sitting in the midst of his family (as soon as their work was over they repaired to his side, feeling that it was profitable to be there), when he asked:

"Eva, was Winona here yesterday?" She looked at her mother inquiringly, for Mrs. Brock and the children thought that Winona's lessons should be dispensed with during his illness. It had been difficult to persuade her to take a short vacation. She came repeatedly after Eva had given her the last lesson, and stood, book in hand, leaning against the house, in the frost, until some one noticed her. They always invited her in to the fire, when she would inquire for Mr. Brock, and go away. So, when questioned by her father, Eva replied:

"No, papa."

"Do you think she is ill?"

"No, I think she is quite well. She is becoming a very sensible woman, dear," said Mrs. Brock, anxious that her absence should not annoy him.

"But," he persisted, "was she here the day before?"

"No, papa."

"When was she here last?"

"She has not had a lesson for a week; her lessons are of little consequence for awhile. We decided to give all our attention to you."

"Her lessons will not disturb me, and they are very important, more so than you imagine. I may give you an idea of the vast work to be done among them, as I have been reading lately about the Indians.

"There are some hundreds of tribes of American Indians, and they differ from each other very much. The Mexicans and Peruvians were highly civilized, for they were rich, built magnificent houses, and were familiar with several of the arts and sciences, particularly astronomy. They worshipped the sun. According to the authority of Dr. Brown, there are about one hundred and ten thousand Indians in North America."

"Are there many of these civilized?" asked Eva.

"A large number of tribes are sufficiently civilized to live by agriculture, and among these are some men and women who are intelligent, polished, and highly educated."

"I wonder if there are any in this part of the country who have won any distinction."

"Not long since, Mr. West was telling me of an Indian minister whom he had the pleasure of meeting. He had passed all the necessary examinations with credit, and was very zealous in his work among his degraded brethren. This worthy man sang a hymn in his native language to an assembly of other ministers."

"This account of them is very encouraging for me, and I believe our brightest expectations of Winona's future will yet be realized. I shall do my best with her, papa."

"That is right; if I should not be with you, I wish you to persist in having a suitable building erected in the reserve, wherein Winona may teach the children of her own tribe. It seems almost impossible for a young girl like you to carry on this work; but Frank

is becoming a man, and he will take my place in this as well as in other respects. Will you not, Frank?"

In a tremulous voice he answered:

"Yes, father."

"But to continue, advise her to pursue her studies, especially her Bible, with unremitting zeal. And encourage her, by every effort in your power, to disseminate her knowledge among her people. Above all, do not fail to ask God to be your leader."

"Yes, father, I will make it my study to spread the Gospel among these Indians;" and Eva placed her hand in her father's, while the tears coursed down her cheeks.

When Mrs. Brock and Eva were busy in the kitchen one afternoon, Frank entered, having a tiny, white frozen spot on his nose, and another on his cheek, while he carried an empty flour-sack under his arm.

"Let me rub your cheek with snow before you go to the fire, Frank."

"Is it nipped? My back was to the wind, and I came so fast that I thought I was all right. There, that will do. Thank you."

"Faith," said Mike, "it's cowld here, but you don't fale it."

"So you were unsuccessful," said his mother, in a disappointed tone.

"Yes; but never mind, I shall get some flour yet, to-night."

"What did they say? Were they out of it?"

"No; Mr. German coolly said, 'Flour is money these times, I can't be lending, or selling it on credit.'"

"What did you tell him?" inquired Mrs. Brock.

"Well, I told him what you said, that considering father's state, you did not care about my leaving the house long enough to go to town, especially in this cold snap, and that we would pay him as soon as we got a bag. And I also told him that we had a draft which we could not get cashed until we went to Buffalo Horn."

"That's too bad, after the way poor papa worked in the fire to save his buildings and children. Never mind, when I finish this knitting we'll receive the pay for it, and this, with the money Martha earned, will buy a whole bag instead of a half, as you intended. Perhaps we can send to town with some one passing," said Eva.

At this juncture Mike muffled himself up, and begged Mrs. Brock to allow him to go to town for some flour; and it was with no little persuasion that she convinced him that the weather was too severe.

"What a giddy girl I was two years ago Christmas," said Martha, to whom trouble was bringing thoughtfulness, "when I thought the possession of a new dress the height of happiness. Now I think it is not good for us to be too comfortable in this world; we might never be willing to leave it. But I DO wish we had a bag of flour and a few apples for father."

There was at this juncture a knock at the door, and a neighbor entered, inquiring:

"And how is Mr. Brock to-day?"

"Very weak, but rather easier, thank you."

"I am glad to hear he is not suffering so much. It has been bad weather for some days, so that you could not go to town. I thought I'd run in and see if you wanted to send for anything, as I am on my way there."

"Oh, thank you! If you would bring us half a bag of flour, you would oblige us very much."

"Now, you never mind sending for that. I kept plenty of wheat last fall to do two years, so if Frank goes over now he can get a couple of bags of flour, and you can give me some wheat next fall."

"We shall not forget your kindness," said Mrs. Brock; "now I wish you would bring us a dozen apples, if you can keep them from freezing."

"Yes, yes. Let me know when I come back what I can do for you," as he put his head in at the door again.

The children were delighted that they were to have such a supply, and Mrs. Brock said:

"See that, now; we have good neighbors. We will do what we can for his wife and family in the way of knitting and sewing."

"Mother," said Eva, "I think a kind neighbor must have let Shakespeare have a bag of flour when he was in need, and it prompted him to write:

> "'The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
> Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel.'"

"That kind neighbor lived in owld Ireland, sure," said Mike.

"I wish such kind-hearted people as this man would have a fortune left them; they would do so much good in the world."

"I should like to see them get along better than they are doing, but wealth often changes the disposition," returned Mrs. Brock.

While Martha was sitting beside her father's bed that day, he said:

"I should like to see Maggie once more, but there is not time now. I wish you would get some paper, and write for me. I will tell you what to say."

"Yes, papa; I shall put it in your own words."

When she was ready, her father said:

"Write:

"MY DEAR DAUGHTER MAGGIE,—I have been wishing to see you lately, but must be satisfied by writing to you. My lungs have been troubling me for some time. Not long ago the doctor pronounced it consumption. Still I hoped that the warm weather might improve my health, but on his last visit, he gave me *no* hope. I have suffered very little. I expect to go to Heaven, because I am trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ. I wish you to meet me in Heaven. Be kind to each other. Read your Bible and obey it, and do not set your heart upon this world. Do not fret about me, I am ready to go. Remember what I have told you.

"YOUR LOVING FATHER."

Martha wrote this letter while her eyes were dim with tears, and she thought:

"I will place my treasure in Heaven, so that I can face death as bravely as papa."

When the friendly neighbor called on his way home, he unbuttoned his great buffalo coat, then an under one, and gathered from the different pockets some beautiful rosy apples, quite untouched by the searching frost, saying, as he did so:

"I will warm myself thoroughly and go in to see Mr. Brock, if it will not disturb him."

"He will be glad to see you," replied Mrs. Brock.

"How do you feel to-night, Mr. Brock?" he tenderly inquired.

"I am easy, thank you, but it will not be long now."

"I am very sorry."

"No, there's no occasion for sorrow, there's no sorrow there. I believe you are trusting in the Saviour, my friend."

"Yes, I am happy to say that I am trying to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus. I shall come back in the morning. Good-night, my friend."

"Good-bye, and thank you very much for your kindness."

Mr. Brock had been thankful, patient and considerate through his prolonged illness, thereby setting an example long to be remembered by those associated with him.

When this neighbor parted with Frank, he said:

"Come for us if he grows weaker, and I and some of the other neighbors will arrange to assist you for a few days."

The coarse exterior of this man, like that of the pine-apple, was no index to what was within. He then drove away, only to return before breakfast the following morning.

For the last week, when bedtime came, Mike insisted upon remaining up all night with Mr. Brock; and the night before he died, Mike was found at three o'clock in the morning, sound asleep, stretched on the floor close up to the outside of Mr. Brock's door, holding an apple which he had hoped to give to his foster-parent. Frank carried the affectionate boy, undisturbed, away to bed.

Mr. Brock was now rapidly sinking. He took short sleeps, and frequently awoke as if to give a charge to one of the family, and would then doze off again.

At one time he said to Frank:

"See that you drive your mother to church regularly; she is not able to walk." Another time, in a wandering manner: "Treat Mike well," and "Sow your wheat early."

After another sleep, he said, with deep earnestness:

"It is hard to part with you all, but meet me in Heaven."

He gave his hand to each of his family in solemn farewell. After this he lay quiet, except to motion for his parched lips to be moistened a few times.

At last he passed calmly away, leaving a grief-stricken family.

It was a sad, *sad* house.

"And silent stood his children by,
Hushing their very breath,
Before the solemn sanctity
Of thought o'ersweeping death;
Silent—yet did not each young breast
With love and reverence melt?
Oh! blest be those (loved ones)—and blest
That home where God is felt."

—*Hemans.*

Kind neighbors did all that could be done, and he was laid in the grave by friends, far from his native land, and then God spread His mantle of snow over the ground as an emblem of the purity of the redeemed.

CHAPTER XV.

BRIGHTER DAYS.

OCCUPATION seldom fails to ease afflicted minds. So the work which the providing of the necessaries of life pressed upon the Brock children lent its assistance to cheer their desponding hearts.

The girls had made remarkable progress at hat-making, and were now preparing the hats for sale. While they worked away they counted and valued their produce, and made numberless memoranda of the good things they wished to purchase. Once Myrtle said:

"Let me make another memorandum, please. A bag of flour, some canned tomatoes to please mamma, tea and sugar, sugarsticks, oatmeal I s'pose, a dress for mamma, and some garden seeds, and a side-saddle."

"We must try to have a good garden this summer," said Martha, who had taken charge of the house for some time, as her mother had lost her interest in

housekeeping, and, indeed, in almost everything of late.

"Yes, though we shall miss papa, he always helped in the garden. But he is better off. We should remember his wish, and try to meet him in Heaven."

Frank began seeding again, but he was alone. The crocuses bloomed as gaily, the birds sang as sweetly, and the sun shone as brightly as they did the summer before, and the weight upon the afflicted hearts was wearing gradually away.

Winona continued to improve, she spoke well, sang and played several hymns, and was preparing to teach in autumn, when it was hoped there would be a new school-house.

The summer passed uneventfully. Maggie sent what money she could, the garden produced its share of early vegetables, berries were abundant, and thus the Brocks were comfortable until the grain ripened. There was no early frost this year, and Frank had a large crop of choice wheat.

Then Eva thought:

"I begin to see the prospect of our Indian school-house, as people all over the land are already looking brighter."

One day, Mr. West, the pastor, called to say:

"I have kept in remembrance the promise I made in reference to the Indian school-house; this envelope contains a few subscriptions, Miss Eva;" and he handed it to her, and drove away.

It contained a handsome sum, collected by Mr. West,

together with his own contribution. She placed this treasure in her mother's care, and remarked:

"I do not feel worthy of this work. God must have put it into the hearts of these people to give so liberally to such a good cause."

A few days later when Frank was coming from town the girls met him, as they often did, a short distance from the house.

"Well, Frank, getting back? Get any letters?" inquired Myrtle. Mail-day, with its letters from old friends, is welcomed by many of the settlers with a half-holiday and a Sunday dress, as if a letter could see with the eyes of the writer.

"None for you, Myrtle, but a registered one for Eva, which must contain something wonderful."

They all watched eagerly, as she opened her first money-letter.

"Oh, see here! a hundred-dollar cheque for the Indian school-house. This is more than encouraging. I presume the gentleman imagines I am a real grown-up woman. Hear what he says:

"MISS EVA BROCK.

"MADAM,—Pardon me for taking the liberty to address you. Your worthy minister and other responsible persons have informed me of your noble work in educating an Indian girl, and of your efforts to establish a school on the reserve. The friendly feeling of these Indians towards the white settlers, to which the education of this girl may lead, interests me in a financial as well as in a philanthropic

manner. I possess considerable land bordering on the reserve, which I can neither sell nor rent, owing to its proximity to the Indians. Thanking you for persevering so bravely, I enclose a cheque for one hundred dollars ($100), to aid in building the school-house.

"Yours faithfully,

"J. BICKLE."

"I am becoming alarmed, Frank; people think me better than I am. What if we lose some of this money! I shall at most require the dictionary to translate his letter. Let me see, *philos*, a friend, *anthropos*, a man; now I have it—a friend of man."

"I, too, feel very responsible about this, Eva," said Frank, "for father asked me to take his place in the erection of this building, and we must act as conscientiously as he would have done. Mamma said that she would give you twenty dollars when we sell the wheat; and here is a letter from Maggie, in which she also promises you twenty dollars, owing to the interest papa had taken in the matter. We will talk it over with mamma and Mr. West, and try to have it completed before the cold weather sets in."

Winona was delighted at the prospect of having a new school-house for her work. The incentive led her to double the length of her lessons, and to learn more thoroughly.

The minister examined her, and pronounced her a suitable candidate for church membership, which assurance afforded Mrs. Brock and her family, as well as the minister, much cause for thankfulness.

In the course of a few weeks there were two school-houses being built, one of which was for the white children, in the Brock neighborhood.

A teacher was required for the latter; Eva, who had creditably passed the late teachers' examination, put in an application, and was accepted at a reasonable salary. She owed this appointment much to the influence of Mr. Turner, who stated that a young lady who practised so much self-denial in good causes could not fail to exert herself for the benefit of the pupils.

"Eva," said Martha earnestly, after they had retired one night, "I have been thinking seriously about my state ever since papa's death. I wish to be good like you and papa, and other good Christians; but I only seem to come up to the brink, and cannot cross over."

"My dear, Martha, I am glad to find you anxious about your soul; but you cannot be good alone. Ask God to lead you to Jesus."

"I have asked Him," she replied, "and I believe that Jesus died for sinners, but I cannot exactly take Him to myself, for I am so wicked, I fear I should commit a sin after I had accepted Him. It is so easy to sin even when I am struggling against it. There are different kinds of sin, too, for if we do anything that God has forbidden, it is a sin of *commission*; if we leave anything undone that we ought to have done, like not loving God, not reading the Bible and praying to God, not doing good to other people's bodies and souls, it is a sin of omission. Even if we live so that others think we are not sinning, we are apt to sin by THINKING that which is evil."

"But, dear Martha, Jesus did not die to take away our sins up to the time that we accept Him, and then leave us to struggle through the future alone. He took them away for our whole lives, after we accept Him, as well as before that change. Christ does nothing by halves. The Bible says, 'But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *all* sin.' *Not part* of sin, but *all sin.* And 'Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' Here again, it does not say part of your sins, it says *your sins*, and that means all of them."

"That was my trouble all the time; you have thrown the light upon it. But surely it would not be right to go on sinning after accepting Jesus?"

"Not to let *sin reign*," said Eva, "but I think we cannot keep altogether free from sin in this world, for 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.' God's power and our love for Jesus remove the desire to sin, and prevent us from sinning wilfully. The longer we try the less will sin have dominion over us."

"I see it clearly now, dear Eva. I do lay all my sins on Jesus. He alone is the foundation of my hope. Is it not too bad that He suffered for us when He had not a sin of His own? It seems to me, now, as if I had wished for a ticket to heaven; I knew Jesus was the only one who could give one, so I asked Him to give me a ticket, because I knew He loved me. He did so, and now that I have it I am extremely happy."

Then Eva prayed that God would keep her dear sister firm in her trust of the Saviour, and thanked God for bringing Martha to Him.

. . . . . .

Now that prospects were brightening, Mrs. Brock advised Maggie to join them. A number of schools were being established throughout the country, and she thought Maggie would have no trouble in procuring a situation.

The day upon which she was expected had arrived, and great were the preparations to welcome her.

"I see a speck on the trail about three miles away, 'cause its near that big bluff, and I'm going to watch and see if it is not Frank and Maggie," exclaimed Myrtle.

"Very likely," returned Mrs. Brock; "Martha, you had better put the kettle on."

Myrtle continued to watch, until at last the horses turned in towards the house, and their own Maggie was with them once more.

There were naturally a few tears shed at first; for her presence brought thoughts of the absent father to their minds. After Maggie was cosily seated in her mother's rocking-chair, she said:

"I was not expecting so many changes. Martha is really a woman; of course, Eva is taller, while Myrtle will soon be as tall as I, and I see that I must present Frank with a razor."

"Yes, Martha is a woman, and a good woman, too. She has taken my place as housekeeper, and is

economical, neat, and an excellent cook," remarked Mrs. Brock, as she smiled complacently upon her.

"That's a good report, Martha, but how do you get along cooking without fruit?" inquired Maggie.

"The merchants are importing carloads of apples this fall, and selling them quite cheap; besides, we gathered a great many cranberries, Saskatoon berries and black currants last summer," said Martha.

Meanwhile Myrtle stole quietly into the cellar, and brought two fine apples for Maggie, saying to her mother, "May I get Maggie a taste of Saskatoon berries, they're so funny?"

"Martha has tea nearly ready, and she'll have some on the table," said her mother. "I am afraid you may not care for them, Maggie. And how did you leave grandma and grandpa?"

"They have not changed much, while the farm remains the same, unless you might notice the fence leaning a trifle, and the absence of one of the balm-of-gilead trees, which was shattered by lightning."

"Which one?" inquired the mother.

"The one nearest the lilac hedge."

"I guess I *would* notice it. We were married under that very tree, and a great party there was in that shady, fragrant yard. I fancy I can see them all, as if it were yesterday;" and she leaned back in her chair, preparatory to a long talk about those happy, bygone days, regardless of the keen appetites of her children. "Your papa was young, handsome and gallant. The same minister married your grandma

and grandpa more than twenty years before. Jemima Hastings looked beautiful in white that day; poor thing. *She's* had her own hardships, *too*. *Her* husband was killed. They were driving home from the city, and on the side of the mountain the harness gave way; they were all thrown out; he was killed, and she was left with a broken arm. After that their only boy died of scarlet fever."

"Yes, mamma, I was visiting her a short time ago; she sent for me because you were her old schoolmate."

"How well I should enjoy a visit there, too! We could sympathize with each other *now*."

"Well, as I was saying, mamma, they are very comfortable, and she was telling me about you finding a watch."

"To be sure!"

"She said that you came up to play with her, and you went to the field together to pick green peas. While picking away she said that she heard a watch ticking. You wore a low-necked dress, and you slipped your hand in your bosom and drew out a large silver watch, which you had found on your way."

"Yes," said Mrs. Brock, impatient to finish the tale, "and I gave it to grandpa. He sent for the owner, who drove up in a covered buggy. He asked your grandpa if I might go with him as far as the store. I was lifted into the shining carriage and we drove away. There I sat happier than a queen, though I wore a pink sun-bonnet and was barefooted. I knew

by the twinkle of grandpa's eye that I was safe. He led me into the store, looked at some dress-goods, and asked me which I preferred. I chose a red piece, and it was not long until I was running along homeward, hugging it in my arms. But I am forgetting. Come to tea, please," said Mrs. Brock, reminded of the fact, as she noticed Frank eating a piece of hot biscuit, and Myrtle pointing pathetically to her mouth.

As Mrs. Brock poured out the tea, she remarked:

"Jemima's mother-in-law lived with her. Is she still living?"

"Yes, she is ninety-one, and very forgetful. Mrs. Brown told her who I was, and when she shook hands with me she sat down beside me, still holding my hand, as she plied me with questions, some of which were: 'Was your father Hughy Brock?' 'Was your mother Maggie Gladstone?' Then she said, 'Well, I knew your father, they called him Dandy.' She put on her spectacles and looked my face over until I blushed crimson, then she said, 'Your eyes are like your grandmother Brock's, but she had a better nose than you have.' She continued to hold my hand, and after a few minutes said to Mrs. Brown, in a squeaking, tremulous voice, 'Jemima, who did you say this girl is?' and every time she was told she shook my hand again."

Then finishing her Saskatoon berries, she smiled and said:

"The berries are sweet and delicious."

"I am glad you like them," said her mother, as she raised her handkerchief to her eyes.

The next morning, while enjoying their breakfast, Frank said:

"Mamma, if you and Maggie put on your things, I will drive you to any place you wish."

"That will be delightful," returned Maggie.

"Very well," said Mrs. Brock, "we might take her to see your father's grave, then go on and visit Mr. and Mrs. West. I have not yet spent an hour at their place. Myrtle, please cut the prettiest flowers in the window, put them in a tumbler of water, and I will set them on papa's grave."

A short drive brought them to the churchyard. As she stood for the first time at her father's grave, Maggie thought of her pleasant visits at home, how her father often brought her a newly-fallen harvest apple, some choice heads of wheat to admire, and how he sorted his illustrated papers to show her his favorite pictures. Then she thought of his earnest Bible lessons, and his sorrow when any of them did wrong. Her mind even wandered away back to her very young days, when he brought them a toy duck that quacked, and how he arose in the night when they coughed in their sleep, to cover them and slip a little liquorice into their gaping mouths. At last she thought of him happy in Heaven, where Jesus as well as her father, had invited her to go. All remained silent but thoughtful. When they turned to come away, Frank said:

"There was a noble young man drowned in a pond not far away; his body lies here, and this case of wax

flowers was sent across the ocean, by his sorrowing mother, to be placed upon his grave."

The drive in the refreshing wind over the wide-spread prairie cheered them again. The view was extensive, as shortly after they left home they could see the town of Buffalo Horn.

"Here," remarked Mrs. Brock, as they drove over the dry, stony bed of a deep ravine, "is where we 'stuck' when we were moving out. This hollow was nearly full of muddy water, and the horses plunged in it, until I feared they never would come out alive. The waggon sank in the mud when we were near the edge. After part of the load was removed we climbed over the dash-board and thus reached the muddy ground. Your father tried again to start the poor horses, but they walked out with only the tongue and the front wheels."

"You had great trouble; and how did you reach home?"

"A rough-looking man, dressed in duck, drove along at the time; he spoke friendly, lent us his waggon, helped your father to load it up, and pulled our broken one out of the slough. Maggie, in former days, I thought that only *broadcloth* proved the gentleman; I have since learned that the heart makes the gentleman, and that such a heart is as often found under soiled duck as under broadcloth." The last words were spoken as they reached their destination.

Mr. and Mrs. West received them warmly.

"I wish you had brought Eva, too," said Mrs. West,

in a disappointed tone, "we think there is no one like her. How is Winona progressing?"

"Eva expected to give her a lesson, and so was unable to accompany us, thank you. Winona is doing very well. Indeed, she studies harder and learns faster than our girls did; it may be because learning is a novelty to her," returned Mrs. Brock.

Mr. West and Frank now entered, and the former, addressing his wife, said:

"What do you think these kind-hearted people have brought us?"

"I am sure I could not guess; they should not go to the trouble of bringing anything."

"Well, they have brought us no less than a bag of the best flour, a ham, a turkey, a bag of potatoes, one of turnips, besides paying the balance of their yearly subscription."

"I am thankful. Mrs. Brock, you are too kind. They are very acceptable, for I whispered to Mr. West when I saw you drive up, that there was only half a loaf, and neither flour nor money in the house. I was nervously waiting until Mr. West borrowed a little flour to make a pan of biscuits. Thank you, very much."

"No, no, it is only a trifle; we have abundance this year," replied Mrs. Brock.

Then Mr. West sat down with his guests and began to speak of what was uppermost in his mind, the new church near Mrs. Brock's.

"Are you aware, some two years ago, the farmers

and a part of the town congregation subscribed enough to build a neat, little frame church, but as adverse times followed, we deemed it wise to wait until people became able to pay what they had promised? It is gratifying to state that several have already paid their subscription since they threshed. I am happy to say that we may let the contract and have the church built and ready to use before Christmas."

"That is very encouraging," replied Mrs. Brock, "we will do what we can, too, of course. Meeting for service in a private house gives the family considerable trouble, while people feel more at ease in a church."

"The settlement will have a better appearance with three new buildings," said Maggie.

"Yes," said Mrs. West, who entered the room, having her sleeves rolled up, and a sprinkling of flour on her dress. "How do you like the appearance of the prairie, Miss Brock?"

"It is a great change; I miss the large, old trees shading the houses, but I believe there are advantages which compensate."

"Yes, I suppose so; it is very healthy, and cool during summer nights, land free or cheap, and very few snakes or caterpillars. Still I felt very home-sick at first."

"I have been quite fortunate in securing speakers and singers for the opening of Eva's Indian school. A professor from one of our leading colleges wrote me that he was going farther west, and would make it convenient to spend a day here to attend the opening,

while the other resident ministers of the town will give short addresses; and an Indian minister, who is stationed about ninety miles north, has volunteered to address his brethren. Our choir is practising a few anthems and choruses, which, with Winona's singing, will make up a full programme."

"You have been untiring in your efforts to make it a success."

"I have arrived in time for all the openings," remarked Maggie. "I was amused and pleased when driving in; we met an old gray-haired Indian and squaw driving along in a new buggy. They had a good pony, and every available place in their buggy was filled with parcels."

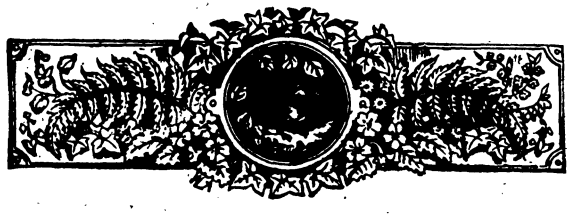
"Yes, there was one at the elevator yesterday with a load of good wheat," said Mr. West.

"While I think of it, Miss Brock, the trustees of a school some four miles south of your place were inquiring about a teacher, and I took the liberty to give them your address; they may visit you this week."

"You are very kind," returned Maggie, with an appearance of relief. "I could have a pony, and ride from home to that school in the summer, and come home once a week and spend Sunday in the winter."

After they reached home, Maggie was much surprised at the progress Winona had made in the study of music.

"Why!" said Maggie to her mother, "I had no idea she could sing so well, and she speaks almost as plainly as we do."



CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUSION.

TIME had glided smoothly along, and it was Christmas-eve.

Frank had just returned with Maggie from her new school, four miles distant. She had had the good fortune to find a home in a refined and pleasant family, who were considerate of her comfort, and afforded her instructive and amusing companionship, inasmuch as they had lived in India and the British Isles, and in their changes of residence from country to country had travelled around the world, and had acquired an intimate knowledge of the habits of many strange people. Therefore, Maggie was being continually enlightened upon the various forms of worship and customs of the inhabitants, the improvements and peculiarities of the different countries, many of the stories being illustrated by the production of some curiosity or relic. The weather had been charming,

and her pupils the most confiding, studious and affectionate children she had ever known.

Eva, also, had been now for some weeks installed in her new situation, and had become familiar with the names and the dispositions of her dozen pupils, and with some of the requirements of a teacher.

She was amused at recess one day by two little girls trying to excel each other in boasting of their old homes and luxuries, enumerating the various comforts they had left behind, each enlarging upon the former grandeur of her family, and calling to her aid all her powers of memory, with some invention, in order to eclipse the magnificent statements of her rival. The last words of the conversation which reached Eva's ears were:

"And we had a dustpan, too, and mammy says, if we was goin' to move again, she would bring it along."

There were again pleasant anticipations about the coming Christmas vacation, and once more the Brock family were happily united under the roof of their beloved home. Mrs. Brock was cheerful and contented, and all the children were enjoying perfect health. The fact that Martha and Frank also were active members and workers in their little church was very comforting to the widowed mother, who found the greatest consolation for her sad loss, in watching in her children the results of their father's teaching.

One morning during the Christmas vacation, Eva drew a long breath as she awoke, vigorously rubbed her eyes, and said to Martha:

"I do wish that necklace could be found."

"Why," exclaimed Martha, "what's putting that in your head so early in the morning? I wouldn't bother my head about it."

"I can't help thinking about it almost continually; but I was dreaming about it last night. I thought I had been tried for theft, found guilty, and imprisoned. I read a long account of the trial in an illustrated paper, and saw a picture of my own face peering through a heavy iron grating. Then I fancied I saw that necklace, fixed in the air over my head, and I put my hands up to take it. Just as my fingers touched it it began gently to rise. It kept gradually floating upward, and I after it, but it was always just beyond my reach. Wasn't it a foolish dream? Well, after we got beyond the earth's atmosphere we went as swift as lightning towards the sun, and I was terrified at the thought that I should soon strike the sun. At last the necklace stretched itself, encircled the fiery ball and passed on— "

"Excuse me," interrupted Martha, "but where did it pass on to?"

"That's just what *I'd* like to know, but I had no time to think, for *I* came thump against the sun, and awoke right here in our own good home. Oh, I'm so thankful I'm here!"

"Of course," replied Martha, "I'm glad, too. It would be rather inconvenient visiting you away there. But you might have remained long enough to petition his sunship to lengthen our summer a trifle."

Eva kept thinking of her dream all the forenoon, and wondering if there was to be more trouble about the loss of the jewel.

Just as dinner was over a neighbor called with the week's mail. One letter addressed in a strange hand to Mrs. Brock caused some surprise, and it was passed from one to another for examination before it was opened. One deciphered the word Bradwardine on the envelope, and wondered if some gentleman friend of Maggie's had written to ask their mother for the hand of that young lady. But no two agreed either as to the writer or to the contents of the letter. At last some one was moved to suggest that the best thing, under the circumstances, would be to open and read it. When Mrs. Brock, prompted by this rational suggestion, tore open the envelope, what was the astonishment of the group upon finding a draft for eight thousand dollars. The young people celebrated this important event with a series of exclamations, whistles and shouts, and Myrtle pranced around the room in delight.

"Eight thousand," repeated Frank; "it must be eighty dollars. Look again."

"Who can it be from? Why is it sent?" inquired Eva, and Martha said:

"Perhaps Grandpa Brock's old schoolmate, who got him to endorse that tremendous note, has found a piece of conscience, and sent this money to us."

"But why should that be posted at Bradwardine?"

"Why, when he came there to pay it and found we

had removed, it would be very natural for him to drop it in that post-office."

However, Mrs. Brock suspended their conversation by reading:

"BRADWARDINE, ONT.,

"Dec. 18th, 18—.

"MRS. H. BROCK,

"Buffalo Horn, Man.

"DEAR MADAM,—It is with deep humiliation that we think of our past treatment of your daughter Eva. On a recent visit to Kingston we saw our daughter's missing necklace on a strange lady, and upon investigation found that the girl Mary Ann Downy (who also, we believe, accused Eva of the theft) had, for a trifle, sold it in that city. We, after some trouble, recovered the jewel, though the sight of it only pains us. We both humbly wish to be pardoned by her and yourself, and should you ever feel the need of a friend we shall be most happy to render you any service in our power. In justice to your daughter we have had published in the last paper (a copy of which will be forwarded to you) an apology for the false accusation. As our ears have not been closed to the report of Miss Eva's missionary work, we have decided to humbly offer the enclosed draft for eight thousand dollars to Miss Eva, to be used as she thinks best in the advancement of her Indian work.

"Your obedient servants,

"WALLACE and MARIA HARKNESS."

"Eight thousand dollars," exclaimed Mrs. Brock; "I wonder if there's not some mistake about it. I

feel as if I'd like to go and tell your father of the good fortune accompanying your missionary work. We must not delay thanking Mr. and Mrs. Harkness."

"Oh, mamma," said Martha, "perhaps papa knew it before we did. But how could Mr. Harkness spare so much? He must have been tremendously rich. I wonder how Miriam liked his sending all this money!"

Eva seemed to be so much overcome with astonishment and joy that she remained silent for a time, while Mike said:

"I'll lave it to Frank, if it wasn't worth more nor eight thousand dollars to be blamed for stalin' all this time?"

"Well," replied Frank, "it is satisfactory to have a written clearance of the charge, but any one who knew about it must have felt satisfied that Eva was not guilty. It never troubled me; but I think Miriam was a little hasty in her charge. But what will you do with the money?"

"I really don't know yet; we'll talk it over. If we could invest it at ten per cent. it would bring in eight hundred dollars a year, which would do more than pay Winona's salary and keep the school in excellent running order. Isn't it great? I had been always afraid Winona would not get enough pay to keep her as a teacher, but now there's no danger. It must have been God that put it into Mr. Harkness' heart to send it. I am very thankful. Now I can sleep soundly without being haunted with that necklace."

They now began to recover from their state of ex-

citement sufficiently to notice the newspapers. The Bradwardine weekly paper, which Mrs. Brock continued to take, lent its holiday attire to announce to the jealous, the gossiping, the sympathetic part of the public, the fact that an heiress—Miriam Harkness—had clandestinely married and eloped with her father's coachman, and that that father had followed and overtaken them in Rochester, where he endeavored, though in vain, to persuade his truant daughter to return with him. He then vowed that she should never inherit his wealth, and returned alone.

"Yes," said Mike, sharply, "that's the raison he's so liberal wid his money, eh?"

This interesting article was further commented upon at the Brock fireside. One member sympathized with the father, another with the mother, another with the daughter, and Mike remarked:

"Faith, it's for the cowtchman hisself I'm afther wipin' me eyes," as he drew his coat-sleeve in idle mimicry across his merry eyes.

But Eva felt truly sorry that Miriam had married one whom her parents could not take into their family, and whom Miriam herself might afterwards despise.

With Mr. West's assistance, the money (excepting two hundred dollars, which was to be immediately expended upon Winona and more school equipments) was safely invested so as to produce an annuity of seven hundred dollars. Two hundred of this was to pay the teacher, and the remainder to pay for improvements and necessaries about the school-house,

and for clothing for some of the pupils. Eva now felt relieved of a great responsibility.

The very next day after Eva's good news reached her, when the girls were busily engaged at some painting in the sitting-room, a man with weather-beaten face, and wearing a thin, worn overcoat, a soiled felt hat, and having no muffler or overshoes, knocked at the kitchen door, and asked of Mrs. Brock, who was alone, if she would give him some dinner. He was sorry he could not pay for it now, but he said he would send them the money in the course of a week, and, upon being invited in and kindly treated, he related a tale of disappointment. He had bought a farm some twenty miles distant, made one payment on it, built a shanty, and spent the remainder of his money in buying a good span of horses and a waggon. He afterwards went farther west to look for a homestead, leaving his property in charge of a neighbor; but upon returning, he found that the neighbor had suddenly gone, and taken his, the speaker's, team and waggon to parts unknown. Left thus without a team, and not having the necessary money to make the second payment on his farm, the stranger became discouraged, and was now on his way to Winnipeg, where he hoped to find employment. The distressed man, who had walked twenty miles that day, facing a cutting wind, was now beginning to grow warm, and to enjoy the well-cushioned chair in which Mrs. Brock had seated him. She placed some slices of roast turkey in some butter to fry, a mince pie in the oven, and then called

Eva to go to the cellar for her. When Eva entered the kitchen, she and Mr. Rogers—for it was no other than he—at once recognized each other, and showed slight signs of agitation. Eva recovering herself first, cordially saluted him, but he reached for his hat, and said, as he rose to go, that he feared he was giving them too much trouble. Mrs. Brock did not yet know his name, but Eva, with genuine sympathy, hurriedly told him that she was now a teacher, and had her report to "make out" for the school, and that she would like him to explain to her a certain part of it. Upon being asked by one of his former pupils for this trifling assistance, he again sat down, hoping to see the paper promptly produced, but Eva and her mother soon produced a good hot Christmas dinner. Mr. Rogers was, of course, obliged to partake of it, but he did not really enjoy it as well as an utter stranger would have done. However, he gave Eva what information she desired regarding the report (which, by the way, Maggie could have done equally well), and again prepared to go. But Mrs. Brock, fearing he would be overcome with fatigue and cold, lent him a buffalo-coat, and sufficient money to pay his fare from Buffalo Horn to Winnipeg, and despatched Frank with the horse and sleigh to take him to the former place. Mr. Rogers tried to dissuade them from showing him so much kindness, but failing in this, he expressed himself as being deeply grateful, and, without looking in their faces, bade Mrs. Brock and Eva "Good-bye." The women felt the happier for having warmed and

cheered the poor man on his cold journey, and though the recovery of the jewel was uppermost in Eva's mind, it was, of course, never mentioned.

The Indian school-house was opened with no little ceremony. All the invited speakers and singers were present, and acquitted themselves in a manner pleasing and profitable to the audience, which was chiefly composed of the white settlers. Winona was the centre of attraction, as she appeared in her new brown cloth dress, made by her own hands. Martha had practised a little self-denial and given the materials for this dress, having previously taught her to be handy with the needle. She wore a plain white linen collar, with a knot of pink ribbon at her throat, and her hair neatly coiled upon her head. She, with great presence of mind, and in a most creditable manner, played and sang that good old hymn beginning, "From Greenland's icy mountains."

After the other addresses were delivered, the chairman called upon the chief, whereupon he arose, walked boldly to the platform, and in what he considered a dignified manner, expressed his views by means of an interpreter.

He thanked the white brethren for the interest they had taken in the welfare of the poor Indians, for building so good a school-house, and also for being present to witness the marked improvement in Winona. He enlarged upon the benefits which his tribe would derive from the instructions Winona was prepared to give them, and expressed great admiration

for the accomplishments and useful knowledge so kindly imparted to her by Eva. He stated that he intended asking Miss Eva to give his children a lesson every Saturday, and that there was a large number of children in the reserve waiting for Winona to open her school, which he was glad would be done the following day. He also dwelt upon the goodness of Mrs. Brock and Martha, who had taught her to cook and sew. As a mark of appreciation and gratitude on the part of himself and his tribe for Eva's gentle perseverance and care in the training of their sister Winona, he begged her to accept a handsome pony, noted for its speed and docility. The meeting then dissolved, and the old chief went out and led the pony up to the door, already saddled and equipped, and respectfully placed the bridle in Eva's hand. She, in a few well-selected words, thanked the chief in his own language, when they all dispersed to their several homes, feeling that the meeting had been very satisfactory to them all.

On New Year's morning, when Mrs. Brock took her place at the head of the table, she found a present from Maggie and Eva, consisting of their savings for the last few weeks. She smiled, and with thanks, returned the money, stating that they should keep it for their own use, as she had deposited in the bank five hundred dollars for themselves, and two hundred for Mike, since the sale of the wheat, and that she was quite free from debt.

That evening, as they were seated around the glowing fire in the twilight, Myrtle said:

"Let's all make a wish."

"What would Myrtle like to have now?" inquired Maggie.

"I'd like a skipping-rope and some long dresses."

"I wish," said Frank, "that I may never find myself in debt; and that my mother may never receive an unkind word."

"I wish," followed Eva, "that all heathens may shortly become Christians."

Then Martha said, "I wish for health and strength to perform my household duties; may I be able to cook, both in regard to quantity and quality, so as to minister to the physical needs of this family, and satisfy their particularly vigorous appetites; may I be endowed with the habits of cleanliness and neatness to keep all things in the house in a fit and sanitary state, and have the same always ready and presentable for visitors, and those who call for food and rest."

"I wish," concluded Mrs. Brock, "that we may meet an unbroken family in heaven."

THE END.