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THE

Canadian Senator

—— OR, ——

A ROMANCE OF LOVE AND POLITICS.

——BY——

CHRISTOPHER OAKES.

TORONTO:
THE NATIONAL PUBLISHING COMPANY.

THE CANADIAN SENATOR.

CHAPTER I.

WESTWARD BOUND.

A GROUP of four people sat on the foredeck of one of the steamships of the Canadian Pacific Lake Superior Line as she ploughed her way westward on a certain beautiful evening in July.

The group consisted of two ladies and two gentlemen. The elder of the ladies would have been termed a handsome woman by two out of every three people who might observe her, albeit her air and appearance of imperious self-confidence would at first sight probably repel rather than attract the majority of persons. Nevertheless, she was a person whom few would pass by without observing. Her looks and manner commanded attention and seemed to demand deference, unless from those whom she was especially desirous of propitiating. Her prominent nose and chin in a face less full and well rounded, and were they separated by smaller and less perfect rows of teeth, would have suggested an early subsidence into a countenance of that variety known as the "nutcracker." Firmly compressed lips intensified the appearance of conscious power. Her figure was generous in outline, and her hair plentifully streaked with grey. Her complexion was dark. Her age, which she could be trusted to keep to

herself, would probably be placed by an impartial judge at about six-and-forty. A slender gold watch guard reaching from throat to waist, a pair of gold-rimmed glasses with which she toyed, with more than one ring upon her plump fingers, evidenced a taste for jewellery. The other lady was a girl just grown to womanhood Her face was oval in shape, her complexion light and clear; her eyes large and of hazel tint: her hair, of which she had a profusion, was dark brown. Her mouth denoted sweet temper and a loving disposition. Her figure, though at present enveloped in a shawl to protect her from the lake breeze, was evidently somewhat slender. The young man who sat by her side was obviously much engrossed by the contemplation of the younger lady. He helped her adjust the shawl more securely over her shoulder when it threatened to slip down, and endeavored in a dozen ways to minister to her comfort. He was a good-looking young fellow of twenty-five or thereabouts, blue-eyed and curly-haired, with an open and generous countenance and that appearance of youthful activity which gave promise of lasting into and even beyond middle age.

The fourth member of the group was a short stout gentleman of sixty or thereabouts, who sat upon a camp stool, a newspaper spread across his knees, and a dark travelling cap set somewhat jauntily on his head, in such a way, however, as to cover the balder portion and allow the grey locks, which remained in considerable profusion on the back and sides of his round head, to become the sport of the playful breeze. His beard was short and grizzled; his features irregular, the nose small and slightly tilted upward; mouth rather large, the under jaw protruding somewhat beyond its fellow, though perhaps not sufficiently to entitle him to be termed "under hung." His grey eyes twinkled at the elder lady, who sat facing him, evidently bent upon making herself agreeable—the young folks meanwhile taking advantage of the preoccupation of the elders with one another, to hang their heads over the bulwarks and indulge in a few tender side glances and a few whispered words. The water was so calm—

and the evening so beautiful, that this seemed quite satisfying enough for them, and they looked out to the west, where the great red sun was preparing to sink out of sight, with contentment upon their youthful faces—while their elders chatted on, apparently each engrossed with the priceless thoughts which the other was uttering. If the old gentleman appeared a little less self-forgetful than his companion, possibly it was due to his being less accomplished in the art of self-forgetfulness, and less gifted with the power to express at will a deferential interest by looks, than she. Perhaps the bump of approbation which shoved the travelling cap to an ominous height at the apex of his skull had something to do with it. At any rate, the deference of the handsome lady was plainly not disagreeable to him, and he showed it by a readiness to be led off on almost any sort of intellectual excursion for which she might express a taste.

"And you have really never visited the Northwest before, Mr. Watkins," said the lady during a pause in the conversation, but not in a tone of disappointment; rather, indeed, as if the thought that they should make their debut in the great world beyond Superior together were a new source of gratification to her, "and you a Senator, too," she added, as though the principal duty of persons of that exalted estate consisted in their perambulating the great lone land from the great lakes to the Pacific at all seasons.

The Senator seized the opportunity to pay a compliment with great adroitness, as he replied, "Ah, Mrs. Fitzgrace, but see what I have gained in companionship by waiting until now!" Then perceiving that his playful compliment was not displeasing to the lady, he decided with the promptness of a diplomatist not to imperil the good impression he had created by a further sally just then, but resumed rather the senatorial dignity as he continued, "The fact is I have been over a great part of Europe. I have even touched Asia and Africa." He stretched forth his hand as if to repeat the touch. "I know almost every nook and cranny of our own maritime

provinces—my native heath as it were. I know Quebec and Ontario, too, pretty well; but as yet my knowledge of the Northwest and British Columbia is derived from the blue books, the evidence given in committees, speeches and the newspapers. But you are right, my dear Mrs. Fitzgrace, in supposing that we Senators like to see things for ourselves, and last session I determined that, after a run home for a few weeks, I would take a holiday trip to the Northwest—not exactly a holiday trip either, though it has seemed more like one since your brother introduced us at Owen Sound, and put you in my charge," said the Senator, with a courtly inclination of the head, "but I am determined to thoroughly *do* the Northwest. We have heard so much about its boundless resources and fertility. Those fellows in the Commons are eternally prating about it. We even hear talk now of a vast Mackenzie River basin of exhaustless wealth, which I should like to test, too, by the light of actual experience." He held up his eye-glasses—for he, too, had a pair with even heavier golden rims, than those of Mrs. Fitzgrace—and waved them slowly over an imaginary panorama of the Mackenzie River basin. "Then there's the deeply interesting Indian question. The 'old man' thinks he knows all about it, but I'm inclined to think he doesn't." By the "old man" he was understood to refer, in the slang of the day, to a certain exalted personage then at the head of affairs in Canada.

"I thought Sir John knew all about the Indians—that he had an Indian title himself—'Old To-morrow,' isn't it?" asked Mrs. Fitzgrace.

"I believe some disgruntled warrior gave him that title not undeservedly perhaps—and to tell the truth John A. is immensely tickled with it. I want to investigate their grievances for myself madam—and I want to make an inspection of the C. P. R. There is a big law suit looming up between the company and the government, which threatens to swallow up some millions, if not put a stop to in time. I should like just to see whether the line is what it is said to be, that is, the

Pacific side. If I run over it I can tell," added the Senator, with confidence.

"Ah, how I should like to go on to Victoria, Senator!" exclaimed Mrs. Fitzgrace with enthusiasm.

"And why shouldn't you?"

A glance at the young couple leaning over the bulwarks and a shake of the head with a sigh expressive of resignation, was the only reply vouchsafed.

"Mr. Watkins," the lady at length said, "it is becoming a little chilly and if you'll excuse me I think I'll get a shawl from my state-room." She arose as she spoke as did also the Senator, who offered gallantly to accompany her.

They passed through the forward saloon where many late diners were still enjoying the excellent six o'clock dinner being served, contrary to the usual custom of lake steamers, upon separate tables, by prompt attendants. Mrs. Fitzgrace's state-room, which she occupied jointly with her neice whom she had just left, was in the after part of the ship. Having reached the after saloon, she apparently changed her mind and seating herself on a sofa she looked at the Senator, as if to invite him to a seat beside her, of which he forthwith availed himself.

"Mr. Watkins," she said, "I have a grave responsibility resting upon my shoulders." The Senator glanced at these ample shoulders admiringly. His thoughts were still on the problems of the North-West which he was about to solve for the public benefit. But he intimated by his look that he could spare thought for the troubles of so interesting a person, and so good a listener, as the widowed sister of his friend Mr. Southcote, had proved herself to be. "You have no doubt guessed something of the relations of my neice and young Rashfellow," she continued. The Senator had observed certain unequivocal symptoms in both of a malady to which he himself had not been a stranger in his youth, and he nodded an assent, "a little spooney" he said.

"They have known one another since childhood, and a sort of attachment was formed at a time when they both ought to have been thinking of their school books, or their

playthings. Arthur never was particularly promising, but his father was a neighbor and friend of my brother William's, and so he let the intimacy continue, even after the death of the lad's father,"—she spoke as if that event should have been the signal for the termination of friendly relations between the two families—"and a sort of *quasi* engagement sprang up between these young people, though Arthur's father had little enough to leave to his widow and family. The young fellow had tried various things, law, business and other things; and then, thinking to make his fortune at once, he went to Winnipeg, and was caught in the 'boom' and sank most of what his father had left him. He managed to save a farm of some sort out of the wreck, and says he has made a home there which, of course, he thinks Gertrude should share with him. Of course William would have weakly yielded if I had not brought him to some sense of his duty. I persuaded him to let me accompany my neice on a trip to the north-west to show her what sort of a life will be in store for her if she persists in her love-sick fancy. But for me this would probably have been their wedding trip. Yet I hope and trust I shall be able to bring her back cured of her fancy —a girl of her appearance and accomplishments would be just thrown away, on the prairies, milking cows and tending chickens—don't you think so?" and before the Senator could reply, she went on—"I'm sure you'll agree with me, Mr. Watkins, and I feel that you will give me all the assistance in your power."

Now, while the Indian problem, the railway question, and the Mackenzie river basin possessed great attractions for the Senator, he was by no means clear that this new mission, of assisting to sever two hearts which seemed to be beating in dangerous unison, was quite so well suited to his tastes. Yet, when Mr. Southcote, with whom he had been acquainted for many years, as the head of a respectable Toronto firm of lawyers, had introduced him to his sister on the wharf, and had put her partly in his charge, he had not given him the impression that she was a person who would require much looking after. On the con-

trary, the brother addressed her in a manner which indicated that she possessed and was worthy of his confidence. When the father parted with the daughter, too, the Senator, while he observed a tear in his eye, had heard him enjoin her to be "guided by her aunt in everything," and lastly, he noticed that his manner to the young man, while kindly, had been by no means effusive. Besides all this, it must be confessed that the Senator was beginning to admire the handsome widow, not only for her appearance, but as a person of judgment and discernment—evidenced by the way in which she had received the information on public matters which he had already seen fit to impart. As he had much more yet to impart, and as he began to feel that the companionship of an intelligent lady of such excellent judgment would be of great advantage to him in his investigations,—an advantage which he could no longer count upon, if he should show sympathy with the cause of these misguided young people,—Mr. Watkins readily promised such assistance as he could render. Mrs. Fitzgrace had evidently counted upon this. She rewarded him with one of her sweetest smiles and a look of gratitude, and then, remarking that it was getting a little late for her neice to remain on deck in the evening air, she went in quest of her—the Senator following once more.

The young people had meantime been enjoying the beauties of the evening and each other's society on the foredeck. As they looked out over the blue waters at the great red disc sinking in the west, their hearts were full, though they said but little. Arthur tried to get hold of a small hand beneath the shawl, but the young lady was conscious of the other passengers now gathered on the deck and coyly withdrew it out of his reach. Then he looked so reproachful that she had to smile at him, though there was something very like a tear in her eye.

"Doesn't it seem as if the sun were going down for the last time—so red and angry, too?" she presently asked.

"Not a bit of it," replied the more hopeful youth, "wait

till you see him rising on the prairie, Gertie! That's a sight worth seeing!"

"And when shall I see prairie?"

"Oh, on Saturday when we reach Winnipeg, but you must leave Winnipeg behind before you see the real thing —the mile upon mile of growing crops bowing before the breeze. Wait till we reach the Portage, and I drive you out to my place and you see a sunrise and a sunset there, before you form an opinion of the prairie,—and I can show you as nice a piece of wheat as you'll see in the whole Northwest, I'll be bound. And right glad will Joggins and his wife and Sport,—my dog you know—be to see you, Gertie, I'll answer for that." The young man rattled on while the maiden looked at him and then out over the waters, wistfully. It was growing darker now, and the young man was once more searching for the truant hand, with some chance of success, when the voice of her aunt broke the pleasant spell.

"Gertrude," she said, "it is growing too chilly, my dear, for you to sit longer on deck, I think. Wont you come in and play something for Mr. Watkins. I'm sure he would like to hear you."

The Senator of course had to support this proposition with his best grace, and Miss Southcote dutifully arose and proceeded with her aunt to the saloon, while Arthur with a feeling of being left out in the cold, lit a cigar and lounged about the deck. It was not long however before he found himself on the after deck, looking in at the cabin windows, his eyes rivetted on the piano and the young lady who was playing, now a dreamy waltz, now a snatch of some song and again one of Chopin's exquisite waltzes, while Mrs. Fitzgrace looked on, smiling approval from an armchair, and the Senator sat marking time very badly on the arm of the sofa on which he lolled. The electric lights were now burning and the passengers were gathering in the saloon, as passengers do upon such occasions, the elders seating themselves quietly to hear what was going forward, the novel readers settling themselves in the most advantageous positions to take advantage of the light,

hile some of the younger people approached the piano rned over the music which lay upon it, and looked dmiringly at Miss Southcote as she played. One young dy ventured to ask Gertrude if she sang, and on learning hat she sang "a little" became so importunate for a song hat the fair performer glanced at her aunt and receiving n encouraging nod from Mrs. Fitzgrace, who seemed in igh good humor this evening, she began a little ballad, which she knew that Arthur was fond of and which soon rought that young gentleman from his retreat. She had sweet and cultivated, though not a strong voice, which vent straight to the heart of the hearer, and one hearer t least it appealed to that night as he thought it never had before. The young lady who had asked for the song was next emboldened to suggest a chorus, on finding a book of part songs on the piano, and soon a choir was in process of formation, Arthur, who possessed a fine robust tenor, forming one of the group who were soon trolling forth "Way down upon the Swanee river" and other familiar melodies, with the general approval of the assembled passengers. The scene is however too familiar to all travellers by steamboat to bear reproduction in print and we may therefore more profitably employ our time by affording the reader some further information regarding the particuular group of travellers, whose company he or she may be destined to keep, beyond the shores of the lakes.

Mrs. Fitzgrace had truly said that the attachment between her neice and Arthur Rashfellow was one which had had its beginning in early youth. The two young people could not remember a time when they had not known one another. They had played together, walked, boated, driven and ridden together, not only as children but in the most impressionable years of youth. They had picniced on the banks of the Humber, sailed across the bay, climbed the Rosedale ravines and the heights of Castle Frank, with many a merry party, but always managing to pass a good share of the time together. They had built snow giants, they had skated and tobogganed in each other's society, and Arthur's toboggan

was reserved for Gertrude's use, while that he should fasten her skates seemed as natural as that he should place her in his skiff in those happy days in Muskoka when they had varied the perpetual holiday by making a special holiday expedition to some quiet spot for a picnic. Then came the time when Arthur had left Upper Canada College, and at his father's request had attempted the study of the law with Mr. Southcote. Mr. Rashfellow had, indeed, tried to induce Arthur to enter one of the Universities, but the young fellow was not of a studious turn. He had been a good deal "spoiled," being the eldest child, and though of a naturally kind and generous disposition, he chafed under restraint, and generally had his own way. As a sort of compromise with his father, who somewhat overrated his abilities, he tried law, but made so manifest a failure of it that Mr. Northcote was constrained to tell his friend and neighbor that he did not think the young man would make a successful lawyer, and Arthur was therefore transferred to the merchant's warehouse of his father's firm. It was at this time that Mr. Southcote began to think that Gertrude and Arthur should have outgrown the attachment which he had observed without any special misgiving in their earlier days. He discussed the matter with his wife, a weakly and amiable woman, who had three other children to engage her attention, but nothing definite came of this conference. He had spoken, also, to Arthur's father on the subject, and the latter agreed with him that his son was not likely to be able to make and maintain a happy home for the young lady. His reckless disposition gave no promise of his acquiring a competency for himself, and though his father enjoyed a good income, he had two daughters and a couple of young boys to provide for besides Arthur. Then came Mr. Rashfellow's sudden death before Arthur had developed sufficient business tastes or habits to enable him to take his father's place or, indeed, any place other than that of a junior clerk in the father's firm. The remaining partners bought out the father's interest, and this, with his life insurance, formed a fund sufficient to enable the family

to live a life of quiet respectibility. A sum sufficient to enable him to start in life had shortly before been left Arthur by an uncle, the brother of his mother, and with this he determined to seek his fortune in the north-west in the early part of the year 1882.

It must not be supposed that Arthur had up to this time changed his purpose of carrying out the programme which he and Gertrude had for some years planned, in boy and girl fashion, of coming some day as a rich man to her father's door to claim her as his bride. Now that his father had died and the realities of life stared him more sternly in the face, he thought the time for definite action had come. His father had quietly hinted that for a young man, with no special prospects, to be dangling after a young lady, who might in the natural course of things do better, was not only unfair to her and her parents, who had shown him so much kindness, but was handicapping his own career, as well. Mr. Southcote, too, had hinted more than once to his daughter that childish preferences and fancies should now be dismissed, and only after a repetition of these hints did he begin to realize how serious the preference and fancy to which he referred had become. In fact, the young people had plighted their troth unknown to their elders, and had more than once sworn eternal constancy. And now when the time for action arrived Arthur was full of hope and energy, and Gertrude was, if not quite so confident of a speedy realization of their dreams, at least willing to wait patiently for his return,

During Arthur's absence in the north-west, Mrs. Fitzgrace took up her residence with her brother, William Southcote. She had in her younger days married a certain well-connected and dashing young Englishman, who soon proved, however, to be an utterly useless and even burdensome mate. Having speedily run through the means he had inherited, he developed a propensity for sponging on his friends and connections until his name became a byword among his acquaintances for meanness and general uselessness. They said it should be changed from

Fitz to *Dis*-grace. He had moreover early in life acquired a taste for drinking, and when circumstances became such that Canadian whisky became his chief beverage, the development of this propensity for drink became more and more rapid. Meanwhile from the dashing swell of his bridegroom days he had become the slouching tippler who was not ashamed to live upon the bounty of his wife or her relations. Fortunately his wife was made of stronger stuff, and struggled with desperate efforts to keep up appearances. She had more pride than he, and could not permanently burden her brother with the support of her husband as well as herself, so that she, the once fashionable Mrs. Fitzgrace, was at length forced—let me whisper gently reader—to take boarders, whose boots, it was said, the once dashing Fitzgrace polished—and polished very badly the boarders asserted—in the back kitchen, as his sole and only contribution to the household support. Of course it was a fashionable boarding house, for Mrs. Fitzgrace would do nothing which was not fashionable. Nevertheless that she chafed under the ignoble yoke of even a fashionable boarding-house keeper, will hardly surprise the reader who has already had, let us hope, some slight insight into her character. She had had two daughters, one of whom died in girlhood, the other married one of the boarders, who took her shortly after to New Zealand. Then at length, the once dashing, but now useless, Fitzgrace having become less and less proficient as shoe polisher and more and more saturated with whiskey suddenly shuffled out of the world and left his widow a free woman, with a small income from the insurance on his life which she had been careful to keep paid up until his death. She gave up her house, and, on invitation of her brother, whose wife was becoming, through ill health, incapable of performing all the duties of mistress of a large household, Mrs. Fitzgrace, or Aunt Caroline, as she was called there, became one of the Southcote household.

Meantime Arthur had struck Winnipeg and the "boom" which was then in full blast there. He speedily invested his all, mostly in town lots and on narrow margins. The

st man was apparently he who bought at the highest
and paid the least money down—spreading his
l over as long and narrow a margin of investment as
ble. So Arthur invested right and left at top figures,
g up almost his entire capital in first payments and
retired to the club and drank champagne with other
naires who daily counted their riches (in town lots)
he sparkling wine. But it must not be supposed that
rgot his first love in the hour of his great prosperity
he. In the early spring he took train for Toronto,
g himself with presents at St. Paul and Chicago en
and arrived at her old home elated with success and
g that his troubles were now over and that he had
walk up to the Southcote mansion in the role of
ering hero and carry off his prize. Unfortunately
Caroline was now installed there. She had reaped
tter fruit of a rash marriage herself and felt impelled
tect her neice from a like experience. She took no
in the young man's reputed wealth and told him so.
autious Mr. Southcote too, counselled a little delay,
o see now the investments might turn out. Then
the news of disastrous floods at Winnipeg and many
thur's purchases disappeared under several feet of
. He still hoped on, however. The water would go
and the prices would go up—what was one, two or
five hundred dollars a foot for eligible lots in the
go of the Canadian north-west? But though the
subsided the boom subsided too and the
rous land agents with whom Arthur's pur-
were left on sale, reported no sales and a lull in the
t. Then came the fatal day of second payments.
f the vendors demanded prompt payment and poor
r was at the end of his rope. In vain he begged
me,—his wealth began to melt away like snow
the sun. Aunt Caroline looked more and more
te, Mr. Southcote looked grave. The young man
e desperate, and finally almost demanded the hand
rtrude, who was tearful and woe-begone, of her
As he had now worse prospects than ever, Mr.

Southcote naturally demurred, and the young man
off again in a huff to Winnipeg to see what could be
with his now fast tottering fortunes. Fortunatel
had bought and paid the greater part of the pur
money of a half section of land near Portage la Pr
and thither, after a brief and unsatisfactory vis
the scene of his unfortunate ventures in Winnipe
betook himself. Driven at last to earnest endeavo
set to work as a farmer, and after a few years hard
he had at length the satisfaction, after committing
blunders and enduring many hardships, with much
determination, of finding himself in the possession
tolerably good farm, free of debt and with a house
outbuildings, which, if not luxurious, were at least
able, and such as his means and the circumstances
country would allow.

Once more Arthur returned to his native city
visited his home. His sisters were now almost
ladies, his brothers grown to sturdy youths. He w
quite so full of confidence as on the occasion of his f
visit, and he therefore spent a day or two with his
people, taking a daily stroll on King street in h
meeting Gertrude. On the third day, however, he w
boldly over to the Southcotes, where he was receiv
Mrs. Fitzgrace, but, alas, with no greater enthusiasm
on the occasion of his former visit. In fact this
seemed determined to keep him at a distance, or a
to ignore his former claims as the suitor of her
Gertrude's manner it is true had lost none of its swe
and he read in her eye as soon as she bent it upo
that she still loved him. She was now a woman, ho
and a certain staid composure of manner had take
place of her former girlish confidence and reliance up
lover. A short time sufficed to satisfy him that
possessed her heart, although it was evident that that
means secured to him the possession of her hand.
no time now in securing an interview with Mr. So
and pressed his suit with so much eloquence and pers
that it is doubtful whether the father's consent wo

been forthcoming, were it not for Aunt Caroline. the young man's fervor had well nigh melted the of the lawyer, it became hardened under the inexor- gic of Mrs. Fitzgrace. When he ventured to suggest nger of the young people solving the difficulty after anner of rash and impetuous youth, without regard ir elder's wishes, if his consent were withheld, she tly suggested that he should forbid the young man use. But he positively refused thus to treat the son former friend, whom he admired for his constancy nothing else. Arthur had well nigh won his point . The father had long seen that his daughter was ppy and became almost convinced that a union with ver of her youth was her only chance of happiness. he came home and told his sister of his latest inter- with Arthur and his resolve to let the young people their way, Mrs. Fitzgrace had merely exclaimed, and nonsense William, let me take Gertrude to the -west and show her what her future life there would d if she isn't cured then, why they can be married nd there." She had no doubt however of being able ct her cure.

CHAPTER II.

THE SAULT.

he morning following the incidents referred to in the ding chapter Mrs. Fitzgrace, her neice, the Senator rthur again sat on the foredeck enjoying the varied eautiful scenery of the St. Mary river. The day was one and the shady places were in demand. How nd refreshing the dense underbrush looked on the s of the islands among which they picked their way. ood ship glided onward turning this way and that as scended the noble stream, the travellers feasting their upon the panorama presented on either side. Ever non as they passed a procession of laden vessels being

towed down stream, would handkerchiefs flutter in t
to greet the groups of passing mariners or an occa
female cook as she stood at the cabin door of her shi
ing a breath of fresh air and a glance at the passers
steamer would now and again pass and an excha
handkerchief greetings between the east and west
passengers would be kept up vigorously by the yo
folk—simultaneously with an exchange of steam w
greetings by the boats themselves.

"The Thousand Islands over again," said the Se
He turned to Gertrude as he spoke. He had scarce
changed a word with the younger lady as yet, so de
had been his attentions to her aunt. It had occur
him possibly that he should honor the neice with a
conversation. "You gave us some beautiful music
evening Miss Southcote," he said. So beautiful was it
had lulled him to sleep in the end, as Mrs. Fitzgrace
observed.

"My music is all in my trunk, and I had to sing
memory, just my old hackneyed songs, and the part
in the ship's book were even more hackneyed, I fear."

"You are fond of music?" queried the Senator.

"Oh, dear, yes," replied the young lady, with more
mation than she had yet shown, "of course I am. Wh
fail to be? To be sure I know there are people who
nothing for music—who can't tell one air from anothe
always feel for them—much as I do for a deformed pe
or one who has to go through life wanting an arm
leg—they miss so much. They are denied one o
greatest pleasures in life."

Now, though Mr. Watkins could distinguish "God
the Queen" from "Yankee Doodle," he could not go
further in musical discrimination. Yet he did not
sider himself a "deformed" person by any means.
began to think that this young lady certainly deserve
fate—if it were to be her fate to milk cows on the pr

"Have you a piano at your house, Mr. Rashfell
asked Mrs. Fitzgrace, suddenly turning to Arthur.

"N—No," replied the young man, coloring and tu

s piteously toward Gertrude, who quickly fixed on some object on the nearest shore.

off glimpses of railway works on the Canadian ow engrossed the attention of the Senator, who hrough a pair of field-glasses at them. He was ly much more interested now than in the question c. He had had to do with the building of a road wn province, he said, and knew something about construction. His road has been but ten miles nt vast engineering difficulties had had to be surd, so he let his fellow-travellers understand. As e could make out through the field-glasses, this ll far short of the standard of his early achieve- And then, what was to be done with it when built? was no connection, as yet, at the Sault, and it was ion as yet whether there ever would be, he thought. always espoused the Conservative cause, and had many a hard-fought battle under the Conservative , but that was before it was considered the part of vative statesmen to build railways though hundreds es of such a country as this, to end no where. na Mills! where is Algoma Mills?" he asked, conously, sweeping his glasses around the horizon in of the missing point. But they were far out of f Algoma Mills. The road was now being extended rd to the Sault, he explained. It went nowhere and now they were building on, in hope of striking lace where a carload of freight could be obtained. ge had been commenced at the Sault, where more ds of thousands were being sunk, but—and here the r shook his head solemnly, as if to say that all this be in vain, the pursuit of a shadow, which would materialize. "I told Sir John so," he said, "but he ave me a slap on the back, 'never mind, Senator, t the Yankees an example. If they don't meet us he bridge is done, it will be their loss—and we'll heir people all over to our side.' This was his only said Mr. Watkins, again shaking his head at the brance of the Premier's levity of speech.

And now as they steamed up stream and drew t
the Sault, they caught sight of stump fires and g
men and horses clearing and preparing the right
for the grade. There was at least life here and it
seemed as if all this preparation could be for nothin
mere indulgence of a whim of the Government or t
way company or whomsoever might be responsible
work.

About noon the boat arrived at the American
The Senator had surveyed the Canadian town throu
glasses, but had apparently found no comfort i
survey. His impressions were summarized in the
expletive "faugh!" which he uttered as he put the
in their case and turned his attention towards the Am
town where they were now touching. The Ca
village indeed looked pretty enough as they passed
it, but distance did not lend enchantment to it in th
of the Senator, who saw only a tin roof or two glint
the noonday sun, a few new buildings, a few m
course of erection, with a scattered fringe of newly
dwellings extending here and there in the outskirt
looked painfully peaceful in the distance he thought
then turned his attention to the other side, where a
bustle and activity. The ship was now tying up
wharf. Beside her an American steamboat lay w
deck-load of curious tourists gazing at the last ar
Below, the wharf swarmed with the usual crowd, some
ing upwards for expected faces, others staring vac
Up the river the rapids from this distance seemed
dancing in the glittering sunlight.

The young people begged for the privilege of a
through the town, as the boat would be sometime rea
and working its way through the lock. Mrs. Fitzgrace
free from the dread of a possible elopement, must of c
accompany them, and the Senator readily consented t
the party. They first visited the post-office to drop a
card or two to their friends at home, and then made their
to the fort, the Senator expressing a desire to inspect
closely the military post, whose not very formidable a

vertheless attracted his attention as they had come river.

on't you think the old duffer is becoming rather ve to your aunt, Gertrude?" asked Arthur, as the r bowed Mrs. Fitzgrace through the wicket, leading he military reservation, while the young people d slowly some distance in the rear.

onsense, Arthur," replied Gertrude, smiling however, shouldn't speak so disrespectfully of a Senator. unt Caroline has too much on her mind just now to uch attention to *him*, I fear," she added with height- olor.

say—wouldn't a double marriage up at Winnipeg Portage astonish your father?" pursued the young eedlessly, "just think how it would look in a tele- ic dispatch in the papers. Just fancy how your would rub his glasses to make sure that he had right.

Just think what nonsense you are talking Arthur," rl replied. I don't think my Aunt will ever marry, and—" she broke off here and glanced out upon the

Don't say that the other will not come off, Gerty, et my heart upon that," the young man exclaimed, ng earnestly at his companion.

Hush, you foolish boy," answered Gertrude.

If I thought it wouldn't I'd take a header into the yonder and put an end to myself!"

Don't talk so— yes, Aunt, I see," the latter words addressed to Mrs. Fitzgrace who now stood with the tor receiving some information from an American r whom they had encountered, who had courteously ed to the Senator's salutation. Gertrude's attention directed to a squad of soldiers in gray, who were being through some evolutions in the barrack yard. The was unsheltered and the heat excessive, so our ds soon took themselves back to the town, taking a at the court-house and schoolhouse, and thence pass- on to the Iroquois Hotel. There were signs on every

hand suggestive of a "boom." Building operation
going on in every direction, while tent accomodati
man and beast occupied most of the waste places
fakirs and peripatetic showmen abounded everywhe
choice of walking-sticks was proffered to the pas
who could encircle one with a ring thrown quoit fa
Aunt Sally seemed onmipresent, while the opportu
for testing the muscles and lungs by paying the sma
required for the use of the necessary apparatus, wer
quent as the travellers sauntered along.

"This reminds me of Winnepeg in the boom
Arthur remarked somewhat sadly. "Only the we
was, when the boom was at its height there, as cold a
hot here. How well I remember the look of the stree
overflowing auction rooms where land was being kn
down every few minutes by the foot or lot, at prices
would make the Senator's hair stand on end, were
quote them, the endless price lists of real estate like
the young man pointed to a placard in the windows of
estate office as they passed, "displayed at every door
window on Main street. There was no shop but had its
estate department. The crowds, the Holmans nightly pl
Pinafore and Patience to in the old town hall, the cons
popping of champagne corks in the clubs and in every
all comes back to me like a bad dream. Come Gertie,
get away from this, which is but a faint reproductio
the scenes I remember," and he hurried his compa
on, first to the hotel, and finding that bustle and real es
advertisements largely prevailed there too, he led he
again down to the lock which they crossed, finally sea
themselves on a bench which commanded a view of
rapids, where several Indians in their canoes seemed to
making sport of the rushing leaping waters, so coolly
they appear to trust themselves and their little ba
to the waves, up which they even fought their
cautiously enough along the side eddies, in search of f
Up stream loomed the uncompleted stone abutments of
new giant railway bridge. In the foreground a new l
was in course of construction.

young couple sat in the shade of the house or office officials of the locks, looking out over this scene, to the girl at all events, was strangely interesting. seems hardly possible," she said, "that all the of that great sea beyond, which I have so often of but have never before seen, could go rushing this incline with after all, so little noise and hub- At Niagara one feels the immensity of the thing in ntinuous thunder of the Falls, the mist, and the ever t rainbow, but here the waters seem to rush laugh- e a lot of children out of school, happy to escape ose themselves in the bosom of other streams and

nd what would you have them do?" asked the man. "Would you have them struggle against and endeavor to stagnate in one vast pond? Isn't ter that they should go on, down stream if you and enjoy life's struggles and activities, aye and be ed by them, rather than strive for what is impossi- Even if you dammed the waters ever so securely ove, you couldn't keep them from rising until they some new channel, probably not half so good a one e old one, and then burst forth to create havoc and uction perhaps. It's just so with people," continued oung man, growing more eloquent and poetic in the nce of nature's beauties than was his wont, "let them their own inclinations—through proper channels of e—and they will be happy. Try to turn them into channels, and they will be miserable."

ertrude began to be apprehensive lest this talk of ng waters should render her lover too impetuous. She t the drift of his discourse and dreaded a fresh out- such as she had more than once encountered—a ping away of the flood-gates such as he had just de- ed. Miss Northcote was a prudent, though a loving She had been brought up in the city, accustomed to omforts, even the luxuries of life. She had all the y perception of the modern young lady, of the advan- of wealth, civilization and home comforts. She re-

garded these things as necessaries. Still she lov young man well. Had he but these necessaries to of she would be the happiest of mortals. She even t at times she could bear the want of them with equa Then thoughts of the house on the prairie—with piano—so far away from home and friends, overca and she would weep herself to sleep without havin to any fixed resolution as to whether she could and bear it for Arthur's sake. She put away the unw thoughts of discomfort and loneliness and made mind to wait and see with her own eyes what was i for her before finally deciding. At one time she woul gone off blindly with Arthur, but her Aunt's interp had prevented that. And now she felt her reso gradually weakening under her Aunt's influence, n much was said on either side, more was left to be in than was actually uttered. That question about the that very morning, indeed, had made her feel ver comfortable and unhappy. She knew, of course, that A had no piano. But the thought had not troubled her. however, her attention had been called to it in that wa could not help reflecting how much comfort she had re at home from music, and how very, very lonely it be out on the prairie without a piano to wile awa hours while Arthur might be absent. Some of thoughts sprang to her mind now, when her lover's t seemed on the verge of breaking into dangerous again.

Her Aunt fortunately at that moment came to rescue.

"Why Gertrude—Mr. Rashfellow, do you inte remain behind? We could not think where you could gone. Don't you see our boat is just about to leav dock?"

The young people, with the house between them an lock, had not in truth thought of the boat, which they barely time to go aboard of before she steamed out o lock.

CHAPTER III.

AN IMPERIAL FEDERATIONIST.

D what do you expect will be the future of this great ntry, Senator?"

The speaker was an active, bright-eyed merchant, a or partner in a Montreal commercial house. Vigor self-reliance were stamped upon his face, and showed nselves in his quick movements—he just now facing the ator as they stood on the steamer's deck. They had hanged a few words on the subject of their common ntry, more especially regarding the north-west. The engers had now come to know and address one another, r the manner of passengers on board ship a day or out of port. The Senator was not one of the exclu- e sort, and rather courted than shunned intercourse h his fellow citizens at all times. This young mer- nt was evidently one of those who are always prepared express, and maintain by argument, if need be, their n opinions, and to accord the same privilege to others. e Senator, as he met the younger man's bright glance, urned a somewhat evasive answer to his question.

"I don't know that I am quite prepared to say," was hat he said, "though wherever we are going, I think e're going a little too fast."

A gentleman, who drew near at this moment, put in a Hear, hear," to this remark. He had made known his olitical proclivities early in the voyage by many vehement enunciations of the Government, and by announcing him- lf as a "clear Grit of the grittiest kind." He therefore pplauded the Senator's remark as a reflection on the Gov- rnment.

"I'm not a politician, Senator, but I beg to differ with ou there," exclaimed the young merchant, with frank ood-humor, and with earnestness as well, "if I did not orsee for Canada a great and glorious destiny, I should, erhaps, express myself in a somewhat similar way. When

I reflect who we are and what we are—the possesso
the larger, and I believe, the better half of this great
tinent—when I think of its illimitable resources and g
natural advantages—its climate, its soil, its imm
waterways such as this—when I think of the infa
struggles of the past and the milestones left behind, w
we have achieved and what we may yet achieve,
mighty part of a mighty Empire, I confess I am no
favor of a parsimonious policy nor of an unprogressive
See how favored we are as a nation, Senator! The vas
possession of this vast Empire, the future home of
teeming millions, even now affording a main highway
her commerce. Ere many years, I believe, we shall be
backbone, her granary," the young man went on, indu
ing in mixed metaphors, "her park and her para
ground if need be, though I think that once the defensi
alliance between the various members of the Empire, whi
I look for in the near future, is accomplished, we sh
need but a small standing army, indeed, to enforce respe
for this, as for every other portion of that greatest
Empires, whose supremacy on every ocean and sea sha
be acknowledged, who shall hold the blessings of peac
freedom and Christian civilization within her might
grasp!"

"An Imperial Federationist?" queried the Senator, a
the young Montrealer paused in his enthusiastic addres
to watch the white gulls, following in the wake of th
ship, as they swooped down to the water to catch the
bits of bread which Gertrude and some of the other ladie
were casting upon the lake, over the stern of the vessel, for
their benefit.

"I am," he promptly replied, "and what I fail to
understand is how a Canadian can be aught else. When
I came of age, my father gave me the option of continuing
in his firm or of setting up for myself. I chose the former,
I think wisely. An old school-fellow of mine about the
same time was given the same option by his parent, but
chafing a little under parental control, my young friend
chose to leave the old house on St. Paul Street and open a

business for himself. His small business could not stand the strain of competition with his neighbors, to one of whom, to save himself from being crushed out, he sold out, entering this rival to his father's firm in a position inferior to that his father two years before had offered him in his own house. Do you think I would change places with him now? No, indeed. When I think of the honored position which Canada will, if she is wise, in a few years occupy, within the British Empire, and of the other alternative destinies within her reach, I am an Imperial Federationist every time!"

"Why not go in for a federation of the Anglo-Saxon race?" put in the gentleman who had applauded the Senator's cautious remark a few minutes ago.

"All right when the time comes," replied the young Federationist, "but let us set our own house in order first. My young friend in Montreal had dreams, perhaps, when he entered his new firm, of getting back to the parental house, from which he regretted ever having departed, by bringing about an amalgamation of the two, but, alas! his new partners only use his name to help them undermine the older structure, which has stood honorably by its customers and the public for half a century, and as my young friend finds himself obliged to drum the towns and cities in competition with his father's travellers, I warrant his hopes are growing fainter and fainter. Senator," continued the young man, "Britain has been the mother of nations, and has carried freedom and an open Bible into every clime. I want to see the re-union of the Anglo-Saxons take place under her glorious flag. Britain has been tried and not found wanting. I'm for full partnership with the parent. I don't mean in local matters, but in matters of mutual interest, and I don't care whether it's by means of a parliament or a council of one man—and his wife, if you like—from each self-governing colony, providing the wife doesn't rule her husband," he added, as his eyes wandered involuntarily towards Mrs. Fitzgrace, who sat a short distance from them with a book in her hand, which she was ostensibly engaged in reading, while

her alert eye was taking in all that was going forward within her range of vision.

The dissertation of his fellow traveller on Imperial Federation failed to draw out the Senator, who looked upon the subject as of too visionary a character to engage the serious attention of a practical statesman, and, contrary to his usual habit, he said nothing, but withdrew to the quarter of the deck where Mrs. Fitzgrace sat, leaving his whilom supporter and the young Montrealer to finish the subject.

Meantime Arthur Rashfellow and a young man from Brandon were discussing the respective merits and advantages of that young city and Portage la Prairie, the town to which more than any other, Arthur now claimed to "belong."

"We have the best farming land in the whole nor'-west," said Arthur proudly, "there is practically no reaching the bottom of our rich top-soil. With such a country, how can the town help prospering? I've heard it's different with some other places, where the farms are liable to be blown away, unless they're held down by the mortgages."

"Well, it's better to have them held down by mortgages than by water," retorted the young Brandonian. "Your 'slough' covers what should be the best land around your town—a veritable 'Slough of Despond,' convenient enough for the whole town to slip into some day—if it doesn't kill you all with fever and ague first."

"Very fine talk for one coming from a town which may slide down its side-hill some rainy day," replied Arthur, alluding to Brandon's picturesque site.

From all which, it will be seen that the young nor'-wester is nothing if not locally patriotic, yet quite prepared to stand up for the whole north-west, including all rival towns, if occasion demands a wider patriotism.

Arthur did not care to have this young Brandon man's playful strictures upon the Portage reach the ears of Gertrude, or more especially her aunt, not that there was anything in them, but for fear a prejudice against the place should be excited in the minds of the

es, whom he desired should be rather impressed by its actions. Mrs. Fitzgrace and the Senator, however, h heard the young men's badinage, (which in reality nt nothing but a little fun) and the former a moment r said,

"Mr. Watkins, I'm sure that Portage la Prairie must be *readful* place. What in the name of conscience, is a o?' I declare I'm almost afraid to go there with poor trude; what if she or I, or both of us should be cken down with fever and ague? I shudder at the ght!"

"I had always understood that the Portage was one of healthiest, as well as most favorably situated of north- t towns, yet that young man's words certainly raise a picion as to the salubrity of the locality."

"If my brother were only with us," suggested Mrs grace, "I shouldn't mind, you know."

"On the ground that men are not susceptible to fever ague—unless the fever of speculation, which is apt to g on the ague afterwards. However let your mind easy, my dear madam. *I myself* will accompany you ortage la Prairie and brave the dangers of this 'sloo,' ed be, rather than you should suffer the loss of your e of mind," said the Senator, bowing gallantly, as gh he had just offered to accompany the ladies across Sahara, or to the top of the Pyrenees, instead of sixty s out of Winnipeg, in the direction he himself was g.

"Thanks, Mr. Watkins," replied the widow, "but we ose staying a day or two in Winnipeg before going on, perhaps it would be hoping too much to expect you to ect your important public duties to attend on two otected females." She quite ignored Mr. Rashfellow n escort, it was plain.

"As to that, my dear madam, I must see Winnipeg of se—and as well going as coming, so let us consider matter settled" and again the Senator bowed.

"You are so kind, Mr. Watkins," and the lady shot a ce into the Senator's eyes, which caused him to resolve

forthwith that he would take up his abode at the Portag for three months if necessary for their complete protection.

As for Gertrude, notwithstanding the presence of Arthur notwithstanding that they were sometimes, though no often alone together, that they more frequently sat o walked the deck or sang at the piano together under the watchful eye of her aunt, and that the great lake was calm—it cannot be said that she was altogether happy. The weight of her aunt's disapproval seemed to press heavily upon her. The distance from home, from which she had never wandered far, the vastness of this great inland sea, when they lost sight of land altogether, contributed to her feeling of unrest. Had her father been here in place of her aunt, or had she been alone with Arthur, the die cast, travelling to her home in the west, she felt it would have been different, and she would have been contented. As it was, Mrs. Fitzgrace's presence and supervision seemed to pervade her as the spirit of discontent. She felt that her aunt was disinterested in her motives, and meant well by her, but this only added to the difficulty of her position. At night, as the fog, so common on Lake Superior, was upon them and she lay in her berth, the dismal blast of the fog whistle, repeated at short intervals all through the long night, made her shiver more and more with each repetition of its dirge-like tone and filled her mind with dark presentiments of evil, until she was ready almost to cry out in despair. She began to wish she had never left home, and the feeling gained force. She was, in fact, thoroughly homesick and dispirited, and the knowledge that her lover was near her was not sufficient to drive away this feeling of despair. Would it ever leave her? That was the question which again and again presented itself to the poor girl's mind and refused to be satisfactorily answered. When the morning came, and the fog had not lifted, she felt as nervous and dispirited as ever. Her aunt's manner was kind and solicitous. Arthur looked rather cast down and unhappy. Gertrude made a desperate effort to be gay and cheerful, and failed utterly. Then she asked to be excused and again sought her berth.

Some three hours later when, roused by her aunt, ertrude once more appeared on deck, she found the scene changed as to turn away all thoughts for the time from erself. They were about entering the far-famed Thunder ay, and as she gazed at the mighty towering Thunder ape, the fog now dispelled, the sun breaking through he clouds and bringing out soft colors on the face of this iant; as, entering the vast and beauteous bay, her eyes fell pon Pie Island and the more distant McKay Mountain, swept ver the nestling town of Port Arthur on the distant hore, then once again turned to contemplate that grand nd awful cape, the girl felt lifted for the time being out f her perplexities and completely forgot them in the randeur of the scene.

Exclamations of wonder and admiration were heard on ll sides. Even the Senator forgot for a time who he was, s he gazed. Then for a half hour or more his glasses eemed glued to his nose, while he endeavored to supplement heir power by a pair of binoculars belonging to the cap- ain, while he sought for the mouth of the Kaministiquia, bout whose shoals and bar he had heard so much in Par- ament. About noon they reached the wharf, and soon, ke the rest of the ship's passengers, were inspecting the leasant and beautifully situated lakeport of the north- est, much as they had done the Sault some twenty-four ours before. They gazed at the displays of quartz and ar, walked up the gently rising streets, took a land view f the great bay, and returned to the hotel for dinner.

CHAPTER IV.

AT WINNIPEG.

T noon on a fine July day there stepped from the last eeper of the Canadian Pacific Express, which had just rrived at Winnipeg from the east, an elderly gentleman, hort and stout, a handsome lady of middle age, a pretty

young lady of slender figure, and a good-looking, curly-haired young man. The discerning reader need hardly b informed that the Hon. Ezra Watkins, Senator; Mr Fitzgrace, Miss Southcote, and Mr. Arthur Rashfellow composed this somewhat distinguished party. They had left Port Arthur at 14:30 precisely, and come through without mishap. The Senator had enjoyed the trip amaz ingly, sitting by the side of Mrs. Fitzgrace most of the previous afternoon and that forenoon. He had been up a daybreak this morning, note-book in hand, that he might judge of the roadbed which had been the subject of s much controversy, and might catch a glimpse of the beauties of Rat Portage and its vicinity. He had succeeded in arousing the interest of Mrs. Fitzgrace to such an ex tent that that lady had actually appeared from the state room occupied by herself and her neice, just before the train passed over Tunnel Island, and again took a sea beside Mr. Watkins, and as the train passed through the tunnel, Mr. Rashfellow long afterwards made the assertion to Gertrude that he saw or heard—but as Mr. Rashfellow was at the time in his berth, and presumably fast asleep and as, moreover, his testimony can scarcely be accepted as unprejudiced, it will be better to pass over his asser tion, and proceed with the narration of well authenticated historical facts in connection with this most momentous summer trip of Senator Watkins. The scenery on and about Tunnel Island had certainly an exhilirating effect upon the Senator. He talked in his best vein, that is to say, very much in the first person singular, with an occa sional first person plural, including his handsome fellow passenger, whom it was evident he more and more regard ed as a person worthy of his best conversational efforts and even of his confidence.

Arthur did not neglect the opportunity afforded by the confidences of the seniors to indulge in some little confi dences with the girl of his heart, though conscious that the alert eye of the aunt was most of the time upon him and the object of his love, either directly or through the medium of the mirrors with which the car seemed to

ound. And here they were at Winnipeg, with the great estion still unsettled, for Gertrude had complained of a adache—that most unpropitious of feminine conditions and the young man wisely, perhaps, forebore to press s suit to extremities. He thought it would be better to ait now until she should see his home, and then and ere, if possible, prevail upon her to remain with him.

Winnipeg the golden! Winnipeg the city where so any hopes lie buried, yet which is still so full of hope, the ty of Young Canada, Lord Dufferin's "gateway" of the rth-west. Even the Senator opened his eyes very wide r a time as they all drove in an open carriage from e station to the Queen's Hotel, along the broad and hand- me Main street. The transition was so sudden, from e dreary almost uninhabited country through which for urs past they had been speeding to this stately well ved street, teeming with life, as it now was. Every ject upon it betokened a metropolis, from the tall helmeted liceman to the screeching newsboy. The cabs, carriages, reet cars and omnibusses, varied by an occasional Red River t-cart, among wheeled things. The quick footed, well ressed citizens, the scarlet tunicked soldiers, the black- bed priests, the bright eyed ladies under bright hued arasols, the unmistakeable freshly arrived Englishman, ith here and there an Italian, a Yankee, an Indian Half- reed, a Chinaman, an Icelander or a Mennonite, gave to e street an air not only metropolitan but cosmopolitan. s our party were driving past the square in which stands e imposing City Hall, the Senator called to the driver to ull up for a moment before the volunteer monument hile he adjusted his glasses to read the inscription upon , while Arthur in answer to an inquiring look from ertrude said, "yes, I was there and saw at least one of e poor fellows fall—but don't let us talk about it," and e turned to point out the lofty post-office building on the ft side of the street.

"Many a half-hour I stood in the line inside the former d post-office which stood there, in the winter of '82, wait- g for my turn to ask for a letter from—you know who—

and too often only to be disappointed," he whispered. G
trude made no reply. She remembered only too well t
she had received letters from him at the period alluded
and, through the influence of her aunt, had been persuad
that she ought not to reply to them and had been v
wretched in consequence. The eyes of the aunt were up
her now, and what could she do, or say, further than
feel and look guilty?

At the hotel, as soon as rooms were secured, the pa
immediately lunched, as Arthur had arranged to go on
the Portage by the first train, which would leave in abo
an hour's time, and look over his farm and set his house
order in anticipation of the advent of the ladies there. A
how anxiously he looked forward to that time. How
wished that everything might look its best and that h
modest home might seem attractive in her eyes. He dar
not hope that it would find favor in the eyes of M
Fitzgrace, but, if only Gertrude would feel it possible
stay with him there, he cared not whether her aunt mig
like it or not.

"Au revoir—not good-bye—Mr. Rashfellow," said M
Fitzgrace, gracefully enough, as he rose to leave. "We sha
see you on Tuesday." A pressure of Gertrude's hand, wi
a downcast look and a little smile—almost the first he h
received that morning, for the headache had not depart
yet—an assurance from the Senator, that he, too, would b
at the Portage on Tuesday, and Arthur was off.

The ladies betook themselves to their rooms for re
and the Senator shortly after strolled out to see more
the town.

An hour later he was sitting in the smoking room
the Manitoba Club, to which an acquaintance whom he ha
met on the street had taken him. He was ensconced i
an arm chair, while a number of gentlemen sat around i
varied and comfortable attitudes. The Senator had bee
introduced to all present, with the exception of Mr. Graha
the young merchant and imperial federationist of Montrea
whose acquaintance he had formed on the boat, who ha
just lunched at the Club. Mr. Watkins was in his glor

w, as a cigar between thumb and forefinger, and a glass of mpagne beside his elbow, he recounted his impressions he journey so far, and of the road-bed of the C. P. R., far as he had been able to inspect it. Thence the con- sation naturally led to railway matters generally, a ic just then uppermost in Winnipeg. The Provincial vernment was about to commence the construction of Red River Valley railway, its act of incorporation hav- been once disallowed by the Dominion Government.

"And you want the veto power wiped out, eh?" queried Senator.

"Certainly," replied one of the Winnipeg gentlemen, hy should the old man say 'we cannot check Manitoba,' l then disallow our act?"

"As I understand it," rejoined the Senator, "he meant t the central Government could not put an irritating ck rein upon your Legislature, but he did not say they ld go in any direction they pleased without any chance heir act being vetoed. We may have no right to put a el bearing rein upon a horse, but that does not imply t we must toss the reins across his back and give up all trol."

"Too metaphysical, Senator, too metaphysical by half!" orted the champion of provincial rights. "What use aking off the check rein, and then pulling the horse on haunches with a curb-bit?"

Here Mr. Graham quietly interposed. "Both sides are, ink, to a certain extent right. When the horse is well ken to harness he will have all the freedom he requires. kilful driver keeps his horse well in hand until he ows he will go steadily in harness, else he would soon rturn the coach. Forgive me if I say that what you ent Manitobans forget is, that we are not in a one- se conveyance. It is laudable of the young horse to h to pull more than his share of the load; but if he be reined in a little, a catastrophe is inevitable. The man,' as driver, has to take care that the young Mani- an nag does not run away and wreck the turnout. As n as he is sure of you, I predict you will have all the

freedom you require, but the C. P. R. is the waggon-tongue, and the nation's commerce must follow it, and our Provincial horses should pull with and alongside it, and not try to kick it to pieces."

"All very fine, Graham. Of course you want us to always pull in the direction of Montreal. But you may make up your mind that the Manitoba horse is going to run away, if it doesn't get this boundary railway!"

"Well, well," interposed the Senator, "you're going to have another railway to the boundary, and one to Hudson's Bay. What next—what next?"

"Why, haven't you heard, Senator?" replied a young man, with a twinkling eye, who had not before spoken (the men were mostly young), "this year we expect the Red River Valley will be built. Next year the locomotive whistle will be heard at Hudson's Bay. The Winnipeg and Alaska Air Line is next. It is to run from here to the mouth of the Yukon in Alaska, to connect with the Hudson's Bay road in the east, and with St. Petersburg by a transfer ferry across Behring Straits on the west. It is expected to take all the summer travel."

"Shut up; minion of the C. P. R.!" shouted the provincial rights champion, while murmurs of "Put him out the window!" "Strangle him!" and similar murderous threats came from all sides. The Senator looked from one to another in amazement. To him a railway to Alaska seemed no more extravagant an idea than one to Hudson's Bay.

"That's just like you fellows," exclaimed the young offender. "I propose to pour the wealth of the Mackenzie River basin into your laps, metaphorically speaking, and you won't have it, because the line would run north-west instead of somewhere where it would hurt your friends and do you no good."

"And when it was completed, the C. P. R. would swallow it and the Mackenzie River basin, too, at one gulp," retorted one of the others.

The friend who had brought the Senator to the club and put him up as a visiting member having, on the ground

a previous engagement, excused himself and gone away
me time before, Mr. Watkins and Mr. Graham, who were
aying at the same hotel, left the Winnipeggers to finish
eir discussion and departed.

"Are they altogether sane, think you?" asked the
nator, gravely, as they reached the street.

"Oh, yes, for the most part, perfectly level-headed and
earnest. Though there is a good deal of private schem-
g and corruption, the heart of Winnipeg is sound, and
e bulk of her men patriotic. They are mostly young
en, as you have observed, but full of hope and ambition
r their country. Young Canada rules here; they are
und to have this Red River Valley road too, and, I
lieve, will have it. They went through an experience
the time of the "boom," which will, let us hope, keep
em out of wildcat ventures for the future. They have
own wonderful powers of recuperation. You would
arcely credit it, were I to describe to you the saturnalia
hich I witnessed in the winter of '82. Across there,"
id Graham, pointing across the street, as they reached
e hotel, "stood one of the favourite auction rooms, and
other just around the corner, where crowds stood
dding day and night for little 25x100 foot lots they had
t only never seen, but which might be under water half
e year round for aught they knew—bidding, too, for
s a mile out on the prairie, what could not be got for
od lots within Montreal or Toronto. I saw that corner
there," he pointed to a cross street to the west,
nocked down in the auction room across the way for
enty thousand dollars to a man who was soon after-
rds willing to pay thousands to be released from his
gain, and had to purchase immunity by a long and
tly law suit. The worst feature was that the vendors
re a church corporation—a church building stood on the
t when sold. The churches were not above enriching
mselves at the expense of the innocent, and sought to
ke money by the cupidity of others. This hotel was a
thing mass, day and night, of land speculators, while
d offices were erected in the corner of all the public

rooms. It was the same everywhere, and the consumptio of champagne was appalling! But excuse me, if I chang the subject, Senator. I met young Rashfellow here i the thick of it, at that time, and have met him in m periodical trips to the north-west several times since. I he—is there anything between him and the pretty youn lady who is with you?"

"I believe there is some sort of foolish entanglement which her aunt, Mrs. Fitzgrace, is just now anxious t unravel."

"Ah, I see," remarked Mr. Graham, dryly as th Senator, leaving him, ascended the staircase. "But tak care," the young merchant added to himself, "that whil she is unravelling that web with your assistance, you ar not caught in the meshes yourself!" Mr. Graham's in terest in the young pair of lovers had become somewha aroused during the course of the trip up from Ontari Arthur he had known, as he had said, for some years, bu had known little of his history. During the trip he ha noticed many things—for he was an observant, though no impertinent or prying, man—which he thought strange a the moment, and which he now began to understand. H liked the young man, and was taken with the appearanc of the young lady.

Meanwhile Gertrude had kept to her room, racked wit nervous headache. The day of anti-pyrine had not ye come, and her malady had to run its course. She wa wretched, and had not strength even to wish herself bette Towards evening her head throbbed less, and the Senato suggested to her aunt that they should all three go an hear the "Pirates of Penzance" at the Opera House. T this Gertrude merely replied by a shake of the head whe it was mentioned to her, and her aunt did not press her t go, neither would she leave the hotel without her neic so it came to pass that she and the Senator spent th greater part of the evening together in the hotel drawing room. He found her as agreeable as ever, an attentiv listener (a rare and excellent qualification), while what sh said was always sensible and to the point. And then th

t could not be overlooked, especially by one who was nding an evening alone in her company, that she was s a very handsome, a *remarkably* handsome woman, the nator began to think, now that his attention had, as it re, been called to the point.

Next morning being Sunday, the two ladies were orted by Mr. Watkins to the beautiful church of the ly Trinity, where good music and an excellent sermon l a soothing effect upon Gertrude. Her elders had time observe the congregation as well, whom they were a le surprised to find, if anything, better dressed and ter looking than the congregations they were accus- ed to seeing in old Canada.

In the afternoon Mrs. Fitzgrace and Gertrude went to some friends who knew nothing of their coming, but ose address they had obtained from mutual friends at ne, just before leaving. The Senator found the club in a very pleasant afternoon resort.

CHAPTER V.

AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE.

R Arthur Rashfellow, as his train whirled him towards Portage on that Saturday afternoon, could not help ing a sinking of the heart. He hummed a tune at to keep up his courage, but it died away on his lips. n he went into the smoking compartment and tried to rt his mind with a cigar and conversation with some naintances he met, but all to no purpose. Finally he rned to his first seat and remained looking out of the dow until the train reached Portage la Prairie.

This should have been the happiest of days for him, he had he been bringing the girl of his heart as a bride is home. That happiness, he believed, he would now experiencing, were it not for the meddlesome Mrs. grace, who stood in his way, as a marplot for all his

plans. Had he not been constant enough to win the lo
of any girl, and the confidence of any reasonable parent
guardian? Had he not loved her dearly, even from chil
hood up, and would her affection for him, which she h
many and many times expressed, even in words, thou
more often by glances and gentle pressures of the ha
and all the other little signs, which, when spread o
many years, bring certainty of a real affection to the mi
of the recipient; would this affection now turn to indiff
ence? Gertrude was rather a self-contained girl, so
as words were concerned, but this only made her signs
preference the more significant, and then had she not l
ago plighted troth with him? Was she going back, n
that he had prepared a home for her? To be sure it w
not much of a home, and unless her love was warm a
steadfast as he knew his was, her life would be lonely a
dreary—and then he was seized with an ague of doubt a
despondency—what a home, after all, to bring such a ten
flower to! Could he expect her to accept the lot? If s
would but stay though; if love and tender treatm
could make the prairie blossom the year round, and
house a comfortable, or at least an endurable one, wo
he not lavish these upon her without stint or selfishne
So in alternate hope and dread the time passed, until
train pulled up at the Portage.

Arthur had telegraphed his man to meet him. Wh
he got off the train he looked around for his man and
horses in vain. He walked around the station, looked
and down the street, but could see nothing of the missi
Joggins. At last he hailed the driver of the last
which was leaving the station for the town, asking him
he had seen Joggins or his horses, anywhere. The
driver, who was but a lad, broke into a broad grin, nud
a young companion who sat beside him, and pointing w
his whip in the direction of the town, lashed his hor
into the semblance of a trot, Arthur having already
clined a proffered "lift" down town in his conveyance.

Arthur started for town on foot, in hope of meeti
the man on the way. When he reached Saskatchew

Avenue, the principal street of the place, he dropped into the first hotel and enquired whether anything had been seen of Joggins—Yes, the bar-keeper said, he had been in an hour or so ago, and had had a drink, and gone out again. He had caught a glimpse of the horses too, standing outside, smoking as if with fast driving. Then Arthur walked toward the old part of the town, to the east. Passing the brick town hall building, he went on to Main street, and down that principal business thoroughfare of old Portage la Prairie, making for a tavern at which he knew his man sometimes put up when sent by him to town. Here as he turned into the stable yard he received a slight shock—the light "democrat" which he usually drove, which was in fact his only conveyance, excepting a light buckboard and a heavy wagon—the conveyance in which he had hoped to do drive his guests in a day or two out to his farm, with some comfort and a little "style"—stood in the yard among a number of other wagons, carts and buckboards, with very evident signs of recent rough usuage. The dash-board was partly torn off, and two or three spokes of one of the forewheels were badly smashed, the whole wheel being "sprung."

"Yes, pretty badly sprung, ain't it?" said the hostler, as Arthur gave the wheel a shake, "but it ain't a patchin' to the way the man is 'sprung'" he added, as he led the way to the stable, and proceeded to stir a mass of limp humanity, stretched on some straw in one of the stalls, with the toe of his boot. A snort was the only response from this mass, which presently in the dim light began to assume the shape of a man lying face downwards, the garments presenting a familiar appearance to the eyes of Arthur.

"He's been havin' jest a dandy time, you bet," remarked Jim, the hostler, "ever since you ben gone. Joggins is wot you call him, but he ain't been joggin' much since you left, you bet! Jest look at your horses in the next stall, Mister Rashfeller, an' you'll have some idee of the gait he's been goin' at," he added, while Arthur stepped to the double stall, next to that in which the trusted Joggins lay, and took a hasty survey of the pair of horses which he had

formerly taken a pride in driving, but which now showed unmistakable signs of pretty rough usage. One had a cut on his flank, while both were trembling and exhausted, and still hot from recent exercise.

Arthur heaved a sigh as he looked at the horses, and then turned his attention to Joggins, who appeared to be in the condition recognized as a common form of "paralysis," the symptoms of which are usually utter helplessness, accompanied by a very strong smell of Canadian whiskey—symptoms which were both present in this most deplorable case. Jim again stirred his patient with the boot and shook his head solemnly, after the manner of a medical man with a hopeless case. He even played the role so far as to lead the way quietly out of the stable before he again spoke, though there seemed no danger of the patient overhearing, or at any rate apprehending anything which might be said.

"You see," said Jim, "whiskey fetches them English fellows, most every time. No sooner'd you gone to Ontario afore he began comin' into town pretty reg'lar, most every day in fact, sometimes with his missus and sometimes alone, an' always havin' a high ole time afore he left. And from the number o' times I seen that two-gallon jar o' his'n comin' in an' out, I guess he kep' it up pretty well to home, too. And," added Jim, in a stage whisper, "I reckon his wife ain't much behind him. She ain't with him to-day, but I've seen her many a time pretty jolly, too!"

This was painful news to Arthur, who had left this couple in charge of the farm, with full confidence that they were just the people whom he could safely trust to look after the place and keep everything in the best of order. He had known little or nothing about them when they came to him early in the spring, but they were good workers, had no children, seemed to know their place, and soon won their way to his favor, in so much that, as has been already said, he left the farm in their charge when he went east, after seeding time, with the fullest confidence that all would be well. He had never seen the man

the worse of liquor but once, and then he had been so ashamed of himself afterwards when taxed with it, that Arthur felt safe from a repetition of this lapse for the future, while the wife, though he had known her take a glass in time of supposed sickness, he by no means suspected of being addicted to intemperate habits.

His worst fears were soon to be realized. After obtaining a hired conveyance from a neighboring livery, and having had his horses fed and rubbed down by Jim, with the latter's assistance he managed to get Joggins, who had had time to sleep himself half sober, to his feet and into the conveyance. He would have abandoned him on the spot, but for the sake of the man's wife, who he knew must be at home. Then taking up the reins, he rewarded Jim with a half-dollar, and set out upon his seven mile drive in no pleasurable frame of mind. He had put Joggins in the back seat of the conveyance that he might escape the fumes of stale whiskey with which the man was reeking, and, himself in the front seat, they started amidst the laughter of the stragglers about the hotel and stable yard; and those of his acquaintance whom he encountered on the road only added fuel to the flame now raging within him, by broad smiles and in many cases jests which seemed to him exceedingly coarse and out of place: "Who's your passenger—a guest from Ontario?" demanded one, while the next shouted: "Drive easy, Rash—the gentleman's asleep!"

It was about half-past seven as he approached his house. If his reflections on board the train had not been altogether comforting, they were much less so during this drive homeward on this quiet July evening. Mingled feelings of wrath at his besotted companion and fears for the state of things which he might find at home filled his mind for the time being, to the exclusion pretty much of all else, though occasionally his thoughts would wander off to Gertrude, until a snore from Joggins would arouse him from his reverie. The sun was setting as he first discerned his house across the prairie, and at the same moment his quick eye detected some dark objects moving in the yellow

field of favorite wheat he had mentioned to Gertrude o board the steamer. What could they be? He urge forward the horses, one of which showed signs of lamenes and both of fatigue, as they moved along the trail. A fe minutes and his fears were confirmed. It was a herd o cattle in his wheat! He turned to the man behind, wh was slowly regaining his senses and demanded an explana tion, but none was forthcoming and he again urged for ward his horses. A couple of miles had yet to be mad and quickly they sped along until at length he drew rei at the edge of the broad wheat-field wherein half a doze head of cattle—his own—were enjoying themselves, som feeding, others lying down quietly, while their marks an trails were everywhere. He jumped out, and Joggins, wh had now regained his senses, followed him, glad of th opportunity to have attention diverted from himself They rushed in and drove the cattle out and along th trail, until they reached a large field enclosed by a wir fence into which they turned them.

Arthur returned for his horses and took them to th stable and put them up himself, not trusting to Joggin who merely lent a hand in unharnessing. Then he pro ceeded to the house, Joggins following shortly after. As Arthur entered the door of his dwelling he called "Betsy," —the household name of Mrs. Joggins—but received n reply. He had entered by the kitchen door, expecting t find her employed there, but the fire was out, and s apparently was Betsy. He passed by into his sitting-room, his favorite and chief living-room in the house, where he ate, smoked, read, and in fact spent most of his indoor hours when at home. It had many easy chairs, and a large and very comfortable sofa, or rather a broad, flat lounge, and on this lay the woman slumbering, her hair and clothes in disorder, while his best pair of decanters empty, and a tumbler on the table beside her, told the tale of how her afternoon had been spent. The room was in great disorder. The presence of Joggins' working boots, hat and clothes in prominent positions about the room, showed that it had been appropriated and used by the

servants as their living room also in his absence. What attracted Arthur's attention above everything, however, was a medium sized box, which he recognized as belonging to Mrs. Joggins and which stood open in the middle of the room and in which seemed to be stowed in some confusion the most valuable articles he had in the house, cutlery, silver spoons, some old vases and mantel ornaments, a quantity of linen, silver candlesticks, a pair of revolvers, and many other small valuables.

Arthur went out and brought Joggins into the room. He glanced at his wife uneasily, and when his eye lighted on the box, he gave a start.

"Wake up that woman," said Arthur, who had scarcely spoken a word since he had left the Portage. Joggins obeyed, and gave his wife a rough shaking. She sat up, rubbed her eyes with her knuckles and took a look round. Her eyes usually leaden in hue, were bloodshot, her cheeks flushed. She had been a good looking woman enough, but but there was a coarseness about the mouth always, and her recent debauch had brought out all her coarseness and given her a sodden and uncanny appearance, which to Arthur was very repulsive.

"Mercy on me, but it's master," she exclaimed as she threw her feet on the ground and began to smooth her hair with the palms of her hands.

"Who let the cattle into the wheat and what does this mean?" demanded Arthur, pointing to the box.

The woman answered the first part of the question first. This gave her time to prepare a reply to the latter part. Had Arthur been a lawyer, probably he would have put the last query and insisted on an answer to it first.

"The cattle—in the wheat," she said slowly, as she went to the window and looked out in the direction of the wheat field, "well I declare to goodness; they boys is so careless—Joe," referring to a small boy who sometimes acted as herdsman for Rashfellow, and lived with his parents some little distance away, "Joe brought 'em 'ome hours agone, 'ee must a' left t' paddock gate open," she said,

and as her eye met Arthur's which now rested on the box, she continued: "we was frightened by a tramp a few days agone an' as John were agone to town, an' so of'en away, d'ye see, I thought as 'ow I'd put them things away safely till wanted. We know'd nowt about your comin' to-day, sir." This was true, as Arthur's telegram had not been sent out to the farm, and when the telegraph agent saw Joggins in town, he at once concluded that he was not in a condition to comprehend its meaning and so it had lain in the office.

"And what brought you to town, Joggins?" Arthur demanded, turning fiercely to the man, who stood sullenly looking at his wife. The man made no answer, and Arthur, whose wrath had now been pent up for hours, turned upon both as he said, "I don't believe a word of this! You intended to rob me, but your drunkenness has over-reached you! You can take yourselves off as fast as you like. Stay a moment," he added, "I owe you a month's wages I believe, and though you don't deserve it, I'll pay you up and then you can go, or if you prefer to wait till the horses are fed I'll drive you to town myself." As he spoke he handed the man the money.

The man looked sullen, but the woman grew defiant. "Rob, did you say! Have a care, Master Rashfell'. Ye've no call to treat us like this. We've bin faithful servants, and we'll have the law o' ye."

"Shall I harness the horses or will you walk?" was Arthur's only response to this, as he turned to the man.

"Naw," replied John. "We came afoot an' we'll go the same way, if so be as you've turned us hout?"

"All right, pack your traps and I'll take them to town to-morrow or Monday, if that will do?"

"Monday 'll be time enough. We wouldn't know where to put 'em to-morrow. Come along, Betsy, don't 'ee be danglin' here no longer. We'll go where we'll be treated like 'uman bein's. Not like dogs by an upstart master!" with which parting shot Joggins strode out of the door, shortly after followed by his wife with a small bundle, their boxes having meantime been hastily packed and

cked by her, under Arthur's eye, after all his valuables d been removed from her chest.

Arthur again went out and took a hasty survey of the ace. Everywhere signs of carelessness and inattention the part of his servants appeared. A garden full of eeds, a dirty stable, filth piled up even at the kitchen oor, everything his eyes rested on told the same tale. He ould have returned to the house utterly disheartened and litary, but that his setter, Sport, came out of some hid- g place apparently, and trotting up to him rubbed a cold se against his hand, just as he was re-entering the house. idently the poor brute had not been well treated in his sence.

"Well, Sport, old boy, come in and keep me company. hank goodness they haven't killed you."

Sport wagged his tail and looked up joyfully at his aster, and together they entered the house. Fortunately ll thought of hunger was driven from the master's mind, hough he looked up some scraps for the dog, which the tter devoured voraciously.

Next morning, though Sunday, Arthur drove into wn, after breakfasting off of some eggs, which he boiled, nd a fragment of bread, which he found in the kitchen. e must have some new "help," now that his guests were oming, and to Jim, the hostler, he went and told his story. im scratched his head a moment, and then informed him hat his wife's sister and her husband were just arrived rom the east, and he would see whether they would be illing to go to him for a few days. This, the newly- rrived couple, on the state of matters being explained to hem, agreed to do, and towards evening Arthur again set ut for home, with the young man and woman, a capable- ooking, lately-married couple from Ontario in the back eat, with their trunk behind them.

Passing along the trail, within a mile or so of home, rthur thought he detected a man and woman sitting be- ind a bit of scrub or bush in a coulé which they passed. "Can that be the Joggins'?" he said to himself. "What re they doing here? I gave him money enough to pay

their way for a few days in town." Then he remembere that he had neither seen nor heard anything of them the Portage.

The young man and woman turned out to be capit workers. The latter undertook to put the house in ord for the expected guests, while Arthur and Tom, the ma set to work outside next morning with such a hearty wi that by evening they had completely changed the face things about the house and buildings. The vegetab garden was hoed and weeded and raked until it looke quite neat. A few flower beds in front of the house we gone over in the same way, and a few geraniums an verbenas in bloom, which Arthur had managed to borro in the town and bring out in pots the day before, we sunk in these beds, and these, with what remained of bloom ing flowers wh ch were there before, made them look quit gay. The grass was cut and made to look as trim as i rank and parched condition would permit. The kitche and stable yards, too, received much-needed attentio Jemima, meanwhile, was airing linen for the beds, swee ing, dusting, scrubbing and, in fact, putting the hous through the process known as "house cleaning," with grea dispatch.

CHAPTER VI.

PRAIRIE COTTAGE.

"THERE," exclaimed Arthur, pointing with his whip toward the horizon, "do you see that speck in the distance, Gertie That's 'Prairie Cottage,' as I call my manor house. It not much of a house or I'd give it a higher sounding titl I'd like to change it's name to 'Gertrude's Bower,'" h added in a lower tone. He was driving his three guest along the trail between the Portage and his farm, on th Tuesday afternoon. It was a lovely afternoon, and as th sun sank towards the western horizon, bringing out th varied hues of the ocean of waving crops and prairi

grasses around them, his spirits rose. Gertrude, who sat beside him in front, seemed to be enjoying the scene, while behind Mrs. Fitzgrace and the Senator were chatting and laughing, apparently in high good humor. One valise for the ladies, and the Senator's travelling bag were the only luggage encumbering them, as Arthur had some difficulty in persuading them to come out even for one night, the elders exhibiting at the station a preference for the town and the comforts of the best hotel, of which, doubtless, they had been informed at Winnipeg fully, so they brought only such necessaries as a very brief visit demanded, leaving their heavier luggage at the station.

"I can't see the house yet," said Gertrude. "My eyes are not as used to it as yours. How like an ocean it does seem, and how varied and beautiful the tints—yellow, dark green, light green,—and see the effect of that little cloud as its shadow sails over the green and turns it almost to blue!"

Arthur was too delighted at seeing her enjoy the scene to break the spell by his common-place speech.

"But are there no orchards—no fruit?" Arthur winced a little.

"Orchards are something we have to do without as yet. It is thought, however, that the hardier varieties of fruit—the Russian apples and other fruit will do well here," he added hopefully.

"The prairie is very beautiful to-day," said the girl. "Oh, see those dear little flowers! You must get me some—what are they?" she exclaimed.

"Just common prairie flowers, such as you will walk on every time you take a tramp across country." He jumped out as he spoke, handing her the reins, and plucking a handful of flowers, returned with them in a few minutes, casting them in her lap. He ran out again for more, and performed the same service for Mrs. Fitzgrace.

"How sweet they look," said Gertrude, gathering the flowers together and fastening them at her waist.

"Did I not hear you say you have had trouble with your servants, Mr. Rashfellow?" asked Mrs. Fitzgrace,

whose quick ear had taken in most of what was being said in front, even while she listened smilingly to the Senator's rounded periods.

"I should rather think I had," he replied. "I packed them off for drunkenness and attempted thieving, as soon as I reached home. They were a bad pair, so I have since heard from many in the town. I was told to-day that the man is supposed to have left England under a cloud, that he is suspected of having been a criminal of some sort. I took them without characters, and certainly have'n't any to give them. I thought I saw them lurking in that coulé over there yesterday, and have heard nothing of their having since been seen in town. I took their traps in on Sunday and left them at the tavern, which was their chief resort, as they desired, and the things are there yet. I'm afraid they're up to no good—or more likely are finishing their drunken bout, Indian fashion, on the prairie, though I haven't seen them to-day, and where they've got their whiskey hid is a mystery."

"Most probably they took a bottle or two with them when they left you," suggested Mrs. Fitzgrace.

"Perhaps so—or they may have had some in the stable, and come back for it at night."

The Senator meanwhile had been cultivating his habits of observation.

"The crops seem good," he said, "and the buildings better than I expected."

"They are much better on the other trail," answered Arthur. "You know this is the best land in the north-west, and the farms in the direction I speak of would remind you of dear old Ontario. Some of them have been under cultivation twenty or thirty years without any fertilizing, and seem to do better and better."

"We passed a land transfer system for the territories. I wonder how it works."

"We have it here, too," said Arthur, "and I hold a 'Torrens' deed which I would'n't change for a farm double the size of mine under the old system," said Arthur, enthusiastically. "A friend of mine in Winnipeg persuaded

he to take it out, and now I can start for the ends of the earth without fear of lawyer's bills following me if I choose to sell—but here we are," he added, as he turned from the road into a side trail, leading through a field of ripening oats towards the house, which stood on a slightly rising site in a space surrounded by a few of the poplars of the country, which Arthur had nursed and encouraged with ceaseless care. "Prairie Cottage" was an unpretentious frame structure, a story and a half high, that is to say, the front showed one clear story, with a steep roof reaching up to the ridge, which ran from end to end of the building, affording space at either gable end for windows to light the upper rooms. A stout verandah running across the front of the house, consisting simply of floor, uprights and slanting roof, seemed strong enough to withstand the wildest gales to which it might be exposed. The two front windows looked out upon it, and the front door, from which the storm door had been removed, to make room for a mosquito sash, opened upon the centre of this rough piazza. Arthur had taken care to have a few verandah chairs and a rug or two placed invitingly upon it, while Sport, ensconced upon one of the latter gave a homelike appearance to the whole. The plot of ground in which the house stood had been furbished up to look its best, and the geraniums and verbenas and other flowers served to brighten the somewhat faded grass. A flagpole, rather short and thin, but as good as the neighborhood afforded, stood in the centre of the plot, and at its top a simple St. George's cross of red and white cotton stood out bravely in the breeze. This last, which was Arthur's latest achievement in honor of the occasion, had caught the eye of the visitors a good way off; but they had said nothing, the Senator preferring always, where possible, to trust to his own observation and trace effect to its original cause for himself, while the ladies were probably in doubt as to whether it might not be a forgotten fragment of the bachelor washing, and so waited until a nearer approach revealed its complimentary character, causing Gertrude to cry out and clap her hands gleefully. Arthur had been

afraid of his life up to this moment to look at her as h nt n
approached his home, but now he turned on her a moisten ished
eye of gratitude and love, which would have touched caus
much less tender heart than that of the young lady besid en p
him. The trail or road by which they approached th g do
house took a sweep to the right of the cottage and at th eling
first turn Arthur drew up, preferring that his guests shoul ough
alight there rather than that they should be dropped at th bseq
end of the verandah or the kitchen door behind, th As
ordinary modes of entrance to the house, according to th thei
station of the visitor. He preferred that on this occasio ve se
they should approach his house from the front in prope me t
state. As he jumped to the ground with the reins in hand nflic
he turned to assist Gertrude to alight, forgetting the aun use
for a moment in the agitation at receiving his lady-love a er ey
his own home. The Senator was out in a trice, howeve bluff
and made up for the younger man's delinquency by assist ere t
ing Mrs. Fitzgrace to the ground with safety and a dignit e.
which said as much for his muscle as for his gallantry—fo re?
the carriage was a high one. as or

"I must make some steps here," said Arthur, as he hande side
the reins to Tom, who had now appeared. and led the guest upp
across his lawn to the house, where he placed th ould,
ladies in charge of Jemima, who conducted them to one o he sp
the two apartments into which the house was divided ith n
upstairs by a small hallway. This latter was lit only by the om v
door-ways on either side when open by day and by a er au
bracket lamp by night. He himself took the Senator to ass a
the other apartment opposite that of the ladies'. The latter ough
was a cheerful and well aired, though plainly furnished ertru
room, containing, however, two beds, and that most neces- r ni
sary article to a lady, a good glass. A few flowers, a atchi
colored rug or two, an embroidered table cover, a few r.
bright panels and placques on the walls, showed that d fr
Arthur's care had not been altogether confined to outside tter
ornamentation. Jemima explained that the ladies were atch
welcome to occupy Mr. Rashfellow's room, which was below ough
stairs and smaller, if they preferred it. Both ladies de- eur,
cided promptly in favor of the room they were in—the

nt not desiring to disturb existing arrangements, as she shed to make their stay as brief as possible—Gertrude, cause the room showed signs, she thought, of having en prepared for her—and both having the fear of sleep- g downstairs in a house where all the men are aloft—a eling common to most ladies under similar circumstances, ough in some instances an unfortunate preference, as bsequent events showed.

As Gertrude stood looking out of the solitary window their apartment toward the setting sun, a feeling of e seemed to steal over her. The sublimity, and at the me time the dreariness of the prospect, filled her with nflicting emotions. The sparse poplar trees about the use in no way obscured the view from this window. er eyes swept at a glance the boundless plain. A single bluff" or bit of bush and a couple of distant farm houses ere the only objects to break the monotony or to suggest fe. Was this a vision of her future life should she remain re? All was bright, 'twas true, but oh, so lonely! It as one thing to drive over the plain through waving fields, side a gay companion, and another to look alone through upper window at the prospect. The loved companion ould, she remembered, be always with her—always? he spirit of the vast plain seemed to answer her thought ith mocking, and then the great red sun began to sink om view. She turned from the window with a sigh. er aunt had been quietly brushing her hair before the ass and endeavoring to read through the mirror her niece's oughts. She deemed it best to keep silence until ertrude should first speak. She had real affection for r niece. Throughout this trip she had, though ever atchful, been kind and considerate in her manner to r. She had forborne from crossing her in small matters d from setting her will in opposition to the girl's. The tter knew her opinion and that was enough. She atched and waited the course of events, ever ready ough to take advantage of any circumstance, should it cur, which would enable her to further her niece's wel- re. That rescuing her from her present position with

its impending dangers would be promoting her welfare best, she never for an instant doubted. But how that rescue was to be brought about she could not at present foresee. She must watch and wait, as heretofore, for the present. She kissed the girl, in whose eye a tear glistened, but said not a word, and together a few minutes after they went down stairs.

The evening was not a specially bright nor a particularly unhappy one. The Senator was the only one of the party who was in a perfectly contented frame of mind. He seemed to have taken a fresh lease of life, in some way, at Winnipeg, and since leaving there his spirits had continued to rise, until now he seemed the life and soul of the party at the combination of dinner and tea—Jemima termed it supper—to which they sat down. He recounted to his young host his Winnipeg experiences—most of them at least—including what he had heard and seen at the club. He commented on the fine physique of the men, ascribing it in part to the climate and in part to the fresh hope and vigor which a new life in a new country inspired. He even criticized the ladies. The younger ones exhibited the same freshness and vigor as the men, but those in middle life, he thought, lacked the charm, the softness of manner, if he might so term it, of their sisters in the older provinces. The Senator became just a trifle confused here, but Mrs. Fitzgrace helped him out with a smile, and he continued to sail along without further mishap during the meal and during the balance of the evening which was spent by the party on the verandah. Arthur was too obviously nervous and fidgety for sustained conversation —even were his conversational powers equal at any time to the task. Mrs. Fitzgrace was outwardly serene but inwardly anxious. Gertrude was quiet and subdued. Arthur made an ineffectual attempt to detach the party into pairs. He had, however, made the strategical blunder of taking the whole party directly they rose from the table out to his garden, so that he could not make that resort an excuse for another excursion thither with Gertrude alone. He could not offer to take her to the stable

A walk down the road which they had so recently driven up seemed superfluous, but as his other resources were exhausted, he ventured to mildly suggest it. Mrs. Fitzgrace said she thought Gertrude must be very tired. Gertrude did not deny it and remained seated. Arthur, in his new role of host, could not rise and exhibit alacrity to leave his elder guests by themselves, though to be sure the Senator made no signs of protest. Every avenue seemed closed. Arthur was not an inventive genius or it might have occurred to him to offer to show the young lady something deeply interesting indoors, but it did not strike him that there was anything deeply interesting for him to show, or if there was, perhaps, he thought Mrs. Fitzgrace would desire to see it, too. So he decided to make the best of matters and wait the course of events until the morrow if need be. At length, as darkness closed in Mrs. Fitzgrace asked her neice if she was tired enough for bed. "Yes, aunt," was the quiet response, and the ladies rose to retire. Refreshments were proffered and declined with thanks, and a moment later the ladies were gone, and Arthur remained harassed by doubts as to the impression his surroundings—his home environment—had made upon the girl he loved. The Senator and he passed a half hour over their cigars, and then the former expressing also a desire for rest, Arthur escorted him upstairs to his chamber. As he descended the young host felt that, but for the snores which were proceeding in alternate cadences, —like antiphonal chanting—from two pairs of lungs in the chamber over the kitchen, where Tom and Jemima were sleeping, the house would be as noiseless and lonely as on the last night he spent alone there, after the dismissal of Joggins and his wife. He went to bed, but sleep mocked him. Anxiety as to his impending fate seemed to drive out all thought of rest. But he had had a long day commencing at daylight with preparations for his guests' arrival, and a troubled sleep at length fell upon him. He dreamed of Gertrude, of her aunt, and of the Senator. He thought the latter was driving the girl off over the prairie, leaving him alone with the aunt, whose brow darkened

and face became distorted into frightful shapes. Then sh
too sailed off over the plain. Next Tom and Jemima ap
peared with Joggins and his wife in hot pursuit, and h
alone was left. At length he fell into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER VII.

A NIGHT ON THE PRAIRIE.

ARTHUR must have slept for some two hours or mo
when a growl from Sport, lying under the bed, caused hi
to partially open his eyes. The day seemed to be dawnin
as it appeared light without. He closed his eyes agai
when a peculiar crackling sound attracted his attention an
a loud bark from the dog brought him out of bed and t
the window. The house was on fire!! He saw the flame
leaping around the corner of the house near which th
kitchen joined it, while a great lurid light told him th
the kitchen itself must be in flames. Cries from the upp
portion of this wing told the same tale. His own room w
fast filling with smoke. In an instant he had donned suc
garments as he could snatch and rushed from his room in o
of the front corners of the house to the hall, to which, to h
horror, he saw that the flames had gained access from the re
and already encircled the stairs. Back to his room he darte
—not daring to open the front door for fear of causing
fresh draught. Slamming his own door behind him he w
out of the window in an instant, intent only on one object
to gain access to the ladies' sleeping-room above, from whic
the flames had now cut off access from within. He kne
just where his only ladder stood against the stable whe
he had seen Tom place it that morning. Oh, so far the fe
yards seemed, as he sped over the ground and grasped th
ladder, swinging it from its resting-place and carrying
almost upright towards the house. As he passed t
kitchen he saw the figure of Tom half out of the upp
window, his screaming wife behind him. He had only ti

cry: "Drop from the window for your lives! It's only ew feet!" for the kitchen was lower than the main build- g. "Gertrude!" he cried wildly, as he stumbled along th the weight of the ladder before him. He dropped it ainst the house, under the upper window, which it failed reach by some feet. He clambered up. Mrs. Fitzgrace d already raised the window to its full height. "She is zed by the smoke and fainting," she said, pointing into e room with one hand, while she held the sash with the her.

"Quick—descend," he cried. He leaped into the room d Mrs. Fitzgrace made her exit as best she might and od upon the ladder ready to carry her neice to the ound. "No, no," cried Arthur, "leave her to me!" Seizing e sash with a wrench he pulled it from its place and it l crashing on the floor. He seized the now prostrate rm of the fainting girl and almost choked with e smoke, bore her to the window through which he utiously made his way, just as her aunt reached e ground. The fragile form seemed limp and life- s in his arms. Merciful heavens, what if she be ad! He almost fell with his burden at the thought, en steadying himself with a great effort descended cauti- sly and laid the girl on the grass at her aunt's feet. The ter and Jemima, who had dropped unhurt from her ndow, now knelt beside her, while Tom assisted Arthur transfer the ladder to the other side of the house, to ch the Senator's window. Fortunately for him, Mr. atkins' side of the house was the last which the flames tacked, and as Arthur and Tom came round the corner th the ladder the Senator was seated on his window lge apparently measuring the distance to the ground th his eye, before venturing on a fall. His travelling g and some garments were already tossed upon the grass.

"Mrs. Fitzgrace!" he shouted.

"Safe with all the others."

As they placed the ladder for him the flames leapt und and up the side of the house and over the of.

"Oh! my notebook!" sighed the Senator as he reach
the ground, remembering that he had left in on the ta
above.

The flames now leapt and played with the boards a
rafters of the house as though they were but pasteboa
A stiff breeze was blowing, whirling sparks and cinders
all directions, but chiefly towards the stable. In its r
many holes were already being burnt. Quickly the l
der was transferred to the stable. Arthur armed hims
with a pail of water and climbed the ladder, while T
went in and loosing the affrighted horses with some lit
difficulty got them out. It was too late to save the sta
however. It was not a large building, and barns the
were none. From his elevation on the ladder, Arthur s
that a greater danger was impending. Here and the
burning pieces of wood were settling on the ground. A
ready the flames about the house had driven the wom
to the garden where, Gertrude now revived, they stood
the safety its surface, free from grass and other d
material, afforded. But the flames were now licking
the short grass about the house, eating their way in the di
ection the wind blew. The flying cinders were carrying da
ger everywhere in that direction. The weather had been d
and the grass everywhere inflammable. Many of the cro
were fast ripening and could not probably withstand t
flames. Unless checked at once a flood of fire would
let loose upon the country, whose extent no man could te
Arthur rushed into the burning stable, seized some emp
bags, and arming himself and the other men with the
he sent Tom forward to beat out incipient fire wherever
could find it, while the Senator and he attacked the advan
ing flames in the grass about the house. It was a stubbo
fight. Arthur rushed along the line of fire beating
vigorously at every step. The Senator too showed wonder
activity for a man of his years, as he plied his sack in t
face of the advancing foe. The fire continued to ga
slowly at first but gathering force as it advanced. A bro
piece of uncultivated prairie land covered with tall gr
parched by drought, stood not far off in rear of the hou

the flames got into this Arthur knew but too well that thing could withstand them. The garden formed an stacle to their advance on the one hand and a small field turnips at some distance off on the other. Between these o oases the two men worked with a will. But, as has n said, the fire was gaining on then. Had the season n more advanced it would possibly ere this have been ing over the plain. Just as Arthur was beginning to de- ir of stemming the tide, Providence came to their aid. The ht was dark and a stiff breeze, as has been said, had n blowing. This had suddenly died away and a cloud inky blackness stood over them. A vivid flash and almost simultaneous crash was immediately followed by ownpour of drenching rain which drowned the greedy nes as effectually as though a tidal wave had struck m. Only some smouldering embers of the burned build- s remained alive and these had not long to live. The men de their way to the garden, Arthur guiding by shouts others through the drenching storm, and here he soon nd the three women gathered in a root-house or cellar, ere the vegetables were kept. Soon all were within welcome shelter, though no one could see another. trude's voice guided Arthur to her and placing his arm ut her he pressed her to his bosom and kissed her lips. she returned the kiss. He quickly released her however e was drenched with wet and felt her shiver. Neither hem spoke—they were too full of emotion at present n for that.

As the Senator stumbled into the root-house he asked he darkness, "Caroline, are you safe?" and the darkness wered, "Yes, Ezra, perfectly safe." The two christian es uttered apparently in the voices of the Senator and Fitzgrace attracted the attention even of the agitated ng couple standing near. Sudden dangers shared in mon often create sudden intimacies, but "Caroline" "Ezra" on the lips of the Senator and Mrs. Fitzgrace oked passing wonder even in the bewildered mind of trude.

"I'm drenched through," exclaimed Mr. Watkins.

An exclamation of "Oh, you drowned rat!" from Jemima seemed naturally directed at the Senator, until certain osculatory sounds and the voice of Tom remarking, 'It is wet, you bet!" told of the reunion of the only married couple of the party, and that her exclamation had been called forth by the pressure of his dripping arms.

"There are some boxes here," said Arthur, "on which the ladies can sit," and he felt about until he had secured one each for Mrs. Fitzgrace and Gertrude—while Tom found one also for his wife.

"Have you any idea how this dreadful fire started, Mr. Rashfellow," asked Mrs. Fitzgrace in her clear voice.

"Was there fire in the kitchen when you went to bed, Jemima?" Arthur asked in turn.

"A littler fire in the stove, but I closed the dampers and it seemed all safe," the woman answered.

"Then I fear the house must have been set on fire—I thought I don't know who would be capable of such a diabolical act. That fellow Joggins is the only person I can think of, and I can't think what object he could have unless revenge, and if that were it, to set the stable on fire would have been sufficient, one would think—unless he were maddened by drink. If there were anyone about I should have expected my dog to have spoken sooner."

"Might he not have recognized by some of the senses so keen in a setter those familiar to the place and so lately belonging to it, even at night."

"Possibly—I think the fire must have started near the junction of the house and kitchen. A table stands inside near there. Was there a lamp in the kitchen, Tom?"

"We left a lamp on the table, but it was put out."

Further discussion as to the cause of the fire ceased. Arthur seated himself on the edge of the box beside Gertrude and drew her hand within his and silence reigned for some moments. Mrs. Fitzgrace's voice again pierced the darkness.

"Had you any insurance?" she asked.

"Not a dollar," Arthur answered in a woe-begone voice.

"Very improvident—very," remarked the Senator. A
e sympathetic pressure from Gertrude's hand was the
r fellow's only comfort now. There was a long pause,
he end of which Mrs. Fitzgrace said, "How close and
fy this place is becoming."
"Tom," said Arthur, "you're nearest the door, open it
oment"
They knew not whether the rain had ceased or not.
y had shut the door and sealed themselves as securely
ardines in a box. A huge mound of earth covered
r cavern on top and sides. Tom felt about for the door,
ed it open, and let in the light of day!
It was rather a motley group which emerged from that
house into the light. Gertrude and her aunt fortun-
y had wraps, which they had thrown about them at
first alarm. Jemima had a shawl and petticoat over
night dress. Tom and Arthur were in their shirt
es. The former had no boots, while Arthur had only
r of wigwam slippers into which he had thrust his
s he was quitting his room. The Senator presented
very dignified appearance as he emerged. He had
ime to don a waistcoat, one flap buttoned two holes
y its fellow, and put on boots, and had thrown his
nd bag out of the window, but had omitted fastening
uspenders in his haste, and these now dangled at his
His jaunty travelling cap rather added to the
atorial aspect of his costume. It was difficult for
a Senator of the Dominion to emerge from a root
into the broad daylight, in this guise, with becoming
y.
considerable number of farmers, attracted and alarmed
e sight of the fire, which must have been plainly
e for many miles around, had gathered about the
The whole party was quickly taken charge of by a
English friend of Arthur's and driven to his farm, a
iles distant, as fast as a fleet pair of horses could
them. The Senator had meantime recovered his
oaking wet, and travelling bag, which lay on the
nt portion of the grass below the window. These

and Sport, with the horses, were all, save themsel
which had escaped from the burning buildings, now ly
in smoking ruins.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RETURN.

"YES, Gertie, the fates are against me. I have nothin
hope for, nothing to look forward to, apart from
dearest. And now if you cast me off, everything w
living for will be blotted out! Think of the years I
toiled and waited—of the cup of joy to be snatched f
my lips, this time you would say forever! Oh Gert
have been imprudent, mad—whatever you care to
me—but I love you so dearly!" and the young man hi
face in his hands.

She stifled an inclination to burst into tears and
her head up bravely. "I do not reproach you, Ar
dear, how could I? You have been all in all to me, Ar
as you say I—have been to you—"

"I did not say, 'have been,' Gertie. I say you *a*
in all to me!" cried the young man passionately.

"Listen, Arthur dear, you say the Fates are ag
you. Say rather that an all-wise Providence ordains
you and I should live—apart. It is neither your
nor mine, that this should be so. But is it not inevi
that so it must be?"

"No! a thousand times no, my darling Gertie!"
young man almost shouted. Then checking himself he
plaintively "give me but another trial. Do not cut
from hope forever. I know I have been foolish, rash
prudent—everything that you can charge in that way.
was worse than folly in me to neglect the ordinary
caution of prudent people, to insure my property,
never thought——"

"Hush, Arthur—dear Arthur—I will hear no m
that. If sudden prosperity be your portion in the f

would not have you think my love depends on *that*—I ve loved you—I shall always love you, dearest Arthur," e with difficulty repressed a sob. Then added with ecision, "but I am unwilling that you shall in future be rdened by one so unfitted by training and in every her way to be a farmer's wife as myself, and I do not nt to see you give up the life which suits you and in hich you have been successful. Some other than I would a help and comfort to you in more ways than I with town training could ever pretend to be. I—I—shall ver—marry. I can promise you that," she said smiling ly. "The time is coming when my father will need me home more than now. My mother is not strong and I r may not live many years. Aunt Caroline cannot be sidered a fixture there,"—she had reasons which she not mention for thinking this. Arthur thought the ner she ceased to be a fixture the better—"and what ld poor papa do without me?"

"You are determined to throw me over, Gertie! Would eaven I could persuade you to stay here. I know that ld be unreasonable to expect. If I continue my farm- I must be near my farm, and I could not ask you to as I may have to live for some months. When I am my feet once more and have a home to offer you it ht be otherwise. But if farming life is distasteful to I'll sell my farm and try my hand at something else. o anywhere, do anything, if only you'll go with me or ise to, after a time—I'd go back to Toronto if I thought e was the slightest opening for me there."

You have made a success of farming, Arthur. Do not it up. Believe me, what I say I'm sure is for the "

What is success to me if you do not share it? I shall my farm and go further West and try my luck. If I e a great strike, perhaps you wont object to my com- back to try my luck with you again. If I don't do hing much, it won't matter, I can perhaps get into a try where there is plenty of hunting and fishing—I as well die among the Indians as elsewhere."

"Arthur, you are cruel me to me now."

"No more so than you to me; since you are going o this afternoon, abandoning me without hope for the future I have admitted I cannot well press you to stay now. Bu for that disastrous fire, I hope you would have stayed. brought you up here into danger, and gave you a frigh which I believe is turning your heart against me. Than God I managed to rescue you from a fearful death. Had not, I think I should have thrown myself in the flames well."

"How can I ever forget your noble conduct, Arthu dear. You know I never shall. It is to save you fro having such an incubus as I was that night perpetuall weighing you down, that I say what I do. I believe I a right. I shall never cease to—to think of you, and sha pray for your welfare always."

"I see you are bound to give me up, so I had better at once!" and the young man seized his hat and made f the door. There he turned and came back for a moment.

"Gertie," he said, quietly, "I shall not see you ag alone. I shall go away too. If I am successful I shall co for you again. If I die in the desert you may never kn it. Good bye," he took her in his arms and pressed lips to hers. She made no resistance. And so they part

She stood for some time looking out of the wind down the broad and then straggling street in Portage Prairie known as Saskatchewan Avenue. They had b driven into the Portage the day before, leaving the frien shelter afforded by Arthur's friends and neighbors, Brown and his wife, a hospitable young English cou who made their stay as pleasant as circumstances wo allow, during the few hours they remained with them a the fire. The Browns had pressed them to stay lon but they were now in need of the trunks they had lef the station, and besides that, Mrs. Fitzgrace was anxiou get Gertrude out of the neighborhood and on her way h as soon as possible. The girl had received a shock from events of the fire which had given her a horror of the of the late lamented prairie cottage, and her aunt thoug

ell to take advantage of her present feeling to carry her
me again. On that evening Gertrude informed her aunt
her intentions with regard to Arthur, and, having in-
lged in some further confidences, Mrs. Fitzgrace went to
ep with a feeling of security as to her niece, which she
d not felt for some time before—which led her to afford
rtrude and Arthur the opportunity of spending some time
ne together to-day in the parlor of this best of Portage
tels, though she did not delay preparations for their
mediate departure.

Those readers who have perused these pages thus far,
ecially if they be of the fair sex, will have no doubt
gun to think that this girl was a selfish, heartless, conceited
mby pamby creature, too selfish to share the burdens of
e man she said she loved, too heartless to remember his
stancy and all that he had done for her, including the
ing of her life, too conceited to become a plain farmer's
e, and too namby pamby to have any patience with!
t she was not, and if the gentle lady reader will but put
self in her place she will begin to perceive that, although
had as yet developed no title to be considered a true
oine, she merely shared the weaknesses common to a
y great many of her sisters the world over.

In the first place she had been constant to this young
n for a very long time. She had lost other suitors by
or she held herself as "engaged," and many of her male
uaintances knew it. Then she had been already many
es disappointed in him and in his power to provide for
and the latter point was more or less still in doubt.
knew herself, too, to be not very strong physically,
utterly ignorant of the duties of a farmer's wife. She
ainly dreaded the loneliness of the life in store for her,
Arthur would have been an entertaining and absorb-
husband indeed, should she not realize some of her
ad in this respect. Her home comforts, her mother's
ealth, the conviction that her aunt would not remain
with her father in which case her absence would be
h felt, as indeed in any case it would by him—all com-
d to draw her eyes homeward. Then the sight of the

vast prairie, that dreadful night of the fire, and the sho
she had received, had both depressed her spirits, and h
created in her mind the idea that she was to Arthur, wh
she dearly loved, a species of evil genius, who broug
him only bad fortune and misery, which would contin
to harrass him so long as any tie connected them. S
really thought he would do better without her, as s
loved him well enough to wish for his welfare before h
own. Perhaps we shall find that as she came to love hi
"better"—as you gentle reader would term it—she beca
less solicitous for his prosperity apart from herself a
more anxious to share his lot. Lastly the influence wh
the stronger will of her aunt exerted—albeit only ne
tively exerted—over a girl of Gertrude's temperament c
scarcely be over estimated.

* * * * * *

As Arthur stood at the hotel door below, a cheery vo
at his elbow said.

"Hello, Rashfellow, you don't look very badly scorch
after all!" and looking round he met the clear eye of
young Imperial Federationist, Mr. Graham of Montr
"I heard you were burnt out night before last, and h
had no end of adventures,—rescued the young lady fr
the flames; fought a prairie fire; that the Senator jum
from a two story window, and that you had lost all y
buildings and crops!"

"Almost all true, except about the crops, though
aggerated. Where did you get the news?"

"In the local paper. It's flashed all over the coun
by this time. I was very sorry indeed to hear of y
loss, Rashfellow, and to see that you had no insura
either."

"Is that in the papers, too?" asked Arthur wit
groan.

"Oh yes, of course it is. Can't keep anything out
the papers nowadays, you know."

"They didn't say I was going off to—to the Macke
River basin, did they?"

"No. Why do you ask?"

"Because I am going there, or somewhere else."

"For what?"

"For some of the riches we read about, and in search of venture."

"But I thought your crops were saved, and I heard u were going to be married."

"Then you heard what isn't so, Mr. Graham. My crops e safe, but I haven't got a wife—ha ha!" and Arthur ughed a very dismal kind of laugh.

"Rashfellow," said the other, with a cordial grasp of e hand, "don't let your troubles overcome you. Never y die, even if all your friends seem to be against you."

"Thank you, Graham—but we haven't all got the hope-lness of you Imperial Federationists, remember," ans-ered Arthur in a more cheerful tone, as he sallied off to ve his rescued horses put in the waggon which he had t in town the previous Saturday to be repaired—in der to take a drive out to the farm.

He returned in time to see Gertrude and her aunt off t afternoon. He and the Senator waved their handker-iefs in response to two others which floated from the r of the last car as the train sped away, carrying with ll the younger man's hopes in this world he thought. thur stood watching the train until it became a speck in tance. Then turning to meet the Senator who had ntered up the platform, he said, holding out his hand.

"Good bye, Mr. Watkins, I understand you go West s afternoon. I shall follow you in a day or two, and we y meet again."

"I thought you were going to harvest your crops."

"I think I can manage with Brown to do that on shares, tired of farming and shall try my hand at something e. Good bye."

"Good bye," said the Senator, shaking his head, as he ked after the curly haired youth driving off in his ggon. "He's well named," he said to himself, "Rash-ow indeed!" and he laughed to himself at his own little e.

* * * * * *

The Senator departed a couple of hours later on h
way across the continent. On this continuation of his tr
it will not be necessary to accompany him, for it is unde
stood that he is writing a very full account of it himsel
much fuller and more readable no doubt than it could b
made here, which will be given to the public ere long. H
had accomplished something already, as will presently mo
fully appear. He now set himself to the task of studyin
the country, its people and their several wants. He sto
ped at each of the principal points for a day or so, visitin
several of the Indian Reserves, took a bath or two at Ban
enjoyed the scenery of the Rockies and pulled up finally
Victoria, where he spent a fortnight before returning, ve
pleasantly.

On the return trip an incident occurred to which bri
reference may be made, as something afterwards turned u
on it. The Senator had visited a number of Indian ban
for the purpose of observing their condition for himself a
seeing whether any abuses existed. He had interview
Crowfoot and many other chiefs and had of course heard
good many complaints of a more or less serious charact
principally, however, relating to the scarcity of food a
tobacco, but which in almost all cases the officials
the spot were able in some manner to explain aw
Perhaps the Indians were being well fed and well treat
Perhaps the officials were too sharp for the Senator.
this as it may, the Senator was returning home with
very formidable array of facts to place before the Sen
and the country, to bring about the amelioration of the r
man's condition—when chance threw in his way just su
a fellow traveller as in his inmost soul he was yearning
meet. He got on at a small way station along the line.
had not been in the car five minutes when he struck
conversation with the Senator. He said he was the R
Robert McWhirter. His garb which was of a shiny bla
surmounted by a much soiled linen duster, seemed of
clerical style. The absence of a necktie was probab
due to the lack of laundry facilities in the back coun

hence he came, but as he wore a shirt which had been hite and a tolerably white collar, the general effect of this partment was rather clerical than otherwise. He had rned who the Senator was from the car porter. Hearing at he came from an Indian country, the Senator informed m that he had visited a number of bands, and that the ult of his visits was on the whole not very unsatisfactory.

"Ever hear of the Kickaways, sir?" asked the stranger.

Yes, the Senator said, he had learned of a small band that name, but they were not near the line of railway understood, and he had not consequently paid them a it. Then the Rev. Mr. McWhirter unfolded a tale with ard to the condition of the Kickaways which made the nator's blood boil. Their reserve was on the Little cking river they were under Treaty No. 7, and their head ef was the notorious Big Kicker. They were in a state starvation, half of the year at least, owing to the in- ention or worse, of the officials. What food they got was it for human beings. Gross immorality prevailed, and rse than all, Mr. McWhirter was pained to say it, the sionary who was looking after their spiritual wants, was lecting his duty, and the government agent was doing rse, sowing the seeds of unbelief among them. He, Whirter, had actually himself seen a copy of *Robert esmere* lying on a desk in his school-room. The Senator never read the work in question, but had heard very accounts of it. He made a note of this, as well as all other facts elicited from his well informed fellow veller, who went on to say that there was a white child charge of the Indians on the reserve—a little girl, who as supposed had been taken when an infant from some ler's home which the Kickaways had doubtless destroyed he American territories—for they had originally come n there. What fate was in store for her, if left in her sent position, it was easy to foretell. To say t the Senator was interested by all this gentleman municated to him is putting it mildly. His sympathies e thoroughly aroused and had it not been that isit to the reserve would have necessitated his re-

turning several hundred miles by rail, and then making a journey of several hundreds more across an uninhabited country traversed by several troublesome rivers, a journey which Mr. McWhirter had made but a few days before—the Senator said he certainly would have gone to the reserve to see for himself that, whereof he had been told. However his informant was so fresh from the reserve, and gave his facts with such particularity, and was withal so respectable and reputable a witness—a minister he understood him to say, of one of the large Protestant bodies—that he, the Senator, asked leave to make use of the information imparted to him, to which Mr. McWhirter readily assented, furnishing also an address where he might be communicated with, in case further information were required. They parted at Winnipeg, where Mr. McWhirter said he had business, the Senator pursuing his homeward journey with as little delay as possible.

* * * * * *

The following letter from Mrs. Fitzgrace to her brother was received by him at Toronto a few days after the departure of the ladies from the Portage. It will complete the account of their north-west trip so far as the reader is concerned.

WINNIPEG, July 16th, 1887.

MY DEAR WILLIAM,—As we have made a stoppage for a few days here before proceeding on our homeward journey I shall devote a portion of it to giving you an account of our doings since I last wrote you from this place. I know you will be most anxious to hear the result of our trip, so far at least as Gertrude is concerned. As we go home by the all rail route and intend getting off at Gravenhurst on the way down, to join Mary and the children at the cottage while you, I know, will then be in Toronto—I write these lines, though by the time they reach you we shall be safely housed in Muskoka. To make a long story as short as possible, Gertrude is *rescued*. I felt all along it would be

o. We spent but one night out on the prairie at the lace which was to have been her home, and *such* a night. see there is an account of it in all the papers here, as no loubt there will be in the Toronto papers, which, with he despatch I sent you from Portage la Prairie, will have iven you an idea of our terrible adventure. I am bound o say the young man behaved with admirable courage nd presence of mind in the crisis, as did also Mr. Watkins, ut you will not be surprised to hear of another instance f Arthur's lack of common prudence and forethought. He had not a dollar of insurance on his property! Well, e talks of selling out and going further west, and I am ure I wish him no ill fortune. But I am confident you ill now agree with me that dear Gertrude has had *most fortunate escape!* I shudder to think what her osition would be *now*, had she come up here as *the bride f that young man!* ("A rap at me," said Mr. Southcote o himself as he read. "Perhaps I deserve it.") And ow William I have another matter to communicate hich I trust will not give you pain. ("What's com- ng now?" thought the lawyer.) When I wrote you n Sunday last from here, I told you how kind and houghful Mr. Watkins had been, and how highly I ad learned to esteem him even on so short an acquaintance. On the day after I wrote you that letter, he asked me to ecome his wife and I consented. I know this step will urprise you, William. My first experience of married life as not so happy a one as to readily induce me to embark in he matrimonial ship again. This match, however, seems o me so eminently prudent and proper for all parties con- erned, that I have had no hesitation about it. The enator is a dear, good man, much devoted to his public uties. He appears to have ample means and no ties, as oth his children are married and have families of their wn. He has, I believe, a pleasant home in the maritime rovinces, where I hope to receive you some day. I hope ertrude will spend a few weeks with us at Ottawa during the inter, and *entre nous* I hope I may be able to draw her ind away from her past trouble, and perhaps be of assist-

ance in seeing her some day established in life with a partn worthy of her *beauty and position.* She is in good healt considering the shock she has had and is behavin admirably. She gave the young man to understand th all must be over between them, I believe. I did not tell h of my engagement to Mr. Watkins until the evenin after the fire, when she told me what her intentions we with regard to Arthur.

We are spending a day or two with our old friends th Andrews. We called on them on the way up, and the made us promise to stop off with them on our return, an I was glad to do so on Gertrude's account—to give her rest after the exciting scenes she has come through, and possible to divert her mind by seeing the Winnipeg peop celebrating the Queen's Jubilee, which they are doing no in place of last month, for some reason. They had a pro cession and sham battle yesterday morning, besides makin a start with their new railway. In the afternoon an evening we went to see the regatta. The Winnipeg oarsme were beaten by the Minneapolis men in one of the races think. I'm sure there must have been *something wrong.* I was all very nice. We were in the boat club's stand, alon with the select two or three hundred, and thousands looke on from stands outside. A military band played on th deck of the boat-house—one that was in the rebellion, (th band not the boat-house, I mean.) Gertrude seeme pleased, and waved her handkerchief when our men won race. The steamboats here are such absurd affairs, wit wheels behind to push them along. In the evening they ha fireworks and the bombardment of a fort across the river and blowing up of a vessel. The effect was really pretty Myriads of canoes with Chinese lanterns and little woode floats everywhere on the water with Roman candles stuc in them, sending up colored balls in every direction. Th men here are almost all handsome. I don't think I shall g again to-day. It is so far away over the Assinoboyne, never feel sure of my spelling that dreadful name.) I sha get Gertrude to go with the others though.

The Senator and I will be married as soon as he return

How and where, will be settled when I reach home. He wished me to be married on the spot and accompany him across the continent, but of course my duty to you and to Gertrude would not allow of that. Good bye, until we meet in Muskoka—we leave day after to-morrow—and believe me, my dear brother, your affectionate sister.

CAROLINE FITZGRACE.

When Mr. Southcote had finished the letter he leaned back in his office chair for a few moments. It was vacation and he had time to read the letter and to think it over a little. But for some urgent private business he would not be in town now. The click of a solitary type writer in the outer office, the tinkle of a street car bell in the street below were the only sounds to break his reverie. "The longest letter I ever got from Caroline in my life. I'm half sorry, and yet after all relieved to think that Gertrude and Arthur have given it up. Though the poor girl may die an old maid, she'll be a great solace to her father's old age. And Caroline's to marry Senator Watkins! It will be a case of ambition gratified with her I trust. The 'how and where' are to be settled by her when she comes. Many another how and where will be settled by her for you hereafter, my dear Senator, or my name's not William Southcote! By day after to-morrow they should be at my island home in Muskoka. I think I must run up in a day or two"—and the lawyer returned to the perusal of some further correspondence.

CHAPTER IX.

IN MUSKOKA.

As the trim little Muskoka steamboat drew up at the wharf of one of her stopping places on a certain warm afternoon late in July, a handsome bright-eyed, brown-haired youth of from fifteen to sixteen years, stood among

the little crowd of expectants who had come to meet her. His face and hands were sunburnt. He wore a straw hat with a gay ribbon, an equally gay neck tie in a loose sailor knot, a suit of flannel and light leather shoes. He looked up and smiled, and nodded pleasantly to the handsome middle aged lady and the pretty hazel eyed girl who looked at him over the rail from the upper deck. By the time the boat had sputtered and fussed herself up alongside the landing place the two ladies had descended and stood ready for the plank to be thrown out, and a moment or two later the lad was locked in his sister's arms, receiving next a kiss from his aunt.

"The skiff is here," he said. "I'll get your light luggage and Robert can come over again for the trunks."

"Oh, how is mother, Frank?" asked Gertrude as they were preparing to embark in the skiff which was drawn up at the side of the wharf.

"About as usual," Frank replied. "The Guv'nor has not returned yet. He went to town some days ago, but we expect him to-morrow."

The aunt settled herself at the helm. Gertrude took the forward seat, while Frank adjusted the rowlock pins in place, and bared his well trained arms for a good pull. It was some two miles to the little island where stood their cottage, out of the steamer's course. There was still a full hour or two of warm sunshine, so the lad cast off the superfluous flannel coat, which he had put on in honor of the occasion. The loose flannel shirt with broad rolling collar, and the leather strap which served, with the aid of an occasional hitch with both hands, to keep his weather-beaten and water-stained nether flannels in place, gave free play to the lithe young limbs, and soon the skiff was spinning over the smooth surface of the lake.

"Oh, let me put in the forward oars," exclaimed Gertrude, "I would so like to have a row!"

"No, no," put in Frank authoritatively, "do you suppose I'd let those cottagers at Ellesmere see my sister rowing herself home after coming all the way from the north-west!"

He glanced at the shore where stood a number of summer cottages, their gay flags floating, while nurses and children disported themselves on the beach.

Mrs. Fitzgrace said she thought, after the fatigues of the journey, Gertrude had better reserve her strength for the morrow, and the latter, seeing that her young brother would feel hurt if she persisted, restrained the impulse to seize the oars and indulge in a little exercise after the confinements of travel. Frank, however, was equal to the task before him, and bent to his oars and rowed with a sweeping stroke which fast shortened the distance between them and Southcote Island.

"I think you're improving in your rowing, Frank," said Mrs. Fitzgrace approvingly.

The boy's face already red with heat took a fresh flush of pride at the compliment. "That's the Hanlan stroke," he said proudly, "but of course a fellow can't do himself justice without a sliding seat," and he redoubled his efforts.

Gertrude who had been turning constantly to look at the still distant but familiar outlines of the island, now exclaimed, "I think I see some one on the point; who can it be?"

Frank's eye kindled with the light of mischief as he heard this, but he made no reply—he was too busy rowing.

"Yes," she added presently, "there's a man on the point. Can it be Robert? No, it's too large for Robert, and he's signalling us, I do believe! Look aunt, he's waiving a handkerchief to us."

Mrs. Fitzgrace had unfortunately lost her gold-rimmed glasses in the fire, but had provided herself with another pair at Winnipeg, which, if not quite so ornamental and highly respectable in appearance, were just as strong as the old ones. She adjusted them and took a long look at the distant island. "I think I see some one," she said at length. "Yes, larger even than William, I should say."

"How persistently he waves that handkerchief. Oh, Frank, can anything be wrong!" cried Gertrude.

Frank laughed outright. "No," he gasped, "he's only glad to see you."

Then Mrs. Fitzgrace took another look through her glasses. "He's as dignified as the Senator," she remarked. "But he never lowers his arm at all. He's got a high hat on—must have just come from town. Why does he keep standing there though? He doesn't seem to move a muscle. Oh, Frank, I do believe its some prank of yours and Kate's! You've been dressing up Robert—no it's too large for him."

Frank was by this time so exhausted between rowing and suppressed merriment that he was obliged to take a rest and indulge in a fit of boyish hilarity. Then seizing the oars he bent again to his work and presently they were alongside the point, a huge rock, on top of which stood the effigy of a man carefully clad in Mr. Southcote's island suit of clothes, which he always left behind him, and topped by an old and well worn silk hat. A handkerchief fluttered at the end of the outstretched arm. A young girl of twelve bounded out from behind the rock at the sound of the oars and clapped her hands in glee.

"Oh, Gertrude,—Aunt Caroline; were you very much frightened? I made half of him." and she rushed towards the landing place shouting at every step. She was a rosy little round-faced girl, not much resembling Gertrude either in features or figure.

"Who did you say he looked like, Aunt Caroline?" asked Frank, putting down his oars.

Aunt Caroline actually blushed! but she only said, "How could that absurd thing resemble anybody!" and stepped ashore.

The island was composed principally of rock, with just enough earth on its surface and in its crevices to allow of some green sward, a few flower beds and a small kitchen garden. Quite a grove of trees, in some places dense enough to be termed thickets, managed to cling to the rock, spreading their roots over its surface and shoving them down into any crack or crevice they could find. In many places they had not soil enough to decently cover

their extremities, which stood out in naked protest against the poverty of the soil. The cottage was a roomy frame structure with a verandah running around three sides and French windows opening upon it.

The veritable Robert, a young lad engaged from the neighborhood to look after the garden, row the boat when required, and for other light duties, now appeared and started on a return trip for the trunks of the ladies; who, with little Kate between them, made their way to the house, where they found Mrs. Southcote lying upon a sofa reading. Gertrude knelt down, and, throwing her arms about her, kissed her tenderly. Mrs. Fitzgrace waited until she made an effort to arise and then met her half way, as it were, with a kiss.

"You'd be better on the verandah, Mary," she said. The mother was, however, intent upon Gertrude just now, as with tear-dimmed eyes she gazed into the girl's face as she knelt beside her. Gertrude burst into tears, and buried her face in her mother's lap.

"There, there, my darling daughter, you are tired. You'll feel better when your things are off and you have a cup of tea." She knew full well that it was not fatigue alone that ailed the girl.

"Oh, mother, mother," was all that Gertrude could murmur. Mrs. Fitzgrace had withdrawn to her own accustomed room, and mother and daughter were left alone. They kissed and fondled one another as only mother and daughter can.

"My dear, dear daughter. This world is full of sorrows and disappointments. You are having your share now, I know full well. But you must not give way. You are young and strong, and these trials and disappointments will reveal themselves as blessings bye and bye, if you put yourself in the hands of One who is stronger and wiser than we." The mother and daughter possessed a common bond of religious feeling, and the former felt this to be the safest, the only chord to touch just now. As she stroked the girl's hair, she continued to pour out the sympathy for which she knew the daughter's heart yearned. Presently the

paroxysm over, Gertrude bethought herself of her mother's weakness and how it had ever been their care to preserve her as much as possible from trouble and worry, so with an effort she roused herself, dried her eyes and arose.

"How selfish of me, mother, to worry you in this way," she said, "I'm tired out, I believe, and will be better after a cup of tea, as you say, and a rest," and she withdrew.

Poor Gertrude! This was but the beginning of many days of bitter sorrow and struggle. She had cut herself free from the anchor of Hope, as it seemed, and was now adrift. She had never quite touched the feeling of hopelessness before. There had always been the one attachment since childhood to which she had clung, and now that she had cut the cord, she knew not how to supply its place. The thought that she had been cruel and heartless to the one she had loved so steadfastly and so well, began to oppress her and to drive out every other thought. Why *had* she gone to the north-west at all if she were not prepared to stay there? How empty and vain seemed her reason for casting Arthur off. Was it because she was so selfish, that she could not endure the life he had with such infinite pains provided for her? Was it because of that wretched fire in which he had shown such heroism? If so what a mockery such love as hers must have seemed to him, to desert him in the hour of need? These heart-searchings, once began, never seemed to cease.

The coming of her father the day after their arrival, made a slight break, but their lives settled down quietly to the old pastimes, now so long and so well known. Boating, fishing, bathing, reading, dozing in hammocks beneath the trees, an occasional trip across the lake or to a neighboring island to visit friends, or to the nearest church for service, these were the chief occupations of life at and about Southcote Island. A couple of schoolboy friends of Frank's came, and with the three boys and little Kate, Gertrude managed to pass many hours upon the water, or exploring the main land, hours which would otherwise have hung, oh, so heavily on her hands.

Meantime the Senator had been heard from more than

once. He would soon be here on his homeward journey and he pleaded that the consummation of his happiness might not be delayed. It would be yet quite a journey from this to his home by the Atlantic and it would be too bad to send him home and bring him back again. But for the distance Mrs. Fitzgrace said she would have done so, as she would have preferred being married in good orthodox style in the city church with full choir accompaniment, and plenty of carriages and wedding favors. As it was she could not ask her brother to open the house, which was closed, and take the family to town—especially Mrs. Southcote. There would be the difficulties of the wedding breakfast and and a score of other things which would keep the family in town some time, at great inconvenience to all. To be sure she could go there and be married quietly, but that would be no advantage over a wedding here, so the matter was finally arranged. The ceremony would be performed at the church at Ellesmere, followed by a wedding breakfast on the island.

The preparation of a trousseau suitable to her future position, made it necessary for Mrs. Fitzgrace to go a couple of times, in as many weeks, to Toronto. Gertrude was induced to accompany her on one of those trips. On the train she saw a face before her which brought at once recollections of Arthur, and presently she recalled one of the fellow passengers on their trip to the north-west, with whom she and her aunt had but a bowing acquaintance. As he made a slight sign of recognition, the gentleman bowed and came forward.

"We met on the boat, I believe," said Mr. Graham with a pleasant smile—for it was he. "May I ask whether you have suffered any ill effects from the fire and its attendant exposure?"

"None whatever, thank you," Gertrude answered. Then she looked up at the frank face of her questioner as though she would ask a question too. Perhaps he read her thoughts, for he said: "Mr. Rashfellow went west two days after your departure from the Portage. I happened to be there at the time, but did not learn his destination—

in fact, I rather imagine he had no fixed plans from what little conversation we had. He let his farm to a neighbor, Mr. Brown I believe, who will harvest his crops on shares. He seemed in good health"—truth compelled him to omit the customary accompaniment—"and spirits."

After a word or two with Mrs. Fitzgrace who did not seem in a specially gracious mood, Mr. Graham returned to his seat and book. "The old lady evidently did not care anything about that young man," he said to himself, "but the girl has not forgotten him, and I read a suspense in her eye which I was bound to relieve, though all the aunts on earth frowned on me!"

Gertrude gazed out of the window for most of the journey after this. Graham saw her look towards him once, as if she would like to ask further information, but catching his eye she quickly resumed her gaze through the window. So Arthur had gone west, out into the wilderness, or among the Indians perchance. Oh, how bitter must be his feeling now towards her who had broken up his home! So self reprochful was she now that she forgot all about the fire and its difficulties, and thought of herself only as one who had deserted her lover and was worthy only of his contempt. Perhaps he would find some Indian maiden who would be more steadfast and ready to help him in his struggles than she. The Indian women she had always heard of as the embodiment of constancy, and had she not herself said to him in that memorable interview that he might become happy and prosperous with some other than herself? And yet the idea of the Indian maiden was by no means comforting to her. Nothing was comforting. Her religious feeling might have consoled her, had she been simply the victim of circumstances, but she was beginning to look upon herself as the cause of her own and her lover's misery, and with such thoughts, it was much more difficult to console herself by religious resignation. Her conscience would not permit her to feel even the consolation of martyrdom. She began to hate herself, and yet she hated the Indian maiden, too!

A short time after their return to the island, the Senator came and put up at the hotel at Ellesmere.

CHAPTER X.

THE WEDDING.

The wedding morn was bright and cloudless. There was just breeze enough blowing to slightly stir the surface of the lake and cause the little steam launch which bore the bridal party towards Ellesmere to feel its motion. This craft was gay with bunting, and white ribbons fluttered from the supports of its awning. Mr. and Mrs. Southcote, Gertrude and Katey, with the bride, were its passengers, while Frank and his boy friends followed in the skiff. Mrs. Fitzgrace wore a becoming travelling dress and bonnet of grey. She possessed rare taste in dress and had allowed no feminine weakness to betray her into unnecessary personal adornment. Handsome was her appearance and proud her carriage, indeed, as leaning on her brother's arm she entered the little church, which stood but a few steps from the landing, a few moments after their arrival there. Mrs. Southcote, who seldom left the island during her period of residence there, had made a supreme effort on this occasion. She was dressed in the simple costume which she wore on those rare occasions when she attended church. Frank, in his Sunday best, proudly escorted her; while Gertrude in a gauzy summer costume decked with a few flowers and looking very pretty, laughingly took the arm of Charley, Frank's eldest boy friend, leaving Bob, his companion and Katey to bring up the rear. In this order they entered the church, where the clergyman and bridegroom, who had been able to watch the approach of the bridal party across the water, awaited them. The entire summer population of Ellesmere, with many from more distant points on the lake, was gathered in and around the church in all the glory of straw hats, flannels and jerseys. They scrutinized with curiosity the bridegroom, whose grey close cut hair, black frock coat and silk hat were upon the whole commented favorably upon—a few whispered comments as to the companionship of "grey hairs and

folly," and a stealthy reference by one or two of the elder unmarried ladies to the adage, "no fool like an old fool."—alone excepted. On the whole the assemblage was a good natured one, grateful for the unwonted excitement afforded them by so unusual an event as the present, and full of compliments on the appearance of the ladies. The bride's stately appearance left nothing to be desired, while many an admiring glance, from the bronzed youths in lawn tennis and boating costumes of every variety, fell upon her neice. To more than one the thought presented itself that his manly form alongside that of this brown-haired beauty would form a more appropriate head to the bridal procession than did the Senator as he marched proudly forth a short time later with his handsome wife on his arm.

The ceremony was quickly and quietly performed. Katey and Bob inspired from some unknown source had, before setting out, armed themselves each with a large basket of flowers, wherewith their design was to strew the path of the bride and groom. As there was a good bit of path to strew, the baskets were large, and as they were large, they left them for convenience sake in the church porch. The ceremony over Kate and Bob made a dash for the porch. The former secured her basket, but the latter saw a small boy in blue jerseys in the act of walking off with his, to whom he gave chase. The little boy in blue was an expert runner and led Bob a long and circuitous chase backward and forward, here and there, while the shower of flowers from this basket increased as the chase became the hotter, ending only when the basket and the thief were both exhausted, and the latter held aloft the former bottom upward with a merry laugh, cut short by a hearty shaking from Bob, who was heard to state that the punishment would have been much more severe had the occasion been other than it was. Katey meantime set herself assiduously at her task single handed, so that two distinct paths of flowers were soon laid out upon the ground. The bridal party, which divided with the boys' chase, the attention of the spectators, took the straight and

narrower path laid out by Katey, the efforts of the Senator to avoid stepping on the flowers being the only thing which detracted from the dignity of his deportment. A committee of youths had meantime taken charge of the bell rope and were causing the little bell above the church entrance to dance merrily, though rather spasmodically, as the rope changed hands, and to turn back sommersaults as if in a perfect ecstacy of merriment, as it gave forth its tinkling clamor.

The young clergyman had quickly doffed his surplice and made strides for the steam launch aboard which the bridal party and a select company of invited guests were now gathered. As she steamed off it was seen that almost the entire population had taken to the water, as if by some concerted action previously arranged; and small yachts, skiffs, sail boats and canoes, each with some bit of bright color either at the bowsprit or masthead, or about the persons of the crew, gathered in a bright flotilla and moving out, formed a passage way for the steam launch, greeting her with cheers and waving handkerchiefs as she passed between.

"Very graceful and polite, I'm sure!" said the Senator who took off his hat and bowed his acknowledgements, "yes, very" he added turning to the party around him, "now, would you believe it, the last time I was married something like this occurred, but the fishermen who took part in it—it was down at my place by the sea—were not all as polite as these gentlemen. I was in the thick of politics then and one political opponent in the little fleet of fishermen's boats through which we were passing flung a fresh fish at me or my bride with such force that it carried away my hat! Of course he said afterwards that he was only tossing us a wedding present,—but I knew better than that!"

The present bride's effort to appear pleased with this reminiscence was so palpably ineffectual that no one ventured to encourage any further explanations regarding the interesting event to which it related. "The last time he was married!" one of the lady guests scornfully ex-

claimed to her lord some hours after, "the man spoke as if it were an annual occurrence!" "He was no doubt thinking more of some old political fight than of the occasion," replied the husband, "now there will be little danger of my making such a mistake." "Well upon my word!" began the lady—but this is digressing from our narrative.

An ex-lieutenant governor, an adept in diplomacy, who, with his wife, graced the present party, came to the rescue of the unconscious and happy Senator, by an enquiry concerning his trip across the continent.

"Yes," said the Senator, "a most enjoyable and instructive trip. I inspected the line pretty thoroughly. Those C. P. R. folk have accomplished a great work, but it has cost a pretty penny, and there are some pretty stiff grades and some scamped work too, which somebody will hear about. I could not visit the Mackenzie basin this time, because I could not induce Mrs. Watkins to accompany me then, and I was too anxious for this day to arrive, to risk postponement." The Senator bowed gallantly to his bride, who smiled and looked gracious once more, "but I learned a good deal about the Indians, and have possessed myself of information which I deem valuable."

"Which you may bring to the attention of Parliament later on," suggested Mrs. Watkins, encouragingly.

"Perhaps so, my dear, perhaps so," returned the Senator, in high good humor, while a twinkle in the eye of the diplomatist, who had known the Senator a quarter of century, and was well versed in Parliamentary life, indicated that he anticipated more of amusement than instruction from Mr. Watkins' threatened attack on the administration.

"Political conversation is hardly the thing in presence of a bride," he said apologetically, "and I fear I'm guilty of introducing it indirectly, Mrs. Watkins, by drawing out your husband on the north-west, but I see the other ladies have not been following us, and you, Mrs. Watkins, I can see, will take a deep interest in public affairs, to the advantage of the country," he added gracefully.

"Here we are, Watkins. Now, ladies, not all at once,"

cried Mr. Southcote, as the boat drew up at the island landing.

The breakfast which followed was a great success. The delicacies had been brought up from Toronto by a noted caterer, whose skill was apparent on every hand. Mrs. Watkins' firm hand divided the wedding cake without a mishap, and the company was a merry one by the time the champagne had been quaffed in her honor, after a short and appropriate speeeh from the parson. The Senator made a lengthy, but on the whole a satisfactory reply, and more, perhaps, from good luck than good management, failed to touch upon any ground so dangerous as that he had trodden upon at the start across the water. The ex-Governor and Mr. Southcote added a few well chosen words, and the bride and groom rose to make some slight preparations for their departure. A half an hour later the steam launch was hurrying them towards the Ellesmere wharf, where lay the steamboat waiting their arrival, to take them on the initial wedding trip around the lakes, the particulars of which had not been divulged, but which it was understood was to terminate at some point within easy reach of a railway station, where their journey towards the sounding sea would begin.

The steam launch returned to the island and bore off the majority of the guests, the young clergyman, however, remaining until evening, to be rowed across by the boys after sundown.

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The departure of her aunt meant a collapse for Gertrude. The removal of the stronger will was inevitably followed by a relapse of the weaker. At least so it seemed just now. So complete was this relapse that she would have written Arthur to beg forgiveness for her desertion of him, had she known his whereabouts, but not a word had she heard of him since she had parted from him save that which Mr. Graham had communicated to her on the train. He was never out of her thoughts now, and the theory of the Indian maiden was taking possession of her imagination

—not that she pictured him marrying a full blooded untutored daughter of the wilderness; but she knew there were *metis* or halfbreeds having more or less intimate relations with their more savage progenitors. She had had some ladies pointed out to her in the north-west as possessing Indian blood who were not by any means ill-looking, who seemed very soft mannered. Might some such an one not be met with on the confines of civilization, with whose superior usefulness, if not superior graces, her Arthur would become enamored? With such conjectures and imaginings, the poor girl tortured herself day after day and night after night.

Gertrude possessed a light canoe in which it was her wont to paddle herself at times alone along the shores of the island and often out into the lake. In this she would now often paddle to some quiet nook where lying in the shadow of the bank, her head resting on a cushion, she would dream the hours away. At other times she would take a book into the grove, and, sitting down under a tree, make an effort to read, only to drop the volume in her lap while she looked out into the hazy atmosphere across the lake, her thoughts still farther away. Occasionally she dropped asleep in her hammock by day, but dreams disturbed her rest, and she preferred her waking thoughts to them.

Mr. Southcote was not slow to observe that Gertrude was unhappy. In former days, when Arthur was in the north-west, he had not forbidden communication between them, and a correspondence had been kept up. Even when he returned the second time to Winnipeg he had not ceased to write her, though whether through the influence of her aunt or from some cause he had not received very frequent letters in return. Now of course no such letters reached her. They had served to keep up her spirits in the former days.

"Gertrude is unhappy, William," said Mrs. Southcote in her quiet voice. "I do believe she would have been better off had she married him and made the best of life out there."

"But, my dear, the house was burned over their heads, you are forgetting that," replied her husband, anxious to justify his refusal to sanction the marriage before they set out, in his own eyes as well as in his wife's.

"Ah yes, I know William, they would have had a struggle, perhaps harder than she could bear, but the poor girl is wretched I know."

"I see that myself. I think we had better return to town a week or two earlier this year. I have usually tried to save you the crowds and bustle of the Exhibition time. It seems to me we might return before the Exhibition opens this year. Perhaps the stir of the town will do her good. I have one or two business trips to take within a few weeks, too, and shall try and persuade her to accompany me. Then during the winter her aunt wishes her to visit Ottawa and life there will be new to her. Things will all come out for the best my dear.",

"That is what I often tell her. I have that blessed assurance myself, but it seems gone from her just now completely. The change, as you say, may do her good, however."

The second week in September found them back in their comfortable Toronto house.

Under the escort of her father and Frank, Gertrude "did" the Exhibition thoroughly. She went through the main building, dutifully examining every exhibit, as they moved along in the crowded procession of sight-seers, round and round, floor after floor, stopping to watch the operations of the loquacious young ladies who manipulated the sewing machines and type writers, luring the piano and organ men from their stools by a question, that they might lessen the deafening sounds arising from this department, criticising the needle work, and gazing at articles at whose use she could only guess, while she accepted mechanically the printed advertisements thrust into her hand at every turn. They walked through the machinery hall, the carriage hall, the horticultural hall, where the bright flowers gave her a passing delight. They looked at the poultry and even visited the cattle sheds, and watched

from their carriage the acrobatic performances, as well as the races in the horse ring. The beauty of many of the splendid horses pleased Gertrude, but the vast sea of humanity which the grand stand presented positively frightened her. The music of the many bands raised her spirits, as music always gave her pleasure. They listened to the best, and kept at a safe distance from the others. Mr. Southcote kept her at the task of sight seeing during several days at intervals, sending her with Frank when he could not himself go to the Exhibition grounds, and taking her out even by night to see the fireworks and the evolutions of the troops by electric light. He developed into a most persistent pleasure seeker, and at even the theatre and concert halls, which ordinarily he rarely visited, he became a constant attendant, mingling in the well dressed throng with his pretty daughter, whose beauty was by no means unobserved, as her recent experiences had rather increased than diminished the attractiveness of her appearance. Invitations to all manner of society events and other social attentions were not by any means wanting, but Gertrude preferred the society of her father when abroad, and her mother at home, to all others, at this period, and to them her wish was now law.

A fortnight later she accompanied her father on a business trip to some neighboring American cities. Detroit's neatness and its stately river teeming with marine life, pleased her. Thence in a luxurious steamer to Cleveland by night, passing down the beautiful Detroit river, the historic old Canadian town of Amherstburg, the archipelago of Put-in-Bay, ever alive by day with excursion boats and bands, on to Cleveland, where she enjoyed a drive through its stately Euclid avenue, and a morning stroll about the streets and through the square, with lofty trees and exultant Perry monument, chronicling the victory of the American Commodore over the British on the lake—then on by rail to Buffalo they sped. Here they took only a few hours' rest at a sumptuous hotel, a walk through the busy streets, and a glance at the towering city hall, which served to heighten

the enjoyment of a quiet day at the Falls of Niagara, whose grandeur never palls, and is perhaps best enjoyed when the autumn tints have transformed the foliage of the trees to soft reds and yellows mingled with the green. As they crossed the lake next day and entered the bay, to her ever beautiful and beloved, Gertrude thanked her father for a pleasant week's trip, which she said she had enjoyed exceedingly; the healthy flush on her cheek, and the lustre of her hazel eyes corroborating her testimony that the little excursion had done her much good. He looked at her fondly and said that he too had enjoyed the brief change. His design was obviously to keep her mind and body in motion until she had regained her wonted spirits, and that zest for life which healthy youth should possess.

Thus the autumn months passed by. The New York trip was duly carried out. It was a period of unceasing kindness and consideration for Gertrude, whose heart was touched, but its soreness when she had time to think, was as before. That it would never heal she now firmly believed.

CHAPTER XI.

OTTAWA DURING THE SESSION.

THE session of the Dominion Parliament opened in the winter following the events narrated in previous chapters, with the customary pomp and circumstance. The cannon boomed, the band played. His Excellency with his staff proceeded to the Senate Chamber, the faithful commoners were summoned and the speech read with all the customary formalities. These have been so fully and faithfully recorded in the newspapers, which year after year down to the present day have presented their readers with full details of this great functon of State, that it would be a work of supererogation, which the reader might justly resent, to describe it again.

One of the foremost among those who followed the

Speaker of the Commons to the Senate Chamber, was a young member of thirty-five years or thereabouts of distinguished mien and fashionably dressed. He had a quick, dark eye, his features were well cut, and his moustache and whiskers trimmed after the latest mode. His dark hair which was wavy, when his hat was removed showed little of the ravages of time. Scarce a grey hair as yet appeared, and a slight tendency to baldness above the temples on either side of a rather lofty and well formed brow, was the only sign, save a slight thinness at the apex of the crown, of the capillary weakness so common among parliamentarians. Perhaps a longer parliamentary life (for this was but his second Parliament) and a more frequent use of his hat in the House—for he as yet availed himself but seldom of that privilege—would remedy this apparent anomaly of a thick head of hair in the appearance of a member of Parliament. The ladies, however, who eyed him from the galleries with a good deal of interest, for he was young, wealthy and unmarried, were inclined to think his remaining always uncovered in the House was studied, both with a view to the preservation of his head from baldness and for effect upon themselves. Be this as it may, it cannot be denied that Mr. George Hatfield, the young maritime province member, was considered one of the best looking, most popular and withal one of the cleverest of the younger members of the Commons. As soon as he was within the Chamber, on the present occasion, he shoved a single eyeglass, which he took from his waistcoat pocket, into his right eye and began a quiet survey of the scene. He glanced but for a moment at the Governor-General and his brilliant staff and the other dignitaries about the throne. His eye quickly wandered over such of the fair shoulders of the ladies as he could, by rising on tiptoe, bring within his range of vision, until it seemed to reach the objects of his search—two ladies in a prominent position, who were already receiving more than a fair share of the attention of their neighbors.

"Who are they?" whispered the wife of a Cabinet Minister of her daughter who was beside her.

"Senator Watkins' bride, and her niece I believe," was the whispered reply, "rather severe looking isn't she ?—but handsomely dressed."

"Yes, the girl is very pretty though."

Scarcely as complimentary were the remarks of some of the ladies farther back.

"Who is that bold looking woman forward there, with the pretty girl on her left ?" demanded the wife of a member of her neighbor, with a slight motion of her fan in the direction indicated. "Oh—indeed," she added, with increased interest as she received the required information, "the dear old Senator,"—then after another look—"I *pity* him! He'll have to mind his p's and q's now, I fancy. He used to be quite attentive to me in former sessions, do you know. That'll be all over with now if I read that woman's face aright. The girl is very handsome though. I see Mr. Hatfield back there with his eyeglass focussed on them. He's struck already, I believe !"

"Nonsense!" rejoined the other lady, who was somewhat younger and better looking and had received some attention from Mr. Hatfield, which she seemed loath to forget, "he's a nephew of Senator Watkins, don't you know, and it's only natural he should look at his new aunt and her niece, to see how they take it all."

"A very short speech," said the elder of the two ladies, with the air of a connoiseur— "and a very poor one." She was of the opposition. "Now he's off."

This latter remark referred to his Excellency, who that moment left the chamber followed by his staff, while greetings and conversation among the assemblage became general.

"Do look at that woman standing there as if she were Lady ——— herself," and the opposition member's wife mentioned the name of the Lady at that time presiding at Rideau Hall. "See how proud old Watkins looks! He is introducing Sir John to her, I declare; and he is paying her a compliment I can see very well—the sly old fox! He hasn't forgotten that Senator Watkins thought he should have been Speaker of the Senate and probably thinks so

still—an idea I first put into his head," she said to herself, "and I'll keep it there too if his wife doesn't, though judging by her looks I think she will."

"Sir Adolphe is talking to the niece," here put in her companion, "he has always an eye for beauty—though I don't mean to say there's much in her face after all!"

Mrs. Watkins and her neice now left the chamber under the Senator's escort. In the lobby Mr. Hatfield joined them.

"Ah, my new found aunt," he said bowing, "I told you last evening that you would be the cynosure of all eyes to-day and that you would make the Senator proud—and I have to congratulate you—and Miss Southcote too," and he glanced at Gertrude, who, as she, with heightened color and her quiet well bred air, walked beside her aunt, certainly justified all the compliments which had that day been passed upon her appearance. Her low-necked white dress became her well. Her figure was, if anything, fuller and more womanly than when last we saw her. As she looked down, Mr. Hatfield rattled on, "I may congratulate myself, too, on being proved a true prophet, though for the matter of that, it didn't require much gift of prophecy to predict a brilliant success for you to-day."

Mrs. Watkins took the compliment graciously enough, while Gertrude looked as though she hadn't heard it at all.

"Come, George," said the Senator, "don't be paying these ladies too many compliments. Sir John, you know, has done all that for them already—as I have also," he added, fearing his wife might think his interference unwarrantable.

As they walked about the lobbies for a little, they looked up at the portraits of the speakers. Hatfield dropped naturally behind with Gertrude.

"Some of us thought my uncle—the Senator—ought to be up here, but it was 'no go.' We hadn't influence enough, and besides, between ourselves, though a good soul, the uncle is at times strangely lacking in tact, and managed that business very badly. But, to change

the subject, how pleasant it is to have a fair cousin—you'll let me call you cousin, I hope?—to show the sights to here. I think you said you had never been in Ottawa until yesterday? Well, I think you'll enjoy it, for a time at all events. I'm to have a place of honor beside you at the Russell, you know, which will be a great gain over last session, when men at the Club, men at the hotel, and men in the House, were my only consolation." This was perhaps scarcely an accurate description of his past social life, but he was speaking lightly.

"There seems to be plenty of ladies," Gertrude remarked.

"Oh yes, of course," he replied, "but if one is seen with the same one twice, it's in everybody's mouth, and we politicians cultivate caution. But you, you see, I may claim as a cousin, and I hope I may be able to do something to recompense you for that privilege."

She murmured her thanks. A suspicion flitted across her mind that the younger man had come honestly by a little of the self esteem which the Senator she knew possessed. But his light talk was something new to her and not unpleasant. And so they wandered on through the corridors following the lead of the Senator, into the beautiful library where Gertrude gazed about her in admiration—promising to herself that she would not be slow to avail herself of its privileges—then out through the reading-room, where already a few members had begun their three months' occupation of conning the papers. They went up to the Senators' gallery of the House of Commons for a few minutes, just in time to see the House adjourn, and mace and Speaker disappear. Hatfield accompanied the party to their sleigh, where pleading an engagement at the Club he parted from them. The ladies and the Senator, clad in warm furs, enjoyed the bracing air as the creaking runners carried them over the dry snow, piled up on either side in great white heaps. The beauty of the massive triple pile of buildings with their tall towers, the dark bronze monument of Cartier, the terraces and gateways of the Parliament square, half veiled by

clouds of swirling snow, which, blown hither and thither by the wind, well nigh hid the new departmental block and other buildings on the other side of Wellington street from view altogether, the sleighs and foot passengers hurrying hither and thither, but chiefly to or from the Houses of Parliament; all these had impressed themselves on Gertrude's mind as they came to the opening earlier in the afternoon, yet seemed to have lost none of their novelty now on their return, so brief was the trip to and from the Russell House.

This day was but the beginning of a new phase of life to her. Up to the present her life had been upon the whole a serene and quiet one. Her Aunt, however, had come to Ottawa determined to see and be seen and to make her presence felt. And it was part of her scheme, both for the girl's sake and her own, that Gertrude should share the new experiences with her. Mrs. Watkins had been in Ottawa before, but only just long enough to recognize the advantage to a lady in her present position of having a young and attractive companion—an advantage to the young companion as well as to her hostess. She was still bent on weaning Gertrude's mind from what she considered its morbid condition, and of putting her in the way of meeting those from whom she hoped she might some day select a suitable husband, for her niece's beauty and accomplishments fully entitled her to *select*, she thought, and not to waste her life either with an unsuitable mate or in useless repinings at her necessary separation from him. These thoughts, however, for the present she kept to herself. She had summoned Gertrude and enjoined her to be in time for the opening day, the beginning of the campaign as it were, and it had chanced that some friends were coming down the day before in whose charge she was accordingly placed. Mr. Hatfield, who was usually punctual in his attendance at Parliament had accompanied his uncle and wife on their journey to Ottawa, and now all were comfortably installed at the Russell. It would be hardly fair to say that as yet Mrs. Watkins had any positive design marked out with regard to her husband's nephew and her

niece, but it must be owned that she thought these young people might with mutual advantage be thrown together and that, in short, a match between them would be a very desirable thing. Hatfield was well off, was considered a rising young public man, had no entanglements so far as she knew, and lived not far from her new home. She had not seen very much of him, but what little she had seen she liked. She was sensible enough to leave these matters to a certain extent to chance, and to the people most directly concerned, but she usually liked to help along the chances as opportunity offered. She knew that her niece, though gentle and to a certain extent pliable, had still a mind of her own. The heart she did not take so much account of. She would, however, wait and see how matters were going, as Gertrude became more accustomed to her new surroundings, and give her such motherly counsel when the proper time came as, in the absence of her mother, duty required of an aunt.

Under the influence of her aunt's will, Gertrude made no attempt to avoid the pleasures and gaieties to which she had been a stranger. It would have been foolish to have come here had she any intention of doing so. So the opening day was followed by a round of social events, in which Gertrude took part, if not with hearty zest, at any rate with some enjoyment. Her thoughts still strayed to the far off West, and she still thought of Arthur constantly, but by degrees an interest in the events about her developed, until she often wondered as she found herself dancing, laughing, chatting, in the midst of some happy throng, or skating or tobogganing with the youth of the Capital, and entering into the sport with zest—whether she could be the same Gertrude who in Muskoka a few short months ago had cried herself to sleep by night and sat brooding by day over the misfortune of her life. Her heart was true as ever to Arthur, though, and the thought of forming any other attachment would, as yet at all events, have been abhorrent to her, and she remembered without regret that she had promised him it would always be so. Her present enjoyment, she felt, was due to the

novelty of her pastimes, which she almost feared would soon wear off.

Her beauty and gentle demeanor were not long in attracting attention. Even at the opening of Parliament it has been seen she was remarked. At the State drawing-room which followed, the impression she created was still more noticeable, and henceforward, whether at a State dinner or ball at Rideau Hall or elsewhere, whether at the rink or on the toboggan slide, Miss Southcote had no dearth of admirers. With old Senators and members, as well as with the younger Commoners, the vice regal household and the "gilded youth" of the Capital, she was alike a favorite, the ladies, too, with few exceptions, joining in the general expressions of approval. She was always "the same" they said, gentle and well bred, unaffected and ready to please and apparently to be pleased. Her musical accomplishments, too, brought her into request, and she was soon recognized as one of the best musicians known to society at the Capital.

It must not be imagined that Hatfield was the man to allow the special privilege he enjoyed of being in the society of one so universally admired to be neglected. As has been seen he claimed cousinship with her from the start, and soon grew even more anxious to please her than even the cousinly relationship rendered incumbent upon him. He seldom missed breakfast or luncheon at the hotel for the Club, as was often his wont in former days. In fact, he had for a session or two before, lived in chambers, taking all his meals, when not invited out, at the Club. Now, he took his place by Gertrude's side, with a regularity more than cousinly, generally managing, too, in some way to secure the same place when he dined or lunched out at the same house.

One morning as they sat at breakfast and the Senator laid down the matutinal newspaper with which he regularly regaled himself—a habit with which his wife had never interfered—Gertrude took it up casually, and glancing over the debates of the previous day, said suddenly,

"Mr. Hatfield, I should so like to hear you make a speech!"

The young member looked up with a pleased expression. Then as he broke his egg he answered—

"Your kind interest is very gratifying and encouraging to a young politician, and as it is no doubt purely cousinly and not intended to disconcert me, you may have your wish if you care to come up to the House to-day. I'm to have a minor part in the debate now on, and at the risk of being disconcerted I shall try and let you know when I shall begin."

"I'm sure the thought of disconcerting you was far from me—I would not for the world."

"Enough said," interrupted Hatfield. "Then it's agreed—perhaps—who knows," he added, "but the inspiration of your presence may enable me to say something absolutely new even on so hackneyed a subject as the National Policy! Will you risk it too, Mrs. Watkins?"

"Most certainly," that lady answered. So the matter was considered settled.

That afternoon found the two ladies sitting in the Senators' gallery of the House of Commons, gazing down upon the scene beneath. The House looked sleepy enough in the quiet afternoon light. The Speaker seemed to be watching the proceedings with a languid interest, while two pages seated on the steps at his feet with heads together were apparently comparing jack knives. The Clerk of the House seemed to be enjoying a nap while his assistant was busy writing. A member in one of the back rows of the Opposition with a number of ponderous volumes piled against the side of his desk, and sheets of paper with newspaper or other clippings pasted upon them and copious notes on other sheets before him, was prosing away, while members sat here and there, some writing letters, others yawning or conversing with their neighbors. A few were listening with a yawning interest. The pencils of about half the reporters in the gallery were leaping along with more show of life than appeared elsewhere in the chamber, while the other half seemed to be idling.

Hatfield sat in a seat in the third row on the right of the Speaker, taking notes. He found time to glance up at the ladies with a resigned look, as though to say, "See what an ignoble task is before me."

When the member addressing the House at last sat down and the rattle of applause from his side died away, Hatfield arose amid a counter rattle from those about him and began to speak. More attention, they observed, was paid on both sides than the previous speaker commanded. The Premier once turned himself in his chair so as to look up at Hatfield and nodded encouragingly and smacked his lips in silent approbation. "Hear hears" were frequent. His voice was clear, and he spoke with apparent confidence, though once or twice during his speech he seemed to hesitate and become a trifle confused, and Gertrude could not help thinking that a consciousness of their presence there was the cause. He spoke somewhat too rapidly, she thought, and though all this talk of duties and tariffs was as Greek to her, she saw that he was hitting his opponent, who sat doggedly watching him rather hard, as that gentleman occasionally stung by a laugh from the other members ejaculated something inaudible to her. Hatfield spoke for nearly an hour and her interest did not flag—nor did Mrs. Watkins, who nodded approvingly from time to time as he went on. His diction was excellent, and his manner for the most part, with the exceptions mentioned, easy. Once a little cross-firing with a gentleman in the front row opposite arose, the purport of which, however, Gertrude could not understand. Hatfield seemed to have been roasting the previous speaker, for whom Gertrude could not help feeling some commiseration, and his arguments unmercifully, when the member in the front row came to his rescue and quickly interjected some remark and the little altercation referred to ensued. As Hatfield sat down Gertrude thought the speech upon the whole a satisfactory performance, while her aunt, beaming with apparent delight, murmured, "capital, capital—and so clever too, my dear!" in her ear. Mrs. Watkins' face, however, began to

harden as the gentleman in the front row of the opposition arose and began in clear and incisive sentences to critisize Hatfield's argument. In a few rapid sentences he seemed to sum it all up. Then he turned it over and presented it in another aspect, while some of those around him indulged in derisive laughter. Next he seized hold of separate portions and seemed to hold them up to ridicule and execration. He even questioned his opponents facts—said his figures on the subject of coal were distorted, illusory, and even imaginative—declared that Hatfield's youth was his only excuse for the enormity he had committed. Hatfield grew flushed as he sat listening, though making little attempts at taking notes or writing, and occasionally indulged in a little forced laugh which grated somewhat harshly on Gertrude's ears. She wished the man who was speaking would not be so merciless or would cease altogether, and was relieved when her aunt, with scornful expression, said she would not listen to "such insolent rubbish," and with lips compressed arose and led the way out. In the corridor Hatfield, who had seen their exit and hastened out to meet them, looking rather excited said hurriedly: "I'm afraid you've had a horribly dull afternoon—that is until I began to be roasted alive by ——." He mentioned the name of one of the opposition leaders with a little laugh, adding: "It won't do for me to leave now. I must hasten back and hear all he has to say as I shall have an opportunity some other time to pay him off. He's nothing if not bitter —though I have a horrible suspicion that he was right on one point, and that I made one slip in my figures, which was I trust excusable—under the circumstances." He bowed as he apparently alluded to his remark to Gertrude in the morning as to being disconcerted,—and she was now sorry she had come, for upon the whole she liked him.

CHAPTER XII.

AN ACCIDENT.

"WHAT'S going on in the House these days?' asked a gentleman in the smoking-room of the Rideau Club.

The question appeared to be directed toward no one in particular, a number of members of Parliament and others being present. A certain ex-minister who had been perusing a newspaper laid it across his knee saying:—

"I see Hatfield has been unloading a rather startling quantity of coal on the House. He dumped at least a cool half million tons more than the year's output can be made to total up. That young man needs snubbing, and I wish I'd been there to do it! He got a pretty good overhauling though, I'm happy to see. He must be trying to qualify for the portfolio of Exaggerator-General to the administration."

"Hatfield's usually pretty careful about his facts," put in one of the members.

"I fancy his head's been a little turned by his pretty cousin, Miss Southcote. They say he's quite gone in that quarter. She sat in the Senator's gallery, to inspire him I suppose, when he made his speech. I was there in the Speaker's gallery and saw it all. She didn't enjoy the dressing down he got much more than he, I fancy." All eyes were turned toward the young man who said this, who sat quietly smoking a cigar in one corner of the room. One of the members entered a mild protest, of "Come, come, Duffy, don't drag a lady's name up here."

"Rather a dangerous form of inspiration for him I should say," remarked the ex-minister.

"She's not his cousin, though," said another,—"she's a niece of his uncle's wife, that's all."

"Which makes it all the more dangerous for him!"

"What bobbery is this the uncle is up to in the Senate?" asked a gentleman who had been meantime quietly perusing his newspaper, "listen to this—'Hon. Mr. Watkins—Wednes-

day next—For a select committee to enquire into and report upon the condition of the band of Indians known as the Kickaways, and more particularly, (1) as to their moral and spiritual condition, (2) their physical and mental condition, (3) the kind, quality, quantity and cost of food supplied to them, (4) the kind, quality, quantity and cost of all other articles supplied to them, (5) the amount of money paid out to or for them in respect of annuities, presents or otherwise, (6) the general condition of their reserve and the progress made in agricultural, religious, and general education among them—with power to send for persons, papers and documents, and to report evidence from time to time and with all convenient speed.'"

"That's one of the results of old Watkins' trip to the north-west last summer. I saw by the papers he jumped out of the upper window of a burning farmhouse. Now he's going to set the world on fire I suppose!" said one.

"There is plenty of room for inquiry and for a thorough overhauling of that Indian Department," remarked the ex-minister; "but old Watkins may be trusted to get hold of the wrong end of things and to make a precious old ass of himself into the bargain!"

"His wife will comb his hair for him if he does!" predicted the man who had read the Senator's notice of motion. "But you haven't heard it all yet. He has got a question on the paper for the same day. 'Have the Government been informed of the presence of a young white girl among the Kickaway band of Indians, and if so what action is proposed to be taken to have her restored to her relations or friends?'"

There was a general exclamation of surprise.

"The Senator must have been among these Kickaways and got hold of some information," said the ex-minister. "I've always understood that their chief 'Big Kicker' was a wily old chap, but I hardly thought he'd carry off a white girl especially under the eyes of the Government agents and missionaries. I think I must go and hear what the Senator has to say. Discussion upon questions is allowed in the Senate—so the white girl must prepare to

be discussed, whether she exists or not outside of old Watkins' imagination—for the old gentlemen can hardly be expected to let such an interesting subject pass without discussion. I predict a big House for Watkins on Wednesday."

"I'd keep you company," said the young man in the corner, "if I thought the niece would be there—I'd like to see whether she and her aunt would be as much worked up when the Senator is sat upon as in Hatfield's case."

"Come along then by all means, though I fancy if Hatfield is there you needn't look for even a glance. A young and good looking member, and a safe seat is not to be picked up every day, and I fancy the young lady won't turn her back on him, even though his conceit has met what it deserves for once."

These notices had been shown by the Senator, with some pride, that morning to his wife, and in addition he had handed her a letter to read from the Rev. McWhirter, whom he explained that he had met in the Northwest, inquiring whether his presence would be required during the session at Ottawa, and intimating that he purposed going back to some remote region in the far west in about ten days after the letter was written, unless he meantime received an intimation that his presence was desired at Ottawa together with a remittance of $300 which would be necessary to enable him to make the trip. The letter was dated from Winnipeg."

"You didn't send the money I suppose," said Mrs. Watkins.

"Well, you see, my dear, I got the letter before I gave my notices. He would be off, goodness knows where, before I could get an order of the House, if I didn't reply at once. So I sent him $100 and told him the rest would be forthcoming when he arrived," explained the Senator.

"Then you trust this man?" queried his wife.

"Oh yes, he's a parson, so I've no doubt he's to be trusted. I'll get an order of the House in due time for his attendance and have no doubt I'll get my money back."

"You know best, of course, but I think I'd rather have had the order first."

"That was impossible under the circumstances, my dear. My motion can't be on before Wednesday—and then probably the Government will ask that it stand—and no time was to be lost in securing his attendance. He possesses a fund of information which will rather astonish the Government and the country, I fancy."

"I think I'd secure that fund of information then, if I were you, before advancing him further funds of my own."

"I have secured it in great part for myself," said the Senator tapping a note book which he had in his hand, "but it has to be submitted in due form by the sworn testimony of the man himself."

The Senator seemed well satisfied and the subject dropped.

That afternoon being Saturday, Mrs. Watkins and Gertrude, accompanied by Mr. Hatfield, drove down to a tobogganing party at Rideau Hall. The day was fine and the air clear and exhilarating—just one of those fine winter days which are really enjoyable, the snow crisp and dry, though the sun shone brightly; little or no wind, though the frosty air brought color to the cheeks and brightness to the eyes.

"Oh, don't let us go down that same old dreary road again," exclaimed Gertrude, who, in a blanket coat and tuque, looked more lively and charming than usual, Hatfield thought, "is there no other more interesting way we may take?"

"Yes," replied Hatfield, "we may go round by way of the Chaudiere and Hull, and cross on the ice to Rideau, but it will consume some time."

"Then by all means, let us go that way! What do you say, aunt?"

Mrs. Watkins offering no objection they turned up Wellington Street, passed by the cab stand, where Jean and Alphonse and Pat stood beside their respective sleighs and carioles, thwacking themselves to keep up the circula-

tion, and cracking jokes, French or Hibernian, according to the nationality of the particular Jehu—past Parliament square and its noble buildings, down to and over the Suspension Bridge, stopping to gaze upon the boiling Chaudiere, which Jack Frost could scarce restrain from bursting his bonds, then through the crowded French wooden town, doomed so often to be devastated by fire, down the river and across its surface on the ice road, thence up to Rideau Hall, that unimposing collection of incongruous buildings, the scene of so many vice-regal festivities, the social centre of the capital. The rink and toboggan slides were alive with pleasure-seekers. The bright colored winter costumes, the sparkling eyes and ruddy cheeks of the young ladies, whose merry laughter rang through the frosty air like sleigh bells, the stalwart manly figures of the gentlemen, whose costumes were in most cases no less bright than those of their fair companions, the swift rush of the toboggan, the click of the skates, the music of the band, formed a combination of sights and sounds quite exhilarating enough to raise the spirits of much older people than Gertrude and Mr. Hatfield, who, having been greeted by vice royalty, and having left Mrs. Watkins to bask in its sunshine, secured a toboggan and were soon speeding through the frosty air. They had enjoyed two meteor-like trips through space. Again they shot off from the summit down the steep descent, when a sudden swerve, a cry, a crash, a blinding avalanche of snow, and there they lay in a snow bank helpless for a few moments, until friendly hands raised first Gertrude and then her companion, who uttered a cry of pain as some one seized his arm.

"It feels as though it were broken," he said, "take hold of the other," and they did so. A few yards further on another party lay stranded in similar fashion—a young man and two ladies—none the worse, however, as they were on their feet in an instant or two after. The first vision of upturned mocassins and petticoats had startled the bystanders.

"Ah, Duffy, I owe you one for that," exclaimed Hatfield, "what made you follow us so closely?"

"Very sorry, I'm sure," said Duffy. "I thought I gave you lots of time. Something must have gone wrong with your toboggan. I hope Miss Southcote is none the worse. I shall never forgive myself!"

"Oh, I'm all right," answered Gertrude, "but Mr. Hatfield I fear, is not. We must go to aunt, and at once," she added, as she saw Hatfield's paleness and look of pain.

Fortunately there was a doctor present,—a fellow-member of the House of Commons—who was speedily called on and pronounced the injury to Hatfield's left arm not a very serious, though it proved a painful one. No bones were broken, but it had suffered a severe wrench, which necessitated his being taken home at once and being laid up for a few days. As they drove back to town slowly, that Hatfield's arm might not suffer from any sudden jolt, the look of tender solicitude in Gertrude's eyes almost repaid him he thought for all he suffered. Mrs. Watkins, too, was kindness personified.

"You should have remained behind, Miss Southcote," said he at length, looking, however, as if he were content that she had not.

"Oh, not for worlds! They asked me, but how could I? Apart from my duty to stand by you after getting you into this trouble, I could not have enjoyed myself a single moment."

Hatfield kept to the hotel for some days after this. Though not seriously injured, his arm was badly swollen and pained him when touched, and heavy clothing was unbearable.

Next morning Gertrude and her aunt, accompanied by the Senator, attended the church, standing literally upon a rock, which they had passed under when driving to the Chaudiere the day before. Gertrude never missed Sunday morning, and rarely Sunday evening, service. Her aunt went because it was the eminently proper thing to do, and the Senator went because his wife went. Sunday in this great hotel seemed not like Sunday at all to Gertrude. The glimpses which she caught, as she waited for the elevator, of the great paved hall alive with groups of men sitting or

standing about engaged, some in earnest talk, others in jokes and laughter; the large dining-room, with its skurrying white-jacketed *garcons*, its many guests at many tables, white-haired Senators, middle-aged and young members of Parliament, the lady relatives and friends of such as were fortunate enough to have them with them, the newspaper men, travellers and transient guests of all kinds, the clatter of dishes and the hum of conversation—always seemed out of place to Gertrude who had spent but few Sundays outside her own home until now. She could not help contrasting it all with the peaceful day of rest at home or the quiet Sabbaths in Muskoka, when the tinkling of the little church bell would come floating over the lake as they rowed to the Ellesmere church. Then her thoughts would wander off to Arthur and, as she wondered where he might be to-day and what he might be doing, she felt the tears coming to her eyes and the old self-reproaches to her heart. Perhaps he was not now living. The thought had come to her more than once and caused her unutterable anguish of mind, insomuch that she had been obliged to withdraw to the privacy of her own room and indulge in a good fit of weeping before she could compose herself.

Such had been her experience in the early part of this Sunday afternoon. She had however washed away the traces of tears and finally determining to maintain her usual composure for the rest of the day, she returned to the room where her aunt and the Senator sat. The former had the High Church paper, to which she always subscribed, across her lap. She had ceased reading and was toying with her eyeglasses. The Senator was enjoying ease, in the shape of a familiar sackcoat, a pair of gorgeous slippers and an arm chair. His thoughts were connected with the far off Kickaways and the misery of their condition. Yet the contemplation of such wretchedness did not seem to have a depressing influence upon the mind of their would-be benefactor. On the contrary he seemed to be in high good humor, as he thought of the blow which it devolved upon him to strike at blundering officialdom, on their behalf.

"I shall not spare them, you may rest assured, madam, once McWhirter is here to make good his statements as to the wretched condition of those miserable creatures. The Government have too long turned a deaf ear to the remonstrances of their friends. I don't say I should care to bring about their downfall, but they *must* be more careful, madam," and he looked at Mrs. Watkins, who had finished her paper and seemed ready to listen. She was, in fact, just then thinking that she could have presided with at least as much grace at the table of her husband, were he in the position occupied by a certain high official with whom they had dined a few evenings ago, as the wife of that gentleman had on that occasion. "If they will prefer incapacity," continued the Senator, "and downright dishonesty to—to—" The alternative which the Government had up to this time neglected for incompetency and dishonesty were not just then made known, for a knock at the door interrupted him, which Mrs Watkins answered by a laconic "come."

Hatfield entered. He wore a loose flannel coat or 'blazer,' with broad red and black stripes, the lounging garb usually reserved for his own room. His arm was in a sling. The colors became him, and his disabled arm lent interest to his appearance.

"Well, George!" exclaimed the Senator, "you look remarkably well, not to say cool, considering what a hard week of it you have just had—first knocked out in the House and trampled on, because you were put up to answer a ninny of a fellow instead of given your proper place in the debate—then tumbled into a snow bank by a young duffer of a civil servant—isn't Duffy a civil servant?—and then last night when I left you in your room, it looked as if you were going to finish yourself and the week together from the way your chums were gathering together, and the quantity of hot water which was being ordered up!"

While this speech was being hurled at him, George quietly took a seat, after bowing politely to the ladies.

"I'm afraid church has not made you charitable, Sen-

ator," he said, "there is something lurking under that 'hot water.'"

"There *was*, George, there *was* something lurking under it, but it didn't lurk there long after the hot water got atop of it, and the sugar and the spoon got into it—a thirstier looking crowd of young Commoners I haven't seen for some time—ha! ha!" and the Senator laughed loudly at his little sally.

"Now, that's what I call telling tales out of school—'tales' is hardly the word, either, with which to characterize such 'base calumnies,' as my opponent of the other day's debate would say. The doctor came in and ordered up some hot water to bathe my arm, and just because some other fellows dropped in about the same time and appropriated some of the hot water and my decanter—would you believe it, my dear aunt and cousin," and Hatfield looked appealingly first at Mr. Watkins and then more timidly at Gertrude, "on such a foundation is built this base and baseless calumny! Who would be guilty of hurling such an accusation at my head the moment it is put inside the door where hospitality is looked for? My prophetic soul might have told me, as Hamlet's did him, that no one but mine uncle could have had the heart to do it!"

"Oh—hot water for a swollen arm—who ever heard of such a thing? Do you mean to say that the doctor prescribed hot, when cold water was available?" demanded the Senator.

"There now—you see, ladies—what use is there in further argument with one who lives in the mediæval atmosphere of the senate—would he believe in any medical treatment more modern than bleeding, for any ailment? But," said the younger man, suddenly turning the tables on his senior, "you spoke of my overhauling in the House the other day. They say it's nothing to the roasting in store for you when your motions come up on Wednesday, my dear uncle!"

"Roasting indeed!" answered the Senator. "I'll do the roasting on that occasion, my boy,—if you don't believe it,

I invite you all to come and see—roasting indeed! I suppose that's what some of your young Commoners have been saying, after they had bathed themselves—inside—with your hot water and the contents of the decanter. I declare it makes me sometimes think of resigning and going in for the Commons—to hear some of these young fledgling legislators talk! If I were only twenty years younger!"—and the Senator wagged his head in token of the agitation which would prevail, in such event, in the political atmosphere.

Such little friendly passages at arms were not infrequent between the uncle and nephew, and never led to serious results. So the ladies preserved their equanimity. Mrs. Watkins had some slight misgivings as to the wisdom of the Senator's proposed course of action, but she was willing that he should have a tilt at the Government if he did not bring disaster upon himself, as she thought she had been treated somewhat superciliously by some of the official ladies. Gertrude had been so distracted by her own thoughts that she was not readily roused to a lively interest in the subjects of the present debate, though she could not help being a little amused. She looked very pretty, Hatfield thought, as she sat by the window, her head resting on her hand, an open book before her. Her brown hair looked soft and warm as it stood in relief against the snow on a house top seen out of the window. Her eyes were peculiarly soft and gentle to-day.

They did not go to the *table d'hote* again that day, out of consideration for their disabled guest, but Mrs. Watkins poured tea from a dainty teapot and tempered its strength with hot water from a little brass urn. Gertrude presided over the bread and butter and cake with infinite grace. Hatfield thought they made a comfortable and on the whole a cheerful little party. Later in the evening Hatfield asked Miss Southcote to sing and she went to the piano and sang one of the solos which she had been accustomed to sing for her father on a Sunday afternoon or evening at home. She began somewhat tremulously now "I will arise—I will arise, and go unto my Father, and will say unto Him—

Father, Father I have sinned." Her voice grew so plaintive that Hatfield feared she would break down, but she gathered resolution and steadiness as she proceeded and finished resolutely, while he sat and listened with bated breath. Her voice was clear, and he thought, excelled in sweetness any he had ever heard. It was abundantly strong too after the first few notes, for the room was not large. The Senator, still remembering what Gerturde had said to him on the steamer, as to the crippled condition of unmusical people, called out: "excellent, excellent! sing another for my nephew. He doesn't often enjoy such a treat, I'll be bound my dear," and presently slipped out to have a chat with a friend in the great hall below stairs. Mrs. Watkins, too had occasion to go into the next room, and did not return for some time. Gertrude was beginning to notice that this sort of thing happened more and more frequently, and became a little alarmed at being so often left alone with Mr. Hatfield—not that she disliked him or feared him, but she began to be fearful lest his constant society, the gaze which she sometimes found directed at her when he supposed her not observing him, with other little signs, might mean something more than mere cousinly regard. And she thought her aunt at all events was equally as observant as herself and that perhaps her little absences when Hatfield was present were not wholly unpremeditated. On this occasion she came back, after having left the young people together for nearly an hour, an interval during which, Hatfield, who pleaded his invalided condition as a special of ground of indulgence, succeeded in getting Gertrude to almost exhaust her repertoire of oratorio music, while he sat dreamily gazing at her, thoroughly enjoying with both eye and ear the privilege of being with her. He began to think it would be a blessed privilege to have her within sight and hearing always. This was not the first time the thought had come to him, but now it clung to him as he sat and looked at her and listened to her voice, and he felt that it was a pleasant thought, and that it was fast obtaining possession of him so completely that it would refuse to be shaken off. Meantime Gertrude

seemed anxious to gratify his taste for music, rather than for conversation. Perhaps she had some dim idea of what was passing in his mind, and feared that a stoppage of the music might bring with it some sort of crisis. At length her aunt returned to the room, and Hatfield shortly after rose to go.

"You must by no means disobey the injunction of the doctor to keep to the house for this week—or at any rate until the weather moderates. Make our apartments your headquarters if you like," said Mrs. Watkins in her most winning manner.

"There is little to tempt me out even if I could get my great coat on—especially when such delightful hours may be passed indoors as I have enjoyed this evening. Thank you, my dear Aunt, I shall not forget to avail myself of your kindness." And as he walked along the corridor he made up his mind that he would wear his arm in a sling for two weeks if the doctor said so—and he rather hoped he would.

CHAPTER XIII.

A DRAWING-ROOM SCENE.

HATFIELD exhibited no great restlessness at his enforced confinement to the hotel during the next few days. The swelling of the arm was going down, but he still carried it in a sling. The pain was fast disappearing and he rather liked the role of invalid. When he did not take his meals in his own room, he could always depend on getting one in Mrs. Watkins'. She made a point of ordering one whenever a meal hour approached and he was in her apartments. The Senator usually stuck to the public dining-room, and received his wife's excuses for not accompanying him with equanimity. Hatfield was shrewd enough to guess that the aunt had some designs upon him, while he enjoyed her kindness and solicitude for his wounded arm. He was quite sure however that Gertrude was no party to any

design on the part of her aunt. She was always kind and gentle, but there was a certain reserve which he had not been able to penetrate. While she did not shrink from general conversation, and was sometimes bright and cheerful, she seemed to avoid a *tete a tete* whenever it could be avoided without being likely to cause remark. She played and sang for him, she enquired gravely two or three times a day as to the state of his arm, she gave him the news when she came in from a luncheon party one day and from a skating party on another. She had even refused to skate with Mr. Duffy, she said, for no other apparent reason than the trouble he had brought on her uncle's nephew. She was altogether so kind and considerate that he felt himself, as he believed, falling helplessly in love with this girl—and yet he could not say to himself that he had received any assurance or even a sign of the sentiment being reciprocated by her. He was fully aware of his advantages as a good looking young Member of Parliament, rapidly rising in public life, with ample means. Yet these things he felt were not considered by her—even to the extent they should have been. There was a something about her manner which in some indefinable way seemed to warn him off, and yet, as is often the result, which seemed the more to lure him on to a hopeless infatuation. On one occasion when the aunt was about to make one of her now frequent exits on some pretext and leave him alone with her niece, he thought he noticed an appealing look, a something not quite a sign from the latter to her aunt, as though she would detain her. This rather galled him. Mrs. Watkins with manifest reluctance remained in the room, and Hatfield grew rather morose and finally withdrew. But Gertrude's unchanged gentle manner when they next met charmed him as before.

On the Wednesday following the accident at the tobogg-in slide, Hatfield was so far recovered that he himself proposed to have lunch in the public dining-room. In fact there was little excuse for his further confinement within doors, though he still wore his arm in a sling—as much, it must be confessed, for the sympathy it evoked from his,

friends as for any relief it gave to his almost completely restored arm. However, he said he could not stand too sudden a return to public life, even in the hotel.

"I must reappear by degrees, by easy stages," he said to Gertrude, as her aunt asked them to precede her to the dining-room, where she would join them in a few minutes, when the Senator should have come in. "Let us walk down stairs and take a turn through the drawing-room. We shall meet some one there, which will serve to break the ice," he added. So they sauntered down and into the drawing-room without, however, encountering a soul, save a waiter and a chamber-maid in one of the corridors. The drawing-room was empty. He threw himself upon a sofa, and she, thinking her aunt who had heard his remark as they set out, would find them there, sat down in an arm-chair near by.

A young man a few moments later came out of the room in which he had lately been quartered, turned the key in the door and walked quietly along the corridor leading past the drawing-room. As he neared the drawing-room entrance he swerved towards it, and, impelled by idle curiosity, glanced in and stopped suddenly, as though a ball had struck him. He saw a beautiful girl, her side face half turned from him, as she looked at the young gentleman, who, clad in a black velvet lounging coat, was half reclining upon a sofa. This gentleman's left hand seemed pressed to his heart—the presence of a bandage escaped the spectator's observation—while the other hand was outstretched toward the lady as if in entreaty. But what absorbed the young onlooker's attention, and seemed to make his blood boil, was the expression of the man's face, and especially his eyes, in which the light of love shone with such an absorbed look, as, while it seemed a revelation to the stranger, seemed also to exclude his presence from the lover's gaze, which was obviously engrossed by his fair companion to the exclusion of everything else.

"Ah, Gertrude!" The young man standing there heard these words only. Then raising his hand to his curly

hair as if dazed, he turned on his heel and slowly and sorrowfully walked away. He walked down the corridor, the stairway, into the lunch room, and sat down at a table by himself, as though in a dream. He gazed vacantly at the bill of fare, and, as the waiter bent over him to take his order, suddenly got up again and went out. The waiter gazed after him in mute surprise, looked at one of his *confreres* standing behind the next table, smiled, threw up his hand, and shrugged his shoulders after the manner of his race, then dusted with his napkin the place where, however, the stranger had left no crumbs, and having paid this little tribute to habit, passed on to take the order of a new-comer.

The young man who had looked in unobserved at the drawing-room door, had not misinterpreted either the look or words of Hatfield.

"Ah, Gertrude," he sighed, gazing intently up at the face of her who sat looking out of the window behind him. Seen from the place where the young stranger had stood, she might have been returning his look, so wrapped in thought was she, as she gazed through the window with a wistful, absent air. "I may, I hope, presume to call you by that name; our cousinship you know, if nothing else, should give me that right," he continued. She slowly withdrew her gaze from the window. Then her consciousness of the present returned to her, as she looked and saw his ardent glance and she colored slightly. As the torch applied to tinder, the spark falling in the powder magazine—that one look seemed to fire his soul. He sat up suddenly. "Gertrude," he said passionately, "I think of you always by that name, and I would call you by it, not by right of a fictitious cousinship, but—because I love you. Will you give me—not the right to call you cousin Gertrude—but the right I covet, to call you Gertrude Hatfield?" He rose to his feet as he spoke holding out his right hand entreatingly. There was no mistaking his meaning now, or that he was in earnest, thought Gertrude in dismay.

She also rose. "Mr. Hatfield," she said gently, "that you

mean what you say I cannot doubt, and, believe me, I feel deeply the honor you do me. But—it is impossible."

"Why impossible?" he cried. It was his turn to be dismayed.

"Because—because," she faltered—and then sinking back to the seat from which she had just risen she burst into tears. "Mr. Hatfield," she sobbed, "please do not speak of this to me again. Believe me, it is out of the question."

"Is there—some other?" he asked quietly, when she, quickly stifling her sudden emotions became more composed.

"There is," she answered simply, as she looked up with tearful but resolute eyes, "though I may never marry, my heart is given to another—unchangeably."

Hatfield began pacing up and down, then stopped before her.

"Gertrude," he said, "forgive me for my sudden declaration—but somehow it has been coming on for some time, ever since I have known you I think. I hope I have not deceived myself with the thought that you could learn to love me—and become my wife," he paused, as if for a reply, then went on quickly: "I will not press you further now. This is no place for such a scene, I know. Please think of what I have said, and do not doom me without full consideration."

"I am very, very sorry, Mr. Hatfield," she answered, rising again as she spoke, "but consideration will not mend matters. Please do not think me unkind, or that I do not appreciate your regard. But I must go; I have a headache which will prevent my going downstairs," and she moved toward the door.

"I cannot accept so sudden a decision—unless the nature of your—your tie precludes my speaking further."

Gertrude merely shook her head as she sorrowfully moved away, while he walked beside her, crestfallen. Not another word was spoken until they reached her aunt's apartments. Fortunately they encountered no one on the

way. At the door she turned, and tried to smile, saying simply: "thank you."

"Remember," he said, "I do not accept this as final. I must have another chance," and so saying he turned, as she entered the room, and made his way towards his own part of the house, where he shut himself in his room for the rest of the day, postponing his public re-appearance as well as his luncheon for the present.

Gertrude found no one in her aunt's apartments. Mrs. Watkins had evidently gone with the Senator to lunch. She sat down in her own room and gave herself up to thought. She would not, she thought, say anything about this affair to her aunt at present, at any rate. If Hatfield chose to mention it, she could not help it, but wounded pride would probably keep him silent until she should have time to get away from Ottawa and home once more. She saw all the advantages which a marriage with Hatfield offered. She was quite alive to the fact that many caps had been set at him in vain—that he was the most eligible bachelor in the House of Commons, that were she to accept him she would be accounted to have made the most brilliant match of the season, and that her future would be assured. And yet she did not waver in her resolution to be true to her promise to Arthur now. Six months ago when she had to decide between a life of self-denial and hardship with the man she loved, or comfort apart from him, these comforts which were now offered her by another had seemed very precious to her. Now she scarce gave them a second thought. She at all events would sacrifice them all to-morrow for life with Arthur at Prairie Cottage. Now that that haven was effaced from the earth and Arthur gone she knew not where, she sighed, womanlike, for the unattainable, more sincerely than she had sighed a half year ago for the comforts which a union with Hatfield would now assure for her. At any rate, she thought, she had her own home yet and there she would go, and would remain. She was true as steel to Arthur now.

To her aunt when she came up from luncheon she excused her absence by saying she had a headache and had

returned to her room. Mr. Hatfield, she supposed, had gone to his own apartments probably preferring to lunch there quietly than to go alone to the dining-room.

"We dine out this evening, you remember, and I do hope, Gertrude, you will be able to go. I know George has been invited." Mrs. Watkins always spoke of Mr. Hatfield as George—"and I do hope he will be able to go. It is such a pleasant house, every one says."

George, however, sent down a note shortly after to his aunt to say that he thought he would not venture out this evening as he needed further rest, and he asked her to make the fullest explanations to their host, the Hon. Mr. Sterling—a Cabinet Minister—as to his physical condition. He took care to put in the word "physical," surmising that the note would be read to Gertrude.

"Mr. Watkins is anxious that we should go to the Senate this afternoon as his motions about the Indians are to come up. Do you feel equal to going?" asked Mrs. Watkins.

Gertrude said she really did not feel up to it, but compromised with her aunt by promising to go to the dinner-party in the evening.

"It doesn't matter very much, I fancy," said her aunt, "as I understand these motions are usually laid over once or twice before they are discussed, and Mr. Watkins half anticipates something of the kind to-day. I would have gone to the House with him but he had a horrid creature in tow—a Mr. McWhirter, who had just arrived in town, and fastened himself on the Senator as we came from luncheon. He knows all about the Indians, my dear, but he's not the sort of man I care to go to the House in company with. As you are not going, I shall stay at home too, and take a rest before going out this evening."

As his wife anticipated, the Senator's motions stood over to a future day. When they were called the Government leader asked that they stand, in order that he might consult his colleagues and make some enquiry respecting the subject matter of them. "When would it be convenient to have them brought on?" Senator Watkins asked. "Oh,

in a couple of days. How would Tuesday suit?" asked the Minister across the floor. Senator Watkins would rather have them disposed of this week, to which the Minister demurred, as it would be impossible for him to get full information so soon. So Tuesday was named as the day and the matter was so far settled. But it was by no means satisfactory to McWhirter, who, as Mrs. Watkins said, had fastened himself on the Senator. No sooner was the matter disposed of in the House than Senator Watkins received a pressing invitation on a fragment of paper from McWhirter to come out to the lobby. That distinguished philanthropist was pacing up and down when the Senator came out. His linen duster had given place to a rather threadbare overcoat; a well worn fur cap and an attentuated muffler kept his upper portion warm. Huge overshoes covered his boots, whose leather legs showed their presence beneath the once black trowsers. He speedily explained to the Senator why he had sent in for him. Being a minister of the gospel, the Senator would understand, he was not blessed with much worldly wealth. The hundred dollars he had received from the Senator were already exhausted in the purchase of his return ticket and various other travelling expenses. The long and the short of it was that he could not stay over in Ottawa for a week, with no certainty at the end of that time as to when his evidence would be called for, his other engagements meantime neglected and all his domestic affairs left to take care of themselves, for less than another couple of hundred dollars. The Senator pointed out that his motion would be on on Tuesday when in all human probability he would be granted a committee. Then the witnesses would be summoned and their fees paid. Until he got his committee of course he could do nothing for his friend, unless he put his hand in his own pocket, which, as the Senator remarked, he had already done to a sufficient extent. Whether the Rev. Mr. McWhirter was familiar with the delays of parliamentary proceedings or was in financial straits, he declared he could not and would not remain until next week unless the Senator could furnish financial relief—the

upshot being that the Senator presented him with a $10 bill to meet immediate and pressing wants, and promised, if he would remain until Saturday, to see him again and try to arrange matters so that he should remain until his evidence was called for. Of course it was out of the question that the man should be allowed to go away now, and we may so far anticipate as to mention that the Senator saw nothing for it on the Saturday, but to himself in the meantime pay the sum demanded. He would, of course, be recouped in due time when the committee met, but in the meantime he thought it would be as well that he should not mention the transaction to his wife, who had indulged in some well-meant but useless criticisms when he told her of having sent the first sum to McWhirter.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN UNEXPECTED GUEST.

As Senator and Mrs. Watkins and the beautiful Miss Southcote entered the drawing-room of their host that evening, the latter came forward to meet them, smiling, and at the same time with a look of solicitude on his countenance.

"I'm so glad you've come, even without our friend Hatfield. How is he, Mrs. Watkins? I'm sure that with the kind attention which the doctor tells me you have been showing him, he ought to be restored by this time."

"He appeared almost so this morning, but this afternoon he seemed disinclined to risk coming out, though he charged me by a note to assure you, that while he thought he had better not come out, his condition was such that you need give yourself no uneasiness as to his being in his place for the vote you expect, on Friday I believe. He said he would not need a 'pair.'"

"I'm glad to hear it. I should be glad to hear that he had decided to 'pair' some day in another sense, but he

has hitherto been proof against Cupid's darts.. A good wife is a great help to a politician, as I've no doubt the Senator has found out by this time. I've never known Hatfield inactive for so long. And the doctor tells me he seems to like his prison bars. Can you corroborate this, Miss Southcote?" asked the minister, turning to Gertrude, who murmured a rather unintellegible reply.

"I had a note from him this afternoon too," he went on, without noticing, or seeming at any rate to notice her embarrassment, "and I really was at a loss for a substitute to fill his place which is an important one, as he would have had the honor of taking you in, Miss Southcote. Fortunately a young gentleman, whose father showed me much kindness in early days—for I went to school with him—came to see me just at this critical juncture, so I invited him to fill Hatfield's place, which I hope he may do acceptably. I did not tell him of the honor in store for him. Left him to find that out for himself, all in good time. He seems a fine young fellow. Ah, I think he is coming—all the rest are here, I believe," and Mr. Sterling looked round the room.

The minister's wife had engaged the Senator in conversation, while on their right a couple of French members of parliament were talking together. These members had wives with whom a certain railway magnate and a Montreal merchant were conversing. This merchant, Gertrude had already recognized as her travelling acquaintance, Mr. Graham, and had exchanged a bow with him. Another member of parliament and his daughter, a small, but talkative young lady, were in conversation with the daughter of the house, a rather handsome girl with a frank and winning manner. These made up the party, with the exception of the young gentleman, who was announced at the moment Mr. Sterling made the last remark already quoted.

The next moment was one of the most trying, and yet one of the happiest in Gertrude's life—for the young man who entered was none other than Arthur Rashfellow!

Very handsome he certainly looked in evening dress,

though his face and hands showed unmistakeable signs of exposure to the elements. He stood still and colored to the roots of his curly hair as his eye fell on the group immediately before him. As for Gertrude, the surprise was tenfold greater to her than to him. He had not expected to meet her to-night, but he knew she was in the Capital and had in fact seen her. She, till that moment, knew not whether he was dead or alive—and her head swam and she thought she was about to swoon. Fortunately a huge group of ferns, behind which she involuntarily shrank, hid her from the eyes of all save her aunt and their host, who at once stepped forward and shook Arthur cordially by the hand. Seeing that the young man was known to the party among whom he now stood, Mr. Sterling said, "I see you need no introduction, Rashfellow, except to my wife"—to whom he immediately presented him. "My dear, the Senator will take you in. Now, Mrs. Watkins"—saying which he gave his arm to the Senator's wife, whose presence of mind had not for a moment deserted her, as she gave the tips of her fingers to Arthur, with a rather icy smile and the remark, "who would have thought to see *you* here." The Senator had had time only to cry out "why, Rashfellow, my boy, 'pon my word?" when he was borne off by his hostess and Arthur and Gertrude stood side by side.

It is a singular, but authentic fact, that the only words which passed between this young couple, whose acquaintance dated from childhood, as they followed in the rear portion of this procession to the dining-room, were a remark by Arthur to the effect that it was a very cold night, followed by a trembling "yes, very," from Gertrude.

The custom still prevailed at this table of marking each guest's place by a card bearing his or her name, and as they reached their places Arthur picked up the card before him, having first appropriated the button-hole bouquet which lay on it, read "Mr. Hatfield, M. P."

"I've got into a wrong place, Miss Southcote," he said. At the "Miss Southcote" Gertrude's heart sank, but she answered:

"Oh, no, I think not. Mr. Hatfield is not well, and your

coming on the scene being quite unexpected, you were assigned to his place." She was ready to add, "and very glad I am of it," but the look which came into his face that instant repelled her.

"Who is this Mr. Hatfield?" he asked, though all the the world knew who Hatfield was. "Does he wear a black velvet coat and is he dark and—and—bald?" and he turned almost fiercely to Gertrude as he asked the question.

"Not bald, certainly," she answered quietly, "though your description otherwise answers. He wears a black velvet coat sometimes. He had one on this morning in fact," and she coloured slightly as she spoke of that morning.

"I thought so!" growled Arthur. They were not making much headway towards a reconciliation. So thought Mrs. Watkins, as she eyed them sharply from a distance. Gertrude was silent. She hardly knew what to say, for she did not wish her neighbors' attention to be attracted to them, as it certainly would if he continued in this strain. It was a trying ordeal for the young lady. Here by her side sat the young man to meet whom once more had been her constant prayer for months past, and yet she scarcely dare speak to him. She was rejoiced to see how handsome he was, and how manly his bearing. He, for his part, was, if possible, more deeply in love with her than before. But he had spent many bitter days since they last met, and this one had been the bitterest of all. He had seen her being made love to by another man, and lending, apparently a willing ear. He had tried to make himself believe that the attentions of this man were obnoxious to her, but the evidence was all the other way. He had rushed about endeavoring to do the business on which he had come to Ottawa, but had found it difficult to keep his wits together. He had called, among others, upon the Minister whom he had heard his father often mention. When he told the Hon. Mr. Sterling where he had been and what his errand was, that gentleman looked thoughtful for a moment, glanced at a paper which lay upon his table, and asked him, in a kindly way, not to

hasten his movements, to stay in town a few days, and to say nothing to anyone as to whence he came or what his business was—and he would see what could be done. Then he had asked him to dinner, and Arthur had thought it to his interest to accept. It would serve, too, he hoped, to distract his thoughts. And now he found that he was asked only to fill the place of that other man, who could not come—that man who had spent the day in making love to Gertrude, who was a wealthy member of Parliament, and could afford to let her spend an hour or two apart from him, amusing herself with a former lover whom she had cast off! He did not wonder at the man's infatuation, for he saw that she was more beautiful than ever. She was a woman now, and one of whom any lover might feel proud; and doubtless this man was proud of her, and would ask her how her former lover had borne himself, how he had taken the dose prepared for him; whether he had snatched at the chance to make a fool of himself again, by a further struggle against fate. His heated fancy, filled with such bitter thoughts, Arthur sat sullenly silent.

Gertrude made an effort to draw him out, asking gently where he had been, and how he had fared since last they met.

"Oh, nowhere you'd care to hear of—away out west." Under other circumstances he would have disregarded his host's injunction to keep silent as to his late movements, but now he determined to follow his advice. "I had some business to do down here, so I came. I'm sorry, now, I did so. I was better where I was. I hope to get my business over soon and be off again." He spoke so bitterly that Gertrude with difficulty kept the tears from filling her eyes. She was aware that many eyes were upon her, and she endeavored to preserve her wonted outward calmness. She knew that her aunt was watching her. Once she caught the kindly, frank eye of Mr. Graham looking at her over a bank of flowers in the middle of the table. She made one other unavailing attempt to draw Arthur into kindly conversation.

"Have you sold your farm, Arthur? It was perhaps not a fortunate question. Had she been less distracted by hopes and fears, she would not have asked it. Perhaps she hoped he would give her a whispered invitation to go again to live there with him, in which case she was now willing to accept. Perhaps he had, notwithstanding her heartless treatment, built another home for her, and would communicate the joyful news—instead of that he said merely:

"No—but it's as good as sold, I shan't go back *there* again!"

He spoke almost brusquely, and showed such a disinclination for conversation, at all events with her, that she, fearing their strained relations would be the subject of observation, was reluctantly forced to turn to her neighbor on the left, who was endeavoring to attract the attention of the belle of the evening by exclamations of admiration at the beauty of the flowers before them. He was a dapper little man, a member of Parliament, with a shining bald pate and well brushed whiskers, who talked in a loud platform voice.

"Ah, I see you admire flowers, Miss Southcote. These are very fine. I saw Hatfield buying some very fine ones last week. I suppose you saw them. Fine fellow, Hatfield. One of our rising men. You are sort of cousins, I believe, which gives you a claim to lots of bouquets I suppose. No, not cousins? Well so, much the better—so much the greater compliment, don't you see?"

The man rattled on in his loud clear voice, always bringing in the name of Hatfield at short intervals, until Gertrude would have been glad to have seen him muzzled. Her head almost swam as she sat and scarcely pretended to listen. She feared that Arthur would interfere with some angry explanation and create a scene—but she heard him indulging in some very laconic answers to the enquiries someone was directing to him. "Beastly place. Ottawa." "Want to get away soon as I can." "Yes?" "No"—and then he seemed to lapse into silence. She heard the Senator dilating upon some defects in the construction of

the C. P. R. to the hostess. She heard the railway magnate talking about art with the daughter of the house. She heard someone rallying Graham upon the subject of Imperial Federation, and heard his good natured reply that that was the subject which had brought him to Ottawa now. She heard her aunt and the minister talking of the ladies at the last drawing-room. She heard the daughter of the M. P. beside her giving her impressions of Ottawa to Arthur. She heard reminiscences in French of the last election of one of the members. She heard fragments of all these conversations and all the time she was conscious of the loud clear voice of the man beside her, who seemed to talk of no one but Hatfield. Hatfield in the house. Hatfield on the stump. Hatfield's talents, and Hatfield's wealth and prospects in the political future. He even informed her confidentially that when a Hatfield party was formed, he would be in it. She was glad indeed when the ordeal was over and the ladies rose.

Before she left the table she said to Arthur that she hoped they would see him soon. Was he staying at the Russell? Yes, he was, but he hated hotels and would get away from it as soon as possible. If he had to remain, he thought he would get a room somewhere and take his meals at the club, where he had been "put up" by a friend. She had no furthur opportunity for conversation with him that evening. Things were evidently going from bad to worse with him.

The Senator was in good spirits as they drove home. "Uncommonly good dinner, my dear," he said. "Our host evidently keeps a good cook. He's not a half bad sort of fellow and about the only one of the Cabinet I care to dine with." He might have added, or who cared to have him to dinner. "I gave him and our railroad friend some valuable points. He knew too much to say anything about the Kickaways, though I could see he was dying to. He knew that Watkins would not be caught with chaff. Eh, Gertrude, by the way, what's brought your old beau on the scene just now? He looked rather glum, I thought. I hope there isn't going to be another fire! My dear, we must

look to our fire escapes. Rather high up for a jump, eh, my dear!"

Mrs. Watkins and Gertrude did not seem inclined to join in his hilarity. Gertrude answered a few questions as to Arthur, and told her aunt all that she knew about the cause of his being here, which was, as we have seen, very little. As soon as they had reached their apartments she went to her own room, into which her aunt followed her.

"Tell me, Gertrude, truly," she said, "is there anything yet—between that young man and you?"

"No, there is not, aunt—but—oh, aunt—I love him more than ever—though he seems to be so changed"—and she burst into a tears. Her aunt endeavored to soothe her, but her efforts for a time were fruitless. At length she dried her eyes and, looking up, said:

"Aunt Caroline, I think I really must go home. You have been very kind to me and I have been here now nearly a month. It is selfish of me to have stayed so long from home, where I think I am needed."

"Nonsense, Gertrude," said her aunt. "I understood you were to stay the session. They will do very well without you at home." Mrs. Watkins turned the matter over quickly in her mind. If there were any danger from Arthur's presence, it would be less here than should Gertrude return home. If the young man was in pursuit of her still he would surely follow her sooner or later to her home, and she knew perfectly well from experience that he would meet with less opposition there than here. Meantime he did not seem in the humour for a renewal of the engagement. Then, again, she had great hopes of Hatfield, which would come to naught should the girl go away now.

"I cannot—cannot stay longer, I fear, dear aunt," said the unhappy girl.

"You are nervous and unsettled by this—this sudden incident. You will feel better after a night's rest. You cannot think of going before the ball on the 10th. We have accepted, and you know you are expected to be there.

George would be so disappointed should you go" As light flush, which came into the girl's face at the mention of Hatfield's name, arrested her aunt's attention, and caused her to say, "Gertrude, I have hoped, I confess, that you might take a fancy to George, and he to you. Such a thing, of course, depends upon yourselves, and your mutual—a—sentiments. But were such a match possible, it would be a most suitable one, and, I assure you, would be very gratifying to the Senator and myself." "Arthur has evidently treated her coldly," thought Mrs. Watkins, "indeed, I could see that much for myself, and it may be possible to direct her thoughts in a new channel, if they have not already run in that direction. Desperate cases call for desperate remedies. I have always had influence with her, and I must exert it now. I believe George only requires encouragement, if I am any judge in such matters."

Gertrude's answer, however, showed her that the case was more desperate than she supposed, for her niece said simply:

"Aunt, that is impossible! Mr. Hatfield asked me to be his wife this very day, and I—I told him no."

"Told him you would not have him, do you mean?"

"Yes, aunt. How could I do otherwise? I could not marry a man I do not love, while I *do* love another!"

"What, throw over a man like George for such a one as Arthur! I don't wish to say anything to the detriment of your boy beau, but remember, Gertrude, how hopeless this attachment has been in the past, and be just to yourself."

But no amount of argument could shake the girl. So at length she desisted, thinking it best to trust to her old allies, time and circumstances, and to aid them all she could when opportunity offered. She kissed her niece good night and left her.

"What, refuse George Hatfield, and all for that boy. The girl must be mad!" was the simple commentary of the Senator when the news was communicated to him. "She'll think better of it, never fear," he added, as he closed his eyes for the night.

Next morning Arthur met Graham accidentally at the breakfast-table. The latter was bright and cheerful as usual, while the younger man seemed so gloomy and out of sorts that his companion could not help remarking it.

"Did last night's good dinner disagree with you?" asked the Montreal man, with a smile.

"Yes, it did—uncommonly," answered Arthur, lugubriously.

His companion eyed him for a few moments. Then he said:

"Look here, Rashfellow, do you remember my injunction to you the last time I saw you—not to say die and give up. You seem as if you were going to disregard my advice. I had my eye on you last night. I think I know what ails you, and you don't go the right way about obtaining a cure."

"Thank you, Graham, but my disease has become so firmly rooted that I shall never be rid of it. It has now assumed an acute form."

"Look here, old fellow, forgive my seeming impertinence. You are in love with a certain young lady and when you meet her after a long separation, you treat her almost rudely. However do you expect to win in that way?"

"That's all very well—but suppose some other fellow has stepped in meantime and dethroned you—Graham, I am talking to you as I would to no one else. You've always shown me kindness. Do you know a man named Hatfield?"

"What Hatfield, the member—is he your rival?"

Arthur bowed his head in token of assent.

"He's a formidable rival—there's no concealing that. Yet I would say this much to you, Rashfellow. If I did not know that you were steadfast and unchangeable in your affections, I would say, perhaps, try and forget this girl. As it is I will only say that I believe she is not indifferent to you. Though Hatfield is formidable, I would not take it for granted that he is irresistible. If opportunity presents itself again, change your manner. Don't give up in despair. I know you will not be any happier for taking

the other course. It's not your nature to get over a thing of this kind as some men would—or, as I've said, I might be less ready to advise as I do. I wouldn't give up such a girl as that for all the Hatfields in the universe!" said Graham as he rose from the table.

"All very well," thought Arthur, "but it's too late now! Graham's a good fellow, but he doesn't know it all."

CHAPTER XV.

WAITING ON A MINISTER.

THERE were three people in Ottawa who were thoroughly wretched for several days succeeding the day upon which the events narrated in the two preceding chapters took place. There were no doubt others who were wretched. The disappointed politicians who have lost an election or missed a seat in the Cabinet; the baffled lobbyists who have come full of hope, carrying their heads high and expecting to sweep away all opposition to their schemes or extinguish the projects of their opponents as soon as they have appeared on the scene, who are prepared, if necessary, to browbeat Ministers, and bully, if they cannot cajole, their own members, and after a few days of ineffectual waiting and watching, have arrived at a sickening sense of their own insignificance, and have retired to seats in the hotel lobbies, where they sadly meditate a retreat homewards; the disgusted office-seekers, who have felt that their superior claims are again about to be ignored in favor of persons, in their eyes, infinitely less deserving; the contractors, and railway and other promotors, whose tenders and pet schemes have been quietly passed over or ignominiously pigeon-holed; the hundred and one other hangers-on who have not got what they wanted, and have exhausted all sources of influence at their command, and have vowed their vows of vengeance—representatives of all these numerous classes were already present at the capital, filled

with reflections so bitter as to entitle them to be classed among the wretched of the earth. Still most of them felt a consciousness more or less dim of the possible dawn of the day to which every dog, however wretched, is proverbially entitled to look as his special day of recompense and of retribution to his adversaries. No hope of such a dawn for them seemed possible now to either Gertrude or Arthur, while Hatfield, if not entirely cast down, having his interest in public affairs to support him, was still a good deal more wretched than he ever remembered having been, at all events since the day when, through over confidence, he had allowed himself to be defeated in a municipal election contest—a disaster, however, which his subsequent victory in a wider field had amply recompensed to him.

Hatfield was too much of a practical politician to be an utterly disconsolate lover, yet too much in love to be able to console himself for the time being with politics. He set himself to reading the newspapers, to parliamentary returns as well as lighter literature. He read the newspaper paragraphs regarding himself, in which the universal wish for his speedy restoration to health and his parliamentary duties was expressed in ministerialist and opposition press alike. He read the speeches in the house, but his mind refused to follow them. The glories of *King Solomon's Mines* even failed to divert his mind completely from the thoughts which were at present engrossing it. He had refused to take Gertrude's answer as a final one, and he had, as a general thing, a faith in his "star," and tried to make himself believe that it would soon be in the ascendant again. He was fully aware of his eligibility and could see no reason—looking at the matter from a practical standpoint—why his suit should not in the end be successful. There was something, however, in the young lady's manner and words which gave him uneasiness and many misgivings as to the ultimate result. Then he endeavored as a practical politician to call to his aid the old adage as to there being as good fish in the sea as ever were caught—or as refused to be caught, in the present case—and he knew that he had but to cast in his hook

and many of these other good fish would jump at it. But he found this very poor consolation for the present. When a man has set his heart upon salmon he does not care to be told that he can have cod or mackerel. Altogether Hatfield spent a wretched day after his interview with Gertrude in the drawing-room and the friends who looked in upon him during the day and evening did not manage to raise his spirits very much.

Next morning he thought he must get out. Though he had rather liked his confinement before, it was now becoming unendurable. He deemed it wisest to keep away from Gertrude for the present, feeling that absence for a time would increase his chances, if he had any at all. So he determined to perform some departmental duties for some of his neglected constituents, a pile of whose letters lay on the table before him. One wanted certain fishing privileges, another had heard of a vacancy in the customs and, having already passed the civil service examination and waited for two years, living on his parents and giving up all chances of more lucrative employment, he was now ready to drop into the vacant place. One young man would like a post in the Northwest. Two or three others wrote simultaneously announcing the death of a country postmaster and each pressing his claim to the appointment—salary some $25 per year. Still another wanted a license to sell postage stamps in the county town. These and many other like missives Hatfield placed in a bundle enclosing them with an india rubber band and putting them in the pocket of his overcoat, sallied forth. Going down in the elevator he became conscious of the presence of a young man with curly hair who stood and scowled upon him as they descended. The scowl upon the good-looking face did not seem natural to him. He thought the young man handsome and manly-looking, but wondered why he scowled so. He should have thought good nature and generosity his characteristics, were it not for this expression of marked displeasure..

A half hour later as he sat in the outer room of one of the minister's offices, waiting his turn to be admitted, Mr. Sterling entered with the young man he had seen in the hotel elevator.

"How do, Hatfield. Glad to see you out again. So sorry you were unable to be with us last night," said the minister, and before Hatfield had time to more than mutter something in answer about his arm still troubling him, the minister and the young man had disappeared through the green baize door which led to the room of the departmental chief whom he desired to see.

"Pretty cool, after I've been here already fifteen minutes," said Hatfield to the private secretary who sat writing at his desk. "Some young constituent who wants a place, I suppose, and will probably get it if all competitors' are passed over as they passed me by. Do you know him?"

The secretary answered in the negative and went on with his work, with that dignified deliberation characteristic of Governmental secretaries. A pile of letters lay before him finished and ready for the signature of his chief. He was now at work on another, and many more of a similar strain were to follow. They contained a most courteous and elaborate announcement of the fact that the Minister had at present no vacancy in his department to which the person addressed or the one for whom that person had written could at present be appointed, but that the letter, being acknowledged, would be kept on fyle, and should it be possible in the future, etc., etc. The letters were always addressed to "My dear So-and-So" by name. Hatfield knew their whole formula by heart, and as he watched the young secretary elaborately penning the well-worn sentences which brought such mingled feelings of disappointment and hope to the recipients, he wondered whether his daily occupation ever disturbed the young man's rest at night. It seemed so sad and funereal a routine, this quietly and decently burying the aspirations of the anxious applicants, that Hatfield could not help comparing it in his mind to the noiseless duties of the undertaker as he makes the "final arrangements." Occasionally the young man took time to twirl his moustache or look out of the window at the beautiful view, and it was evident that his mind was in nowise clouded by the mournful character of his occupation. Hatfield found temporary relief from the

contemplation of these proceedings by taking up the local paper from the Minister's county town, which with many other country papers lay upon the table or were arranged upon files in the little waiting-room without. Hatfield's patience was about exhausted when an electric bell sounded and the Secretary disappeared behind the green baize door. Presently he returned and announced the coast clear for Mr. Hatfield, the brother Minister and his young protege having made their exit, by another door, into the hallway.

"I wonder who that young fellow is," said Hatfield, his thoughts again reverting to Rashfellow, (for it was he). "He doesn't look like an ordinary office-seeker, and why the dickens do the Ministers make so much of him."

Meanwhile Arthur strode down the corridor alongside Mr. Sterling, who remarked:

"That was Mr. Hatfield, the rising young member from the maritime provinces, whom we left waiting in the ante-room. I did not care to introduce you just at present. It was he whose place you took so opportunely—and acceptably—at dinner last evening."

Arthur winced a little, noticing which the Minister went on:

"It is said he is rather attentive to the young lady you took in, and as he has had frequent opportunities of making himself agreeable—she being the niece of his uncle, Senator Watkin's wife—you could scarcely expect to entirely displace him in an evening—though I forgot by the way," said the Minister, noticing the by no means pleasant expression the young man's face had assumed, "you and Miss Southcote had met before, which no doubt accounts for the headway you made against such odds. You will have an opportunity to renew the acquaintance at the ball at Madame Bureau's on Wednesday next, if not sooner. You must certainly remain over for that, if for nothing else. You received your card?"

Arthur answered in the affirmative and the minister shook hands and pursued his way to his own department, leaving his young friend at the main entrance. The helmeted Dominion policeman, in his trim uniform, saluted

the young man whom he had seen parting from the minister, as he held open the door for him.

Arthur passed out in hot haste. He felt his face burning and longed to face the bracing winter air. Could he not go anywhere without seeing or hearing of this fellow Hatfield? What was he but a blue-nosed upstart, with plenty of money and "gab" no doubt? That was enough for Gertrude now, it seemed. This morning after breakfast he had thought on what Graham had said to him and had almost made up his mind to stay at the hotel and seek out Gertrude and bare his heart to her once more. He thought it was too late, as she was evidently committed to this man, but his determination to steel his heart had begun to waver, and he had, after Graham's words, softened a good deal—after all, he thought he would have it from her own lips if she were going to marry the man, who, it seemed, was confined to his room. But a short time after he saw the man in the elevator evidently restored to health. He scowled as he thought bitterly that an interview with Gertrude would be no comfort to himself or her now. Still he had not quite made up his mind, until he had again seen Hatfield in the ante-room and heard the subsequent words of Mr. Sterling about him and the girl he had loved, but who loved him no longer. It was evidently in everybody's mouth, and the best thing he could do would be to keep out of the way as much as possible. He could not well leave the city, but he could leave the hotel and seek quarters elsewhere.

Arthur, was, as the reader has no doubt already judged of an impetuous temperament. He accordingly forthwith went and secured a room in some chambers convenient to the club and had his luggage removed there. Then he started out for a long tramp. He must tire himself with a long walk. That he thought was his only salvation in his present state of mind. He had during the previous day tramped the whole city over pretty much, and had also walked some distance down the river, as also up to the Chaudiere. Now he would would leave the beautiful Ottawa valley behind, walk out by the Rideau Canal into the country—anywhere so long as there were a good street

before him. The more dreary the walk the better, he thought, as he struck out through Stewarton into the country. The wind had risen somewhat and blew an occasional swirl of snow across his path and into his face. He took the middle of the road stepping aside every now and then into the deep snow to make way for a farmer's sleigh or a more fashionable equipage with dangling robes, containing a family party from the city. Even the jingling music of the sleigh bells jarred upon Arthur's ears. They, as well as the rest of the world, seemed out of tune to him, as he plunged along in the sleigh tracks with brightening color on his cheek, but a load on his heart. At one moment he thought he would push right on and leave those towers and stately piles which loomed from Parliament Hill over the city behind him, dominating the entire view in that direction, and not return beneath their shadow. Only further humiliation and anguish were in store for him, he thought, if he returned. Why had he thought of coming to Ottawa at all? He certainly would not have, had he known what was in store for him. He even doubted whether he would have, had he known beforehand of Gertrude's presence here. It was already late in the afternoon before he began to consider that having come so many hundred miles on business, it would be unmanly in him now to go off without having closed one way or another the business which had brought him, and with a sigh he turned to retrace his steps. Presently as he strode moodily along the sound of sleigh bells caused him involuntarily to step aside to allow a dashing equipage to pass. Suddenly he heard his name called out by a musical voice and looking up found himself face to face with his hostess of the previous evening and her good-humored daughter.

"Why, Mr. Rashfellow, wherever have you been?" exclaimed Miss Sterling with hearty good humor. "You must be nearly frozen," she added, as she noticed the frost on his moustache, which his rapid walk in the sharp wind had produced.

"Won't you get in and return to town with us?" said the mother kindly, as she noticed that the young man

looked tired and troubled. "We have gone far enough against this wind and are about returning."

Arthur endeavored to excuse himself, but the ladies pulled the robe from the seat opposite them, and pressed him to get in with such kindly earnestness that he saw he could not without rudeness refuse to do so.

"Papa tells me you will be here until after Madame Bureau's ball next week," said the younger lady. "It will be one of the events of the session, and I hear she is making great preparations." Then observing that Arthur did not display much interest in the subject of the forthcoming ball, she turned the conversation to the Northwest, asking him many questions about the country, the people and his life there, drawing the young man out in spite of himself, until he found himself extolling the country and its climate in glowing terms. The kindliness of the ladies, the quick gliding motion as the horses, without being urged by the fur-caped coachman, sped toward the town, revived the young man's spirits somewhat and he talked with something of his old time gaiety. Though he could make no claim to brilliancy, Arthur had always had a certain fresh and good-humored vivacity about him which ladies liked, and which his troubles had not yet crushed out, and the reaction from his former mood was apparent in his talk. They turned into Sparks street and as they drove up it a sleigh from the opposite direction passed containing two ladies. Arthur saw Mrs. Sterling and her daughter bow, and turned in time to catch a glimpse of Mrs. Watkins and Gertrude who were smilingly acknowledging the recognition. He grasped his fur cap and saw the other sleigh pull up by direction of Mrs. Watkins at a cross street, down which at that moment Hatfield came and greeted the two ladies.

This latter incident served to turn Arthur's thoughts into their former channel and as he was put down at the point he had desired, near his lodgings, his spirits had again collapsed

"By the way, Mr. Rashfellow," said Miss Sterling, "a friend of mine has asked me to aid her in making up a

skating party at the rink on Saturday, and I do so hope you will come. Please do. I'm sure you are a good skater. We never take no for an answer," she added, smiling, as the young man stood irresolute, and, without awaiting a reply, mother and daughter drove off, bowing a pleasant adieu.

"He seems such a nice young fellow, but has had some trouble, I should think. Has papa said anything to you about it, mamma?"

"Nothing, dear, except what you have heard. I understand he is here on some business with the Indian Department. What it is, I don't know. Your papa thought a great deal of his father, and has taken rather a fancy to the young man, who does seem a good-hearted, gentlemanly young fellow enough, when he throws off the moodiness which I have also observed."

Meanwhile, at the next street corner, as Arthur could still observe from where he stood, Hatfield was exchanging greetings with Mrs. Watkins and Gertrude.

"Oh, I'm almost as good as new," said the young member, smiling and showing no trace of the embarrassment he felt at meeting Gertrude for the first time since their memorable interview of the day before. "My arm is a trifle stiff and sore yet, but that doesn't trouble me much. I've spent the morning kicking my heels about the departments, waiting the convenience of ministers to have my requests pigeon-holed or refused on the spot, while some young stranger, with more influence perhaps, waltzes in ahead and gets just what he wants."

Hatfield spoke in a light bantering tone, but, nevertheless, Arthur's having been given precedence to him in one of the departments was still in his mind.

"Ministers have a way of forgetting sometimes who their friends are, have they not?" said Mrs. Watkins with a meaning glance and a smile.

"Oh, yes—in which, however, they but resemble almost all other less exalted mortals. That much may be said in extenuation," saying which, Hatfield raised his fur cap, and the ladies drove on.

"Why did you not speak to him, Gertrude?" queried Mrs. Watkins. "I think he was feeling a little hurt at your want of sympathy."

"I did speak to him, Aunt. I asked him how his arm was, and when he said it was so nearly well, surely there was no necessity for wasting more sympathy on a subject he treated so lightly himself."

Gertrude spoke with a slight trace of asperity, as much as she ever shewed to her aunt, or, in fact, to anyone.

"Ah, I see how it is," returned ber aunt with a wearied sigh, "the sight of that young man Arthur has turned your thoughts from the common sense channel which I hoped they were taking. Now, if he would only take to Blanche, there might be some chance for him and for you as well. She is a kind-hearted lady-like girl and her father has the power to make something of him."

She spoke of Miss Sterling with whom they had just seen Arthur driving. She always spoke of her as Blanche behind her back, though never in her presence.

"I am sure I hope he may—if—if—it will be for his advantage," said poor Gertrude, in a tone which completely belied her words.

"Yes, her father seems to take a decided interest in Arthur, and could give him a position if he liked, and Blanche would certainly make him an excellent wife," she was about to add "a much better wife than he deserves," but checking herself, continued: "of course he could never take anything like the position George occupies, even if he had ability sufficient to take a part in politics. George will be a minister himself some day, if he chooses; at all events he will be a leader, whether he cares to take office or not. His wealth fortunately makes that a matter of no very great consequence to him—though I hope myself to see him enter the Government some day. It gives a man an authority, and a recognized position which of course a mere private member, however eminent, cannot have. His wife will undoubtedly be a leader in society, if she chooses, at once. That is why so many mothers are so anxious to secure him for their daughters."

Gertrude was somewhat accustomed now to this sort of thing from her aunt. Her beautiful brown eyes were bent on the far off Laurentian hills which were now within view. She was thinking whether there could be anything in what her aunt had suggested with regard to Arthur and Blanche. The thought brought a pang to her heart and caused her lip to tremble. Her fine nostrils dilated, and tears came to her eyes. Fortunately the coldness of the day justified all these signs without their suggesting to the observer the tenor of her thoughts. Why had Blanche's father and mother taken up Arthur as they seemed to have? If he and Arthur's father had been such warm and intimate friends, how was it she had not heard of it before? Might there not be some ground for supposing that the father had not thrown Arthur in his daughter's way without design, or, at all events, that he had no objections to an intimacy growing up between them, as it evidently was growing up? Gertrude fully recognized the advantages which such an alliance would offer to Arthur. It would, no doubt, be the making of him, and she must consider his interest first of all, however bitter the thought might be to her. She was sure that Arthur could not be in love with Blanche. That, of course, she told herself many times, was out of the question. But then he was evidently not quite himself—that is, his old self. He was evidently distressed and piqued, and a man in that state, she thought, is ready to do almost anything. While she tried to feel glad at the thought that good fortune might be in store for Arthur, the thought was too heavy a load for her heart, which sank within her.

"But do you think she would marry him unless she knew he loved her?" asked Gertrude, putting her thought into words, as she observed that her aunt had paused as if for a remark from her. Gertrude had, however, no doubt now that this young lady would marry Arthur if she got the chance. She had begun to think of her as a horrid designing girl—though she was in truth a good and gentle young lady.

"Who would marry, *who*? Oh, if you mean Blanche

marry Arthur—I don't know. I'm sure, I hope so—but I was speaking of George."

"Aunt, I hope you won't speak about George to me any more—not in that way at least—if I am to remain with you another week. I'm sure he's everything you say, but I'm sure also that he wouldn't care for a wife who didn't care for him."

Gertrude spoke so resolutely that her aunt thought it best to drop the subject—at any rate for the present. She merely raised her eyebows and her handsome head a trifle higher as she and her niece continued their sleigh-drive.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SENATOR MAKES HIS MOTION.

SENATOR WATKINS' notice of motion respecting the Kick-aways excited a widespread interest. There had been a good deal of talk about the Indians in general and the way in which they were being treated by the government officials. It was said that some of the bands were at the point of starvation, that what food they got was bad, that musty flour, rotten pork and other deleterious articles were being supplied to them by dishonest contractors and inhuman agents. It was charged that their petitions for food, clothing, seed and implements were ignored and that their moral welfare was not properly looked after, and in fact that gross immorality was allowed and even practised by those in the service of the government on the reserves. The humanitarian public was accordingly interested in the Senator's forthcoming motion in expectation of having some light thrown upon these alleged grievances and measures taken for their redress.

Then again another section of the community anticipated some "fun" as the result of the Senator's motion. It was known that he was somewhat out of touch with the government on several points, though himself a Conserva-

tive, and that he was of an independent turn of mind, fond of his own opinions and very obdurate in maintaining them. It was whispered that disappointed ambition in regard to the Speakership had a good deal to do with the independent stand which he was now accustomed to assume. According to the slang of the day, he was said to be a "kicker," and young Duffy had been the means of fastening the title of Big Kicker upon him, by asserting at the club that he was after the title and position of the famous chief of the Kickaways who was known by that name—a title which was destined to stick to the Senator for a long period.

The Senator's question about the alleged white maiden, too, had drawn widespread attention; and it was even hinted that Viceroyalty itself was much interested in the outcome of this enquiry.

Then the press, and more especially the opposition press, had been devoting much space to the matter. Naturally the most of the charges as to Indian mismanagement found vent in the latter quarter, and besides the desire to have such charges investigated, in the case of one band at least, and of having justice done to the aborigines, the opposition organs were glad, on general principles, to encourage an attack upon the administration and to foment strife among its supporters. Accordingly they rang the changes upon the Senator's notice and predicted interesting developments.

Lastly, the Senator's wife had now become a factor in the social, if not the political, life of the Capital. The small receptions and afternoon teas which had been held in her rooms had drawn together not a few ladies and some gentlemen who had some grievances of more or less moment to themselves, for which they held the Government or some member thereof responsible, and who were ready to back anyone with pluck enough to stand up against the leaders of the party. They already looked upon Mrs. Watkins as a would-be leader or champion under whose banner they might range themselves, should she prove strong enough to justify it, and, although Mrs. Watkins herself

said little about the Senator's proposed motion, and indeed had inward misgivings about it, her friends naturally associated her with it and concluded that her efforts would be put forth in her husband's behalf. Mrs. Watkins could not of course have very well counteracted this impression had she even known of its existence, and she had already learned that the Senator was obstinate and that it would be useless for her to attempt to stay his actions, at present at all events, in a matter of this kind, even were her doubts sufficient to justify such interference. The lady of the opposition who had boasted of some influence with the Senator at the opening of the House, a certain Mrs. Harrison, had not exercised it in the direction of a withdrawal of his motion. On the contrary she had caused Mr. Watkins to glow with satisfaction by an adroit reference to the notices he had given, when she met him one day, and had announced her intention to be present to hear his speech.

All these causes contributing, it is not to be wondered at that there was, on the Tuesday fixed for the discussion of Senator Watkins' motion, such a gathering as had not been seen in the Senate Chamber on the occasion of a debate for many a long day. The club had emptied itself, the rotunda of the Russell House was well nigh deserted, sleighload after sleighload of fashionable ladies and their escorts had been deposited at the main and private entrances to the Houses and were wending their way to the Senate. Swarms of civil servants had left their offices and bent their steps in the same direction. There was a thin House of Commons which would have evaporated entirely at one time had any member drawn attention to the want of a quorum. A French member held the floor and was treating the House to a long-winded speech in his mother tongue. Sir Hector Langevin sat listening and stoically held the fort. Other members of the Government came in and out, most of them much more interested in what was transpiring "in another place" than in the proceedings of their own Chamber. Even the Premier had gone out, and after adroitly dodging all the lobbyists in sight, had taken occasion to go round by the front entrance to the Senate Chamber. As he

passed with jaunty step the marble columns of the front lobby of the Senate he paused a moment before the entrance doors. The door-keeper held open a door for him to enter, but Sir John, raising himself on tip-toe, contented himself with a glimpse over the intervening heads, at Senator Watkins, who was then on his feet, addressing the House, his face in such a glow that it seemed to shine even through the grey stubble of his beard. The Prime Minister took in the whole scene at a glance, himself almost unobserved save by the Speaker of the Senate who sat opposite on the canopied eminence of the throne and almost started as he recognized those well known features in so unaccustomed a place. That one glance sufficed, and the eminent onlooker smacked his lips and pursued his way, wearing his customary inscrutable look. Just a suspicion of a twinkle in the almost expressionless light eyes as he turned away and a more eloquent wag of the uncovered head with its mass of hair, as he disappeared down the lobby as jauntily as he came, might have afforded some slight clue to the experienced onlooker to the thoughts flitting through the active brain within.

Inside the Chamber, Senator Watkins now had full swing. His voice was clear and his manner not wanting in a certain dignity. So his wife thought as she watched him from the gallery. He was fluent too, and there was no uncertainty in his mode of expression. He was obviously very much in earnest. He began with a brief reference to his trip to the Northwest. He had heard a good many rumors about the condition of the Indian bands and he had taken the trouble to visit a number of them. Fortunately or unfortunately, those he had visited were, he had very good reason to believe, among the best cared for as well as the most industrious of their race. He felt it his duty to say this, although he had seen some things which had not altogether pleased him. He had not had time or opportunity to visit the reserves of other less industrious, perhaps, and certainly less well cared for tribes. Among these were the Kickaway band, whose reserve lies along the Little Kicking River. He had

had, however, the good fortune to meet with a gentleman who had labored among them as a Christian minister for some time, a gentleman whose word was entitled to every credence, he believed, who was at present in the city, and whose evidence would be forthcoming, if a committee were appointed by the House to investigate the condition of this unfortunate Indian band. This reference to his chief witness by the Senator, who did not, however, mention his name, created some stir among a knot of clergymen in the gallery, who at once began an animated conversation in whispers among themselves. The Senator proceeded to recount several of the charges of neglect, cruelty, and immorality which the evidence of this witness would, he believed, clearly establish. When he made reference to the fact of so pernicious a work as *Robert Ellesmere* being imported into the reserve, there was a perceptible snicker throughout the chamber, while the clergymen even were observed to smile. The clever face of the government leader who had been listening with respectful attention, lit up for a moment with a broad smile, as he made a note on the paper before him. Mrs. Watkins winced at this as she watched the effect upon the venerable heads, of varied baldness, of the Senators, who had been for the most part paying respectful attention, for the heads began to wag, and some whispered colloquies between neighbors ensued, while some of the Senators who had been busy writing laid down their pens to find out what the fun was about, and having ascertained, indulged in more or less quiet laughter. Senator Watkins paid heed to none of this by play, however. He had his notebook in his hand, and he felt bound to exhaust it before sitting down. He must also roast the Government a little now that he had them in a tight place, both because he thought they deserved it, and also that he might force them to grant a committee. So the Senator indulged in some caustic remarks, while his gestures and his color grew more and more pronounced. The government leader smiled again, whereat the Senator grew more angry. It was all very well for them, he said, to be living on the fat of the

land, carrying on the Government with a high hand here, while the unfortunate red men were pitilessly let starve or feed upon rotten pork, and contract disease more horrible than death. Some murmurs of dissent arose, but the leader looked as imperturbable as ever, and even glanced around as if to rebuke those who would interrupt Senator Watkins. Presently the Senator, who had pretty well exhausted his subject, as well as himself, after having wandered several times into other topics, upon which he was not in unison with the Government, and having been many times re-called to the right path, by cries of "question," sat down amid some applause.

The Speaker cast his eye over the chamber, but no one arose for a moment. Then the Government leader stood up, and in the smoothest and blandest of tones began to express the thanks, which he felt sure the House and the country would accord to the Honorable Mr. Watkins, for having brought this subject before their attention. They had every evidence that the subject of the Senator's motion had aroused interest—widespread interest—and the leader gave a rapid side glance at the gallery. The Government were most anxious that its wards, the Indians, should be treated with every consideration. They believed that they were. It was impossible, of course, where distances were so great, to be absolutely certain that every charge made against a Government agent was untrue, however great the confidence the Government had in their agents. There might be truth in some of the charges brought forward. It might not be a very serious matter if some of them were. Just how far the presence of a copy of *Robert Ellesmere* (the sound of laughter was here heard again) on an Indian reserve might injuriously affect the untutored red man, he was not prepared to say. There were others more capable of judging than he. But certainly *some* of the charges, if true, were serious. The Government felt this. He had consulted the Superintendent-General. He had consulted his colleagues. The desire on all hands was that the fullest investigation should be had, with an anxious desire to do justice to the

aborigines, whose demands, he might be allowed to say, were sometimes rather extravagant, sometimes even dishonest, but who should, nevertheless, be treated with both firmness and consideration. The Government, while it had no knowledge or information which would lead them to believe the charges made to be true, were so anxious that no wrong should be done the Indian tribes on the one hand, or no unjust suspicion attach to the Government officials on the other, that a committee would be appointed to investigate the matters referred to. He presumed the same committee could inquire into the subject of the question of the white girl and report upon that also. It might be convenient to so far anticipate the honorable gentleman's question, as to which the Government could give no information at present, for the reason that they had none to give. The Government leader here paused and looked at Senator Watkins, who, now flushed with victory, nodded his assent and produced a paper, from which he read several names he had to propose for the committee. The leader suggested some additions and alterations. Finally the motion was declared carried, and the committee struck.

The whole affair ended so quickly and quietly that many of the spectators gave a sigh of disappointment as they turned away. Senator Watkins, however, marched out into the lobby, with the air of a victorious general, or the air which such a one is popularly supposed to assume, and was soon receiving the congratulations of friends with gracious condescension. His eye was wandering about, however, in quest of the Rev. McWhirter, whom he had seen just before the house met, but who was just now, apparently, nowhere to be seen. His wife and Gertrude came out from the gallery just then, however, and he went up to meet them.

"Have got them rather treed this time!" he said, addressing his wife, who did not look by any means as triumphant as he, as she replied with a laconic "I hope so." She did not feel like saying more just then, for the Senator's lady friend, Mrs. Harrison, was beside her, and at once greeted the Senator.

"Oh, Senator, how well you acquitted yourself," she said, "of course you'll be suspicious of compliments coming from me, but I must have the gratification of saying that my predictions with regard to you have so far come true —have they not? I'm sure they have been acting atrociously, and I do hope you'll show them up!"

The Senator looked very gratified as he escorted the ladies to their sleigh.

Gertrude said nothing. The scene in the handsome red-chamber had been very interesting to her, as her eyes had wandered over the assembly. She had caught sight of Hatfield who had come in with some of the members of the Commons. His face wore a half amused look for a time while his uncle was speaking. Then, again she thought he looked a trifle displeased or pained. Then their eyes had met and he bowed smilingly and shortly afterwards had disappeared. She thought the look of pain was rather on his uncle's account than on hers, and she believed he was getting over his little disappointment of last week very satisfactorily.

"Allow me to congratulate you, Mrs. Watkins, on the Senator's speech. He pitched in in first rate style, don't you know!" Mrs. Watkins looked round and bowed somewhat stiffly to Mr. Duffy who had joined her and Gertrude as they were moving away, the Senator and Mrs. Harrison, the lady of the opposition, preceding them. Mrs. Watkins was not inclined to encourage the attentions of a civil servant, even of one so socially distinguished as Mr. Duffy, so she merely acknowledged his remarks by an inclination of the head. "Just looked in to see the fun for a few minutes," the young man continued, glancing at Gertrude. "Saw you and Miss Southcote and followed you out just to say this. Have seen a lot of attacks on the Government in my time, but never saw a committee got so easily and nicely as the Senator did it, don't you know. We civil servants can't say much, you know, but I hope the Senator will follow it up. Lots of things ought to be raked over, you know. There comes my chief. Think I'll have to say *au revoir*," saying which Mr. Duffy

bowed, casting another side glance at Gertrude, of a sheeps-eye character, which she could not resist laughing at.

"Oh, Miss Southcote will never forgive me for that mishap at Rideau, I know. It wasn't my fault, it wasn't indeed!" and Mr. Duffy was evidently struggling between a desire to vindicate himself and to escape the observation of his chief, who might consider the company he was in an indication of his disloyalty to the government.

"Oh, don't distress yourself in the least, Mr. Duffy," said Gertrude, still laughing. "I'm sure no one bears you any ill will. Pray don't sacrifice your country's time if it is only to make so unnecessary an apology." Mr. Duffy—a little flush suffusing his fresh blonde-whiskered face, glanced toward his approaching chief and hurried off in the opposite direction.

Meanwhile Mrs. Harrison was walking by the side of the Senator.

"You have been doing excellent service for your country, my dear Senator," she said, "I only hope you won't stay your hand. The leaders are evidently alarmed, but no doubt count on your fidelity to party, and perhaps think you are not so much in earnest as you seem."

"Never more in earnest in my life!" exclaimed the Senator.

"Exactly so. No one who really understands you, could doubt that for a moment. That's what you should impress upon them unmistakeably, if you would succeed. I hope you won't mind my saying so, Mr. Watkins. I may not seem to you a disinterested adviser, Senator, but I am, nevertheless. It is not *our* fight you know, but I am none the less interested, as a friend of yours, I assure you. I have been watching the discussion with much interest, and no stone will be left unturned to make you draw back. I even fancy I saw a certain eminent face looking in at you this afternoon, when you were speaking," here his fair companion whispered a word or two to the Senator, which caused him to start, and flush a deeper shade. "I'm sure anyone who thinks you can be cajoled out of the line of duty, whether Grit or Tory, will be mistaken, however, my dear Senator," she added.

Mr. Watkins looked more triumphant than ever when, having placed the ladies in their sleigh, he resumed his search for the Rev. McWhirter.

Some half an hour or so later a group sat in the smoking-room of the Rideau Club, composed with one or two exceptions of the same gentleman who were present at the conversation recorded in a previous chapter. One of these exceptions was our friend Mr. Graham of Montreal.

"Positively the tamest affair you ever heard of," exclaimed the ex-minister addressing Graham. "We had been promised a great sensation by Senator Watkins—a regular upheaval of that chamber of antiquities—the Senate! To be sure I didn't expect much. Knowing old Watkins so long as I have, I felt sure he would be incapable of creating a great sensation. He managed to draw a big crowd together, and to get a committee to investigate his Kickaway grievances. But you may be sure there's a pitfall prepared for him somewhere, into which he'll be sure to fall headforemost. I went up just to see how the old ladies would conduct themselves. Haven't been there before for an age. Shan't go again in a hurry, either," he added, with a shake of the head, as he reached for his glass, and refreshed himself with a potation.

"Why not?" enquired one of the others.

"Faugh!" exclaimed the ex-minister, contemptuously, It only made me think how the thing *might* have have done. If I had taken up that matter, I'd have kicked up fuss enough to raise a perfect bobbery, you may depend! I wouldn't have let it pass off with an oily reply from the leader, without a word of answer in it. There is plenty of crookedness in that department, plenty of red tape to be untied, plenty of pilfering, plenty of cruelty, and worse—but old Watkins isn't the man to get at it, and I'm afraid the Senate isn't the place," and the ex-minister looked around him with a look which said as plainly as words: "I'm the man who could do this thing properly." As his hearers began to prick up their ears, he added, "Of course I'm speaking only from hearsay. The Government don't know anything about it, I daresay, or as much as I or old Watkins."

"I hadn't the pleasure of hearing Mr. Watkins' speech," said Graham. "I believe him to be an honest, well-meaning man, though, so far as my means of judging him go. I haven't been in the Senate Chamber for some years."

"Think the thing ought to be done away with?" queried the ex-minister. "You Imperial Federationists would hardly relish seeing old Watkins holding forth in the House of Lords, would you now?"

"I'm not aware that any Imperial Federationist has contemplated anything so fantastic in your eyes as that, or that we ever expect to see Lord Salisbury in our Senate either. The one would perhaps be as reasonable a proceeding as the other. I fear you are like many others who don't want to understand the aim and object of Imperial Federation."

"Never saw anyone who did understand them!"

"That's because you have been associating with other people who don't want to understand," said Graham, good humoredly. "Those aims and objects may be summed up in three words: *equal citizenship* and *co-operation*. I for one should be sorry to see any interference with the legislative autonomy of any one member of an Imperial Federation by the other. We don't want to legislate for Great Britain nor to have Great Britain legislate for us, nor Australia for either of us—except in-so-far as matters of common Imperial concern may require to be dealt with by a council drawn from all parts of the empire, whether its numbers be large or small, and whether its decisions be final or merely advisory, but backed by the weight of advice from a body representing the whole world-wide empire."

"The greatest empire the world has ever seen, etc.!" put in the ex-minister, scoffingly. "And do you suppose the Parliament of Great Britain—the present Imperial Parliament is going to play second fiddle to any such body as that?"

"I can't say. They have a pretty full orchestra of their own and plenty of tunes of their own to play, it seems to

me, which they can probably play better without our interference. We don't propose to brigade the bands, but why shouldn't a few picked musicians from each be given the task of preparing the programme of truly National or Imperial anthems."

"Fiddlesticks!" laughed the ex-minister.

"To drop the metaphor then," said Graham, "and return to my first proposition. All we want is a recognized position in the great federated empire—whose greatness I'm glad to see you recognize—and mutual co-operation in defence, in commerce and matters of common concern generally. I have no fear but that Britain will ultimately see it to her interest and the interest of her race, as indeed to that of the world generally, to advance her sons into a working partnership. I'm sure you'll admit that she'll find these sons—the 'auxiliary kingdoms,' Sir John once called them—worthy partners in her future glory."

"Dreams, idle dreams, I fear, my dear Graham. But you've strayed away from our Senate into the clouds. What would you propose to do with this excrescence on the body politic? It is becoming venerable if not venerated, and may develop some of the strength of root as well as the rottenness of age. Won't it be a hindrance to your pet scheme?"

"Not at all," replied the Montreal man. "I've already explained that our legislative automony is to be preserved. That of course need not prevent our reforming or abolishing, if need be, any part of our own internal machinery we may desire to. I see you've got a hobby as well as I, and now that I've come down from what you call the clouds I'm willing to give my ideas for what they are worth with regard to that narrower subject as well. Our Senate has done some service to the State, but no doubt it might be improved. What it requires is more intellect."

"More *what*?" demanded one of the commons members, laying down his newspaper with the air of one who had detected the scent of a novelty.

"Hello, my dear Senator, come in," called the ex-minister to a junior, but portly, member of the Senate,

with a flower in his buttonhole, who at that moment looked in at the door; "come in and hear the revolutionary proposal our friend Graham here is making for the resuscitation of that venerable but decaying institution in which you cut no inconsiderable figure."

"All right, what is it?" demanded the portly but good natured Senator, as soon as he had been introduced to Graham.

"He proposes to import *intellect* into your House," exclaimed the member who had laid down his paper to listen. "Wouldn't the Speaker leave the chair as if dynamite had been detected!"

"Come, come, Johnson," said the Senator. "One would suppose Mr. Graham was proposing to rob the Commons to enrich the Senate, which would be perhaps a risky proceeding."

"Oh, you would be safe enough from being translated to the Senate on that basis, Johnson, my boy," said the ex-minister laughing. "I owed you one, you know, my dear fellow," he added, "and besides you are keeping Graham from evolving his plan."

"Oh, my plan is a very simple one," said Graham. "As I said, I think the Senate has been of service, and at all events we could hardly abolish a second chamber here, while such chambers still exist in half the provinces. Election by the people has been tried and discarded after trial, by the leaders of both parties. Election by the legislatures of the province which already occupy themselves too much with Dominion matters and issues, would be worse. My plan, for the present, is merely that, present company excepted," bowing to the Senator, "and also excepting the considerable body of able men in the Senate already, the rest of the material be gradually strengthened by the introduction from time to time of men of intellect, from all walks of life. Why should not some of the most eminent of our educationists, business men, retired judges, even clergymen, be from time to time drawn into the Senate. Would the presence of such a man, for instance, as Principal Grant of Kingston, notwithstanding his

cloth, not be a distinct gain to the power of the chamber and at the same time increase the respect in which it is held by the people? Perhaps the anti-clerical feeling and fear of being priest-ridden would be too strong to permit of appointments being made from the ranks of the ministers, even on a strictly non-sectarian and impartial plan. Something has already been done in the direction I indicate among the other classes, and the House has been strengthened in public estimation, at all events, but then again why should men be appointed only when age has already begun to weaken their intellectual powers? Younger timber would strengthen the structure.—Now, you have heard what you have chosen to call my plan. It is by no means revolutionary, you see."

"Well, Graham, my boy," said the ex-minister, "if the thing has to be perpetuated, your plan is, perhaps, as good as any, and I think we'd better advise the Government to begin by putting you in the Senate to supervise the job of reorganization—but I say, isn't that young Duffy out there, who carries the gossip of the town under his hat? Perhaps he knows when Watkins' Kickaway Committee is to meet. Call him in and see if he can't manage to have us smuggled in behind a door. I'd give a good deal for the privilege of attending before that committee. I say, Duffy, have you got anything to do with subpœning the witnesses for the Kickaway Committee?" he said, addressing Mr. Duffy, who had entered the room. "If so, I wish you would have me summoned. I'm sure what I know, or what I don't know about the Kickaways would prove of value to the committee."

"I hear the committee meets to-morrow morning," answered Duffy, "as the members haven't much grist as yet from the Commons, and want to get through this business and adjourn. I daresay if you apply to Senator Watkins he may be glad of your assistance, as one of the fellows told me he had spoken to him about the committee meeting, and he is looking high and low for his chief witness, whom, it seems, he can't find."

"Well, tell them to have me called," said the ex-

minister, rising from his seat, as the party prepared to disperse. "I've no doubt I'll do as well, and I'd like to be there to see Watkins make an ass of himself."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE KICKAWAY COMMITTEE.

MR. WATKINS stood in a quandary on the Sappers' bridge about ten o'clock on the following morning. He had, on the previous afternoon, consented to his committee being summoned for half-past ten o'clock this morning, and here it was ten o'clock and no McWhirter to be found. He had hunted the buildings for him the previous evening, had gone through library, reading-rooms and even restaurants, in search of him, though he almost passed the latter by, feeling that the reverend gentleman would not be likely to go to such a place. Yet the only trace got of anyone answering his description was there, as one of the attendants told him that a person tallying exactly with McWhirter in dress and appearance had had a glass of brandy there an hour or so before. He remembered him because of the "pretty biggish horn" which he had swallowed. The attendant couldn't remember who had brought the gentleman there nor which way he had gone, and his sudden silence on the subject caused the Senator to think that the Rev. McWhirter had gone there, contrary to rules, alone, to have a solitary horn, and for the first time he began to have some misgivings about his chief witness. He recalled having once or twice observed a slight smell of brandy or something equally strong when speaking to him, though he had thought nothing of it at the time. What if his witness should get on a spree and disgrace not only his cloth and himself, but him, the Hon. Ezra Watkins, who had placed such confidence in him, as well! The thought was horrible, and there arose in his mind a vision of Mrs. Watkins and a recollection of her expressions of

doubt about the man, and he determined to say nothing about the matter to her for the present. No doubt he would turn up in good time and all would be right. But he had not turned up at the hotel during the previous evening as the Senator had expected. So the latter had risen early and gone in quest of him. He had on a former occasion obtained the address of his boarding place, which was in Lower Town, and thither the Senator had this morning trudged, only to learn from the landlady that McWhirter had not returned the night before, that he had never had any luggage and even the small handbag he had carried when he came was gone from his room. The poor Frenchwoman was evidently very dubious as to whether "M'sieur Mavirterre" would ever return, and with tears in her eyes she assured the Senator that she had received no pay from him as yet, and she hoped the Senator would see that she got it.

"But why in the name of goodness, my good woman, did you trust him! He had plenty of money to pay you," said the Senator, looking at the little black-eyed woman rather fiercely, and thinking sorrowfully of his two hundred dollars.

She said her husband was an attendant of some sort at the Parliament buildings, and when she was debating with herself as to whether she should not demand pay in advance, seeing the man had no luggage, her husband had told her that he had seen McWhirter in company with one of the leading Senators with whom he was evidently on intimate terms. If monsieur were the Senator in question, surely he would see her paid.

Mr. Watkins returned sick at heart, and now stood for a moment on the bridge looking down at the snow and ice as if expecting McWhirter to re-appear from that quarter. In reality he was debating with himself as to whether he should return to the hotel and inform his wife of his trouble or go direct to the committee room, where the committee would, before long, assemble. He had a presentiment that he would not get much sympathy from his wife, more especially, if she learned that the man had $200 more of

his money and had not even paid the modest demands of his boarding-house keeper. To know that the man lodged in Lower Town would probably be enough for her. Mr. Watkins therefore concluded to go at once and face the committee. It would be humiliating, after all his bold talk of yesterday, to be obliged to ask an adjournment because he was not prepared to prove his charges—and then other Senators seemed so anxious to get away. Would he be any better prepared to make good his charges after a week or two's delay? If McWhirter should not turn up this morning he thought his best plan would be to make a frank statement of all the man had told him about the Kickaways, and ask an adjournment for the purpose of securing his attendance, at the same time acquainting the committee with the fact of his disappearance.

When Mr. Watkins reached the committee room he found a dozen Senators assembled ready for work. Some fresh shaven and well starched, as to their linen, some shaggy, some bald, some stout and others thin, nearly all more or less gray-haired. The Senators sat and chatted in groups. There had been no divorce proceedings, and Mr. Watkins' motion was as yet the most exciting episode of the session. The Government leader entered immediately after Mr. Watkins, and as soon as the roll had been called was at once elected chairman.

A short discussion ensued as to the order of procedure. Unfortunately for Senator Watkins, the other members of the committee seemed to be unanimously of opinion that all preliminaries should be dispensed with, and that he should proceed forthwith to make good his charges. When Mr. Watkins requested that his motion of the day before be read, and suggested that the inception of the enquiry did not rest with him, he was met with the objection that it would be useless to spend time inquiring into the condition of the Kickaways, until the grounds of complaint were formulated and the evidence as to them taken. The other Senators were evidently satisfied as to the conditions of the Indians, until some grievance were shewn to exist, and they began to suspect that Senator Watkins had been somewhat

reckless, and that for some reason or other he did not wish to undertake to establish his charges. A vote was therefore forthwith taken, and the onus cast upon the Hon. Mr. Watkins. The clerk had no sooner recorded the vote than Mr. Watkins rose and made his statement. It was substantially the same as that he made in the Senate the day before, though more circumstantial and in detail. He was interrupted by a call for "proof." He then informed the committee he relied for proof upon the Rev. Mr. McWhirter, a minister of the gospel, he believed, who had furnished him with the information just detailed, whom he had met on the train during his north-west tour, who had lived among the Kickaways and was yesterday in the city, but whose present whereabouts he had been unable to ascertain. He craved the indulgence of the committee and asked an adjournment in order that the Rev. Mr. McWhirter might be found and brought forward to give evidence.

A shaking of the grey heads and an ominous pause ensued. The Senators were becoming impatient of delays and wanted to hear some evidence or, failing that, to get home as soon as possible. The chairman only looked placid and as smilingly imperturbable as ever. At length he said, in his customary bland tone, that there was another witness present, who had personal knowledge of the Kickaways, and if the Hon. Mr. Watkins could give no information as to the whereabouts of the witness he relied on so that he could be called, it might save time to hear the witness who was present, especially as he understood he did not wish to be detained longer than could be avoided in the capital. Senator Watkins' eyes followed those of the chairman and some of the others toward the entrance door, near which he now observed Arthur Rashfellow standing.

"Will Mr. Rashfellow please come forward," said the chairman.

Arthur obeyed, while the eyes of Senator Watkins dilated with surprise, and those of the other members of the committee were bent upon the young man, some with curiosity, others with admiration of his fresh, frank, handsome countenance,

"Perhaps it would expedite matters," said the chairman, as soon as Arthur had been sworn, "if Mr. Rashfellow would narrate his own experiences, in his own way, among the Kickaways, and at the end, any member of the committee who desires may ask such questions of him as he may see fit."

This was assented to and Arthur, with a heightened color and one or two preliminary coughs of embarrassment, began to speak.

"Just tell us how you came to be among the Kickaways in your own way, you know," said the chairman reassuringly.

"My house near Portage la Prairie was burned down in July last," said Arthur glancing at Senator Watkins, and conscious of a lump rising in his throat. Then fixing his eyes again upon the chairman he went on determinedly to narrate his subsequent experiences. He had gone west, and not having any fixed plans, he had bethought himself of a friend he had known rather intimately in Winnipeg some years before, who had since become farm instructor to the Kickaway band, and was then living among them with his wife, whom he had married since they last met. As he was himself desirous of getting away from civilization, for the sake of sport, and other reasons—he determined to go to the Little Kicking River, see what the country was like, and, perhaps, renew his friendship with Mr. Dickson, the farm instructor. He had done so, and Mr. Dickson had received him most cordially and hospitably. Mr. Dickson's wife, however was in very poor health, and he saw that the husband was greatly troubled about her. He was very anxious to take her away for a change of air, in the hope of restoring her health, and she, too, seemed equally anxious to go, except that she appeared to be greatly attached to some of the Indian women and children, whom she was instructing, and who evidently were equally attached to her. As he was himself a practical farmer, and was also glad to be of service to his friend in time of need, he offered to take Mr. Dickson's place for a few months, providing the consent of the department could

be obtained. Leave of absence was subsequently granted to the instructor and his wife to visit British Columbia, and he (witness) had remained in charge all through harvest and until the new year, when they returned, the lady much improved in health.

Interrogated as to the condition of the Indians, Rashfellow said it was much the same as that of other bands he had visited. The men were, as a general rule, lazy, and neglected their farm work if allowed to do so. He had managed to have the crops harvested in fair condition under all the circumstances, but only by dint of the greatest perseverance and the most careful oversight and even severity. They would neglect their crops and machinery, and everything else if they could manage to get off hunting, or if they could get hold of liquor, which would, of course, put an end to work completely. In his opinion they were if anything, too well fed. The food was the same as that supplied to the mounted police, who were certainly not suffering. The machinery and cattle, too, were to a great extent wasted on them, as they neglected both, the machinery especially being abominably abused. Of course they expected all the latest appliances. Big Kicker had asked him if he couldn't get a "binder," which would thresh the grain out as it went along and carry it on into store. He had had no difficulty about liquor, though Mr. Dickson had had a great deal. There had been a man on the reserve who was suspected of supplying liquor to some of the bucks, in exchange for furs and other things. He had managed to escape detection for a time, having come upon the reserve in the character of missionary (at least such he claimed to be), but as his true character was fast becoming exposed, largely through the exertions of the priest who visited the reserve, coming from the mission further up the river, this man had suddenly departed shortly after he (Rashfellow) came there.

During Arthur's recital Senator Watkins had sat with his eyes fixed upon him, and when he mentioned the mysterious missionary, and the suspicions concerning him, and his sudden departure, Mr. Watkin's breath came

quickly, and with a sudden gulping sensation, he asked the witness if he knew the man's name.

"McWhirter—the Rev. Mr. McWhirter he called himself. But I have been since informed that no such man holds any position in the church he claimed to represent, and I have every reason to believe the fellow an impostor." As Arthur answered this, quite unconscious of the terrible blow he was inflicting upon Senator Watkins, on whose forehead he noticed however, that beads of perspiration had formed—a gentle ripple of laughter passed round the room. The other members of the committee had recognized the name which Senator Watkins has so lately given as that of his chief witness. Arthur however, had entered the room only the moment before he was called upon and had not heard Mr. Watkins mention McWhirter's name.

"Describe the man's appearance," said Mr. Watkins.

Arthur sketched briefly, from memory, the man's appearance. It was sufficiently accurate to leave no doubt upon Senator Watkins' mind. He leaned back resignedly in his chair with a sigh.

A short stout gentleman had a question to put. Had Mr. Rashfellow seen any white children upon the reserve?

None but the children of the store-keeper, he said, and one other, which was certainly very fair, though apparently the child of a half-breed woman, who had accompanied McWhirter to the reserve as a sort of housekeeper. In fact the child, he believed, was generally regarded as McWhirter's. Both the woman and child had disappeared from the reserve shortly after McWhirter's departure.

A general shaking of grey heads followed this announcement. The Senators looked at one another, then at Mr. Watkins and then at the chairman, who seemed as imperturbable as ever.

"Any other question to be put to Mr. Rashfellow?" he asked.

"Just one moment," said Mr. Watkins. "Have you seen anything of Mr. McWhirter since you came to Ottawa, Mr. Rashfellow?"

Arthur replied in the negative, and was allowed to go.

At that moment a telegram was placed in the hands of Mr. Watkins. He hastily opened it and read:

TORONTO, February 8th, 1887.

If you still want me, send one hundred dollars through general post here. ALEX. MCWHIRTER.

The Senator's first impulse was to wire the chief of the Toronto police to watch the post-office and have the man who called for the required remittance arrested. On second thoughts, however he dismissed the idea. It was plain his $300 were gone, and he might be thankful that that fact was not public property and that he had not been bitten more severely. This thought was gradually working itself through his rather heated brain, when he was roused by the chairman:

"Well, Mr. Watkins?" said that gentleman, blandly.

Slowly the Senator arose. The ruddy color shewed itself through the short grey beard. His brow was moist, but his lip firm.

"It is plain I have been deceived by a base man," he said simply, "and I suppose there is nothing further to be done, Mr. Chairman, but to report the evidence already taken."

"And ask leave to sit again?" suggested the chairman

"Not necessary in any case" answered the Senator. "though I may say at once, after what has taken place, I have no evidence to offer and regret having made a motion upon the statements of a scoundrel."

And so the labors of the Kickaway Committee came to an end.

The reporters had not been admitted, but during the day the whole thing leaked out and the papers had each its humorous account of the result of Senator Watkins' great attack upon the administration of the Indian Department, and the Senator had of course the satisfaction of reading in every paper he took up that no one had anticipated any other result, though in some cases the suggestion

was thrown out that in other hands perhaps the enquiry might have resulted differently.

He made a clean breast of it all to his wife. He felt that he must have some confidante to whom he could pour out his overwrought feelings.

"What do you think of that?" he asked as he finished the recital of McWhirter's duplicity.

"I think someone has made himself very ridiculous. I needn't add the old saw as to the fool and his money," was the tart reply of Mrs. Watkins who felt the humiliation even more deeply than the Hon. Ezra Watkins himself.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ARTHUR SELECTS A BOOK.

ARTHUR RASHFELLOW had come to the capital at the suggestion of his friend Dickson, the farm instructor on the Kickaway Reserve. The latter's wife was still by no means strong, though the trip to British Columbia, to which Arthur had alluded in his evidence before the committee, had done her an immense deal of good. Indeed so well did the climate of the Pacific slope agree with her that her husband became possessed with a strong desire to settle there permanently. While in British Columbia he had learned of an expected vacancy in the Government service there which he felt himself competent to fill and which, while it would afford about the same remuneration as he and his wife earned in their present positions, would secure for them a residence in that climate which had proved so beneficial to her, with, at the same time, a much easier and more comfortable life for her. On his return to the reserve he found that matters had been well managed by Arthur in his absence, the usually complaining Indians tranquil and contented, the crops all secured in good condition, and Rashfellow himself quite satisfied with the life

he had been leading and even evincing a desire for a continuation of it.

Under these circumstances it was natural that Mr. Dickson should have begun to turn over in his mind the possibility of his being able to obtain the position he coveted in British Columbia for his wife's sake, and that he should at the same time have come to regard Arthur as the one who would best take his place on the Kickaway reserve. That the latter was unmarried was, he knew a drawback, but not an insuperable one he thought. For the storekeeper's wife would be able to take his wife's place in the school, and for that matter what was to prevent a good-looking fellow like Arthur having a wife of his own? He, Dickson, could not of course take action in the matter, himself—at least not directly, and while he was not without some influence at headquarters, he was one of those who believed that a man on the spot with a good address and a little influence was worth a dozen influential persons writing from a distance to the seat of government the usual formal requests on behalf of a friend. He knew from past experience how easily the latter are put off. How much easier it is for one in authority to pen a passable excuse and refusal, sitting in his office alone, with his correspondent at the other end of the Dominion, than to have the same excuse and refusal on the tip of his tongue when he is being plied with reasons for granting the same favor, asked by the petitioner in person or some other equally solicitous on his behalf? He had heard Arthur say that his father and one of the ministers had been intimate in boyhood. Arthur's appearance and manner were in themselves a recommendation. Above all he seemed so attached to his present lonely life and so loth to leave it, that he believed his young friend, if he took up the project at all, would throw his heart into it, for their mutual benefit. Accordingly he broached the project to Arthur, who at first refused to enter any region more civilized than the Kickaway reserve, but was at length induced to listen and then to consent to undertake the mission. Dickson offered to pay all expenses, but this Arthur would not agree to, and, as

the enterprise was intended to be to the advantage of both, they finally agreed to divide the expense, and Arthur set out for Ottawa. "Remember that a good strong useful wife would be a great help," Dickson had said at parting "and you had better bring one back with you." "Jack talks as if a wife were part of the necessary settler's effects," Mrs. Dickson added, but Arthur said nothing.

And here he was at Ottawa He had, as we have seen, called upon his father's old friend, and had been well enough received. This gentleman had asked him to dinner and had next morning taken him to one of his colleagues, the minister in whose department the British Columbia position was; for Arthur's first thought was to obtain this for his friend, caring much less as to his own fate. This minister, whom they visited, while Hatfield waited, as the reader will remember, had already received a number of letters from supporters in different quarters, written at the instigation of Mr. Dickson and forwarded so as to reach Ottawa about the time of Arthur's arrival there. He was therefore to some extent prepared for Arthur's request, and—while not definitely committing himself— had not been discouraging in his manner. Arthur had then been advised to wait before pressing the other matter—his own appointment as farm instructor. His friend, the Hon. Mr. Sterling, had advised him to wait, promising to take him to the Superintendant-General of Indian Affairs—and he had waited. Then had come a summons to attend and give evidence before the Kickaway Committee.

He had gone before the committee and told what he knew without thinking much of the matter. He did not read the newspapers attentively, and had never been in the Senate, and therefore knew little and cared less about Senator Watkins' motion and the sensation it had created. As has been said, he knew nothing of McWhirter's stories or presence in the capital, and now, as he left the committee room, his thoughts were already away from the committee and its proceedings.

Here he had been for about a week, and apparently he had effected nothing. He had been courteously treated,

and put off with vague excuses. Then his meeting with Gertrude had reopened the old wound afresh. He would have gone off at once after that, but the prospect of securing a home among the far-off Kickaways seemed so much the more attractive, according as his misery here increased, and that prospect alone had kept him. Now, however, his patience seemed about exhausted. He had called this very morning at the office of his friend, the Minister, and had been told he was engaged and would be for some time. He began to think his hopes had been in vain, and that he had as well go, he hardly knew where. He walked toward the corner of Sparks and Elgin Streets, and stopped at the door of the ticket office, uncertain whether to go in and secure a sleeping berth for the night train west. On second thoughts he would go first and buy a cheap edition of some book, which would, perhaps, serve to divert his thoughts until train time, and while away the time upon his journey to the unknown land. Accordingly he entered a stationer's, and listlessly turned over the pages of some books lying upon the counter. A moment or two later he looked up as some one entered the shop door, to which his back was turned, and came up to the counter beside him. A sudden thrill passed through him as he looked up and met the soft, enquiring eyes of Gertrude. How beautiful she looked in her soft sealskins, which set off her clear complexion in a way Arthur thought he had never seen it set off before. Her cheeks had the bright glow which winter outdoor air gave them, and as she saw and recognized Arthur she started, and the color spread for an instant into a very pretty blush. He raised his cap and gazed at her.

"You here—Arthur!" she said, at first a little tremulously. Then observing the shopman's eye upon her, she added in a matter of fact way, "can you help me choose a book for my aunt? She sent me to get one for her, having a slight headache herself. She generally patronizes the Parliamentary library, but could not trust me to go so far to-day."

"I'm afraid my taste and hers may not run in the

same channel," he answered. "How would this suit?" and he picked up a copy of Cooper's *Prairie*.

Gertrude answered without looking up. "I'm afraid your tastes *do* differ on that subject." She longed to add that her own had undergone some change, but she could only bring herself to say "Love of the prairie is, I should think, something of an acquired taste. I think the prairie flowers and the fresh free air delightful. I think I shall take her this book of Max O'Rell's, *John Bull and His Daughters*. Are you looking for a book too?"

"Yes, and I think this will do," he answered gloomily, picking up one on which the title *Dark Days* was printed in the blackest of characters—Hugh Conway's well told story.

"That almost makes one shudder. Why not try something more cheerful?" she said, smiling upon him as if she were determined to force some sunshine into his eyes. He was not altogether impassive under her glance, though he clung to the book of his choice, throwing a coin upon the counter and following her to the door. Outside he hesitated, while she turned towards the West.

"I have another errand a little further on. Wont you come with me, Arthur? You know I have seen so little of you, and I do so want to hear about—about yourself, and what you have been doing."

He joined her at once and walked along by her side, but without a remark.

"I'm sorry you would not relinquish that book. Though it may be more cheerful inside, it has a depressing look," she went on, somewhat at a loss how to draw him out of the mood, so different from his old ways, which appeared to have settled upon him.

"Don't you think 'Dark Days' appropriate for one who has gone through what I have?" he answered. Then noticing the look of pain which came over her lovely face, he added, with something of his old cheerfulness, "I have been among a dark race, the dusky Indians, of late, and had hoped to be able to return to them, but darker days still seem to have fallen upon me, and I was about to go and secure my Pull-

man berth and take myself off when I met you. The only difficulty was that I hardly knew where to go, though, I suppose, I should have pulled up in Toronto for a time."

She cast so sympathetic a glance at him as he said this, that he felt impelled to give her his confidence as of yore. Why, even though her love were to be dead to him, should he not now tell her of his project and its failure, and enjoy, if only for a moment, a little of the ready sympathy which had always been his when sought from her in bygone days. The injunction of his friend and patron to silence was surely now no longer binding, and even if it were, it is pretty certain he would have disregarded it, so potent was the influence of a sympathetic glance from the girl he still so truly loved. So it came about that in a few minutes he gave her a brief history of his life since they parted at the Portage, and told her the object of his visit to Ottawa, and of the hopelessness which at present possessed him.

"Oh do not give up, Arthur," she said brightly, as he finished. "I only wish it were in my power to do something to further your object. Is there anything I can do?"

He shook his head.

"I fear the Senator has not much influence of that sort just now," he said, "and—" the recollection of Hatfield caused him to suddenly break off. She noticed the cloud which came over his countenance and divined its meaning, but was determined not to be daunted by it.

Presently she said, "I have met a good many of the politicians, and——"

"Ah yes," he broke in, "I know whom you are thinking of—Mr. Hatfield—and I wouldn't accept his aid—if I had to beg my bread for want of it!"

"No Arthur," she answered, firmly, "I was not thinking of Mr. Hatfield, whom I have not exchanged five words with, for nearly a week past—and whom I certainly shall not apply to on your behalf."

She spoke in a slightly offended tone—then suddenly brightened again as she stood at the doorway of the shop to which she was going, but which they had passed and

repassed half a dozen times, regardless of the cold, the passers by and all else, so absorbed had they been in this new-found confidence.

"I have made many acquaintances since I have been here and some perhaps I may and shall appeal to if you wish it, Arthur." She looked at him wistfully, as she drew her gloved hand from her muff and held it out—for he had said he would not go into the shop. "We will talk of this further at the ball to-morrow night. I had thought of begging off from going, but shall go on purpose for this. Will you not come? You must not think of going away now."

What could he do but promise, even though he felt he would be but playing the part of a moth hovering about the old flame.

His step was lighter though as he walked along the street. What could she mean by saying she had not spoken five words to Hatfield for a week? The thought elated him though he dared not let it take the shape of a definite hope.

CHAPTER XIX.

MADAME BUREAU'S BALL.

THE ball at Madame Bureau's was one of the events of the session. There Grit and Tory, French and English, Senator and Commoner, Orangeman and Ultramontane, were accustomed to meet once a year, for Madame Bureau was not narrow, in either a political or racial sense, in her hospitality. Mr. Blake, Sir Richard Cartwright or Mr. Laurier would equally with Sir John Macdonald, Sir Hector Langevin, the late Senator Trudel or Dalton McCarthy, be made welcome, should any or all of them choose to accept her invitation. And a sufficient number of distinguished guests to render the entertainments notable, and of young people to make them gay, were

always present at her balls. The present event was no exception to the rule—cabinet ministers, judges, senators, and members of Parliament, with the fashionable world of the capital generally, were gathered at Madame Bureau's to-night. Sleigh after sleigh drew up before her mansion, and left its quota of muffled fair ones and their escorts to swell the throng which already filled the spacious rooms and hallways comfortably.

Among the later arrivals were Senator and Mrs. Watkins, Gertrude and Mr. Hatfield. No sooner had they paid their respects to their hostess, and, after a few moments' conversation, passed on, than Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Sterling, and Mr. Rashfellow were announced. Gertrude looked up as she heard the name of the latter, and saw at a glance that Arthur's face wore a more radiant and happy expression than she had seen upon it in Ottawa as yet. Her heart leapt as she saw the change in his appearance, and in another instant a feeling of faintness seized her, as she saw that Miss Sterling leant upon his arm, and was conversing with him with a freedom and want of restraint which, in her anxious eyes, betokened a degree of intimacy extremely dangerous to her happiness. What if Arthur, despairing of her love, had found consolation, and perhaps happiness, in his newly-formed friendship with Miss Sterling? Arthur, indeed, seemed to have found favor in the father's eyes. He was a Minister of the Crown, possessing sufficient influence to place the young man on his feet again, and the young lady was handsome, kind-hearted and sympathetic. Assuming parents and daughter not averse to him, would it not be a wise and prudent thing—indeed, would Arthur not have been throwing away a great chance were he not to make love to the daughter and secure an alliance in every way so desirable? These thoughts rushed through poor Gertrude's mind like a whirlwind. She had seen the mother and daughter driving Arthur about the town. She had first met him at their house. She knew the friendship which had existed between the father of the young lady and Arthur's father. Her aunt, it will be remembered, had first suggested the

possibility of such an alliance. She had grown pale at the thought, which had now again so suddenly seized her, and she scarcely heard what Hatfield was saying, though replying hap-hazard and in monosyllables, when Arthur and Miss Sterling came up. The latter almost at once engaged in conversation with Mr. Hatfield, while Gertrude he stood face to face with Arthur.

"You bade me come and I am here, Miss Southcote," he said, not coldly, but with a touch of the good-natured bantering manner she was accustomed to in old times.

"I am very glad to see that you have done as you were bid then, Arthur," Gertrude returned in the same tone, smiling as she felt her spirits returning somewhat in spite of the proximity of Miss Sterling, whom in truth she had always liked.

"I hope you have a dance reserved for me then," said Arthur.

"Oh dear, yes. We have just come and I am only as yet engaged for the next—with Mr. Hatfield—after which I am at your disposal, though in truth I don't like dancing a great deal. I'm glad that programmes are not in vogue here—welcome innovation."

"What we don't dance we can sit out, I suppose," he said.

Hatfield having secured from Miss Sterling the promise of the next dance, now led Gertrude away just as Mr. Duffy and a number of other admiring swains were foregathering about them. A moment later she was beyond the reach of these latter, as she and Hatfield mingled with the throng of dancers. A few minutes after Hatfield complained of a return of the pain in his arm and together they entered the conservatory and after admiring one or two of the blossoming plants sat down in one of the many double seats.

"It's a little too soon for me to begin this sort of thing," he said, glancing at the ball-room and stroking his lately disabled arm. "I thought I had quite recovered but I find I haven't."

"One is very apt to think oneself all right too soon. But you'll get over this I hope, in a short time."

"Oh, yes," he said. "I haven't any anxiety about that. But the subsequent and more serious wound cannot be cured so easily—except in one way." He had not intended saying anything of this sort when he left the dancing-room. But suddenly the thought had come to him that he might as well put an end to his suspense at once. The opportunity was not unfavorable. The young lady had had a week to think over the subject and would surely have reconsidered the matter by this time, if she were going to reconsider it at all. He was not one of the patient waiting sort of people. He was prompt and business-like in his methods as a rule, and for some days past he had been thinking the matter over and had come to the conclusion that he must bring this affair to a definite termination. He should be sorely disappointed were a second attempt to win the fair girl futile, but better even that, he thought, than an indefinite period of anxious suspense, to end perhaps only in the same disappointment. Such a waiting race would render him completely miserable and mar his career he felt. Perhaps, too, he had formed a tolerably high estimate of the advantages of his position, his wealth and his appearance in the eyes of the fair sex, and presumably in Gertrude's as well as others whose appreciation of these advantages he had good reasons for suspecting. Had he taken counsel of Mrs. Watkins she might have advised a different course, but he had not consulted her. He was not a man to consult anyone, much less a lady, in an affair of this sort. He therefore suddenly determined to end the suspense if possible now. So he looked straight at Gertrude as she sat at the end of the seat looking down and seeming not to hear his last remark.

"I need scarcely explain myself to you, Miss Southcote—Gertrude. I said when last we met before this evening, that I would not relinquish hope, without another trial. May I not hope that you have seen some reason to relent—to change your mind? Forgive me if I am taking any unwarrantable liberty," he added as she still remained silent, "but I fancied from what you said as to—as to another—that you were in no way tied."

Here he broke off as she still kept her eyes down. Then she slowly raised them and said,

"I am tied—and yet not tied—my heart is tied, Mr. Hatfield, as I said a week ago, and cannot be loosened. I thank you for your goodness, for your generous offer and regret—oh so much—that it cannot be as you wish."

"And the other fortunate man—" he began involuntarily, and then checked himself. He had never sought from her, nor from anyone else, to find out who was the happy possessor of her heart, and would not now. He had no need to ask the question however. He had not observed that the music had ceased aud then begun again. Now she looked up as Arthur, searching for her, came up, and the expression of joy and gladness which swept over her features at that instant told the tale and gave him the answer to his half-formed question. He abruptly got up and walked away as Arthur offered Gertrude his arm and claimed the dance.

"I'm so glad you came, Arthur" she said, and then stopped.

"I was afraid I had interrupted an interesting *tete-a-tete.* I almost turned away again when I saw you—but I came here feeling good-natured and as nearly happy as I ever feel now and I determined not to give way to bitterness again."

"I'm glad you did not. Let us get out of this; I fancy the perfume of some plant is overpowering."

He led her to the ball-room and as he placed his arm about her and they moved off in the waltz, all memory of Hatfield and the painful interview with him, fled as if by a magic touch and she felt only the happiness of being close to and held and guided by the strong arm of the man she loved.

"Do let us find some quiet spot," she said as they finished, "where I can ask you about yourself—about your success in the object of your mission."

They soon found in the hallway above stairs the place they wanted. A quiet secluded seat behind a half drawn portiere, some large palms filling the rest of the alcove.

"Now tell me, Arthur, please, how you have succeeded. Are you to have the position among the Indians you spoke of?" and she looked at him anxiously.

"No, I fear not. You see, as I told you yesterday, my being unmarried is a drawback. Mrs. Dickson has been most useful in the school and in teaching the Indian women many things. I haven't a wife and it seems I'm doomed to live alone," and he sighed.

"Do you know, Arthur, what came into my mind downstairs when you came in? I thought perhaps you had been making love to Miss Sterling, and had not been unsuccessful."

Arthur laughed. "Do you think," he said, "she would think twice of a poor beggar like me. I know she's good and kind, but that would be too much to expect." He shook his head and added—"Besides, no one knows better than you, Gertie, that were she ever so willing, that would be impossible."

At the sound of her old familiar name from his lips, the tears started to her eyes. He held her hand now, and looked at her quietly, but not unkindly.

"Do you think, Arthur," she said, looking up into his face and then down again at the carpet, "do you think I—could—teach the—the Indian women anything?"

It was all out now, and she blushed at the thought of her boldness.

"Do you mean that you would care to try?" He had managed to steal one arm about her waist. He was in the seventh heaven of happiness now.

"Yes, Arthur," she whispered "I am ready to go anywhere—to do anything—if only I can be with you—always." His grasp tightened to the verge of an embrace. Her breath fanned his cheek. Then he kissed her lips. It was the sweet kiss of reconcilation, and betokened future unbroken happiness, both felt. As he released her, the half quizzical look she had noticed downstairs was in his eyes.

"Yes," he said, musingly, "the Indian women are sadly lacking in musical culture. You might teach them that.

But do you know, dearest, there isn't such a thing as a piano on the whole Kickaway reserve!"

"Oh, now you are making fun of me, and punishing me for my heartlessness!" and the selfish thoughts she had indulged in on the bank of the Sault Ste. Marie lock came vividly before her.

He at once melted, and said, "No, darling, I never really thought you heartless, and, I suppose I may tell you that, though I am not to be instructor to the Kickaways, I am to have a position in the department here. Dickson is to go to British Columbia and very glad I am of that. But the government either thought I would be wasted on the reserve, or the instructorship would be wasted on me. But I am to go into harness at a fair salary here, and my friend, Mr. Sterling, tells me I am sure of promotion. He has been very kind to me and has really managed the whole business with the other departments. I gave evidence before Mr. Watkins' committee, and that, it seems, hasn't done me any harm, whatever effect it may have had upon the Senator; though I had no idea of advancing my fortunes at the time, and simply told what I knew—no one, I am happy to say, suggesting anything else. But it seems governments are gratefnl for even small favors, and I suppose that, coupled with Mr. Sterling's interest in me, has secured me my position. When I got to my room after leaving you yesterday I found a note from Mr. Sterling asking me to see him at once, and when I went he asked me some questions, which someway led to my making a complete confession to him about you, and that seemed to help, too, and to-day he sent for me, and told me the matter was all arranged, and dismissed me with an invitation to dinner, and to accompany them to the ball this evening. So now you have the whole story, darling, except that I have to get up a bothersome examination of some sort. What do you say? Can you give me another chance—and do you think you can live in Ottawa as the wife of a poor civil servant? You have yourself, you see, been to some extent—I think to a great extent—the cause of my good fortune!"

"I almost think I would rather live on your farm, if you had another cottage there. Not that I have anything against Ottawa, but I should really like to try my hand at farming since my former folly and selfishness has found me out. Oh, Arthur, you cannot think how bitterly I have repented leaving you at Portage la Prairie last summer—the heartaches, the sleepless nights and all!"

His only reply was to draw her to his bosom, and kiss her once more as they stood preparatory to going down stairs, for the band had ceased playing for a time, and the loitering couples of whom they had had glimpses on the landing and stairway had disappeared, and they now guessed rightly that supper was going on.

"You say you thought I had been making love to Miss Sterling," said Arthur, as they descended the stairs. "I had much better reason to think Mr. Hatfield was making love to you."

"Poor Mr. Hatfield. I'm sure I wish him all manner of happiness. He has suffered enough on my account. You heard of our accident? I hope he will secure a good wife who will keep him from toboggan slides in future."

When they reached the supper room, Gertrude found her aunt seated beside Mr. Sterling, while Mr. Watkins was in attendance upon Mrs. Sterling, and quite overpowering her with huge loads of trifle and jelly. Mrs. Watkins glanced searchingly at Gertrude, as she came up and gave Arthur a not ungracious greeting, as she knew that she was in the presence of his influential friend.

"What did you do to George, Gertrude?" Mrs. Watkins asked. "He has gone off some time ago, complaining of his arm, saying he would walk home and positively refusing to wait for supper."

"Most unaccountable," said Mr. Sterling, coming to Gertrude's rescue, for which she gave him a grateful look. "Look here, Senator, your nephew must be getting up another great speech—preparing to crush his opponent of the other day!—as he has actually turned his back upon these good things," saying which the Minister quaffed his glass of champagne with apparent gusto.

"George is a studious fellow," answered the Senator, who had often taken note of the blue books about his nephew's room, though he had never caught him in the act of studying them deeply; "and he doesn't care much for this sort of thing. It takes old fellows like ourselves to appreciate these things now-a-days. A little ice-cream, madam—here, I say, waiter, some ice-cream for Mrs. Sterling. Yes, as I was saying to Madame Bureau, only this evening, I believe that after all I enjoy this sort of thing more than all our proceedings in the Senate."

"And what did she say?" asked Mrs. Sterling, rather amused.

"She said 'perhaps this sort of thing was the most profitable amusement of the two.' I doubt it, madam. I doubt it, indeed—but then I must say it's pleasant!" and the Senator bustled off to have another passage with the lively hostess.

Another waltz Arthur and Gertrude managed to snatch, despite the serious looks of her aunt, who was troubled at the turn affairs among the young people seemed to have taken, though she did not care to manifest it too plainly. It was the most delicious and happy dance these two had ever known. It was happiness enough for Gertrude to know that she had confessed her own former heartlessness and her unalterable devotion to her first love. She had never doubted his love for her, though she had been fearful as to what her selfish (as she now regarded it) conduct might lead him into. Now that she had put herself right she was content to live or die—to go to the ends of the earth with him, or wait for years until he should make a home for her here. To him the thought that he was still beloved by the one girl he cared for, after she had seen more of life, had been admired and sought after, was simple ecstasy. He even sympathised with her former reluctance to undertake the life he had before offered. He would now work, deny himself, do anything to give her the comforts she deserved and to deserve the love he was now assured had never altered. A glance from those soft eyes, a gentle

pressure of the hand from out the sleigh at parting, sent him home the happiest man in Ottawa.

* * * * * *

Before she slept Gertrude told her aunt her whole heart's story. She spoke so clearly and unfalteringly of her love now that Mrs. Watkins' objections were, at least, subdued into silence. Gertrude, as has been said, was fond of her aunt, and liked to have her good opinion, and Mrs. Watkins knew it. But she now recognized that her niece's love for Arthur was too strong for any counter influence from her, and she submitted with as good a grace as possible under the circumstances. She thought, with a sigh, of Gertrude's infatuation and folly, but she would make no further attempt to counteract them. This she told her brother in a letter written to him next day.

CHAPTER XX.

CONCLUSION.

ARTHUR and Gertrude are happy now in their modest home at the capital. Their happiness suffices for them, though their house is small. Arthur, since entering the Civil Service, has had several advances. He has his boat, which they can step into on the river within a stone's throw of his house, and in it they often make extensive trips upon that noble stream. Their beautiful little daughter is usually a participant in these trips—though not always in the walks by land which they often take. Gertrude has grown even more beautiful—in the eyes of her husband, at all events—than when the reader last heard of her. She cares not for the gaieties of the session, though she has not completely left off going out into society She thinks, however, now only of Arthur's and their child's happiness, and loves best the seasons when no Parliamentary session stirs the somewhat sluggish and

uneventful life of the capital. She likes, especially on a quiet autumn afternoon, to walk with her little girl up to Parliament Hill, admire the flowers and foliage beds, gorgeous in their autumn dress, and seating herself where she can gaze out over that noble view of river, and valley, and mountain, dream away an hour until Arthur joins her, and—their child between them—they stroll homeward to a quiet dinner, to be followed by music—for the Senator's wedding present to her was a Canadian upright piano—or perhaps in the earlier part of the season a row on the river. Frank, whose college career is almost completed, spends a few weeks with them every year—and a fine handsome young fellow he has grown to be—and rosy cheeked, good-hearted sister Katie has once accompanied him. As for Gertrude's mother, she has grown much better in health. She was able to be at her daughter's wedding, and from that day seems to have been growing stronger, and the thought comforts Gertrude greatly—while Mr. Southcote tells her laughingly, that by the time she gets Katie off her hands, she will be a stronger and heartier woman than ever. Gertrude says she still hopes Arthur may be able some day to rebuild Prairie Cottage—for he still holds the farm—so that she may "vindicate herself," as she expresses it, by living and working, for part of the year at any rate, on the farm.

Arthur is the same gay-hearted affectionate fellow he was in the days of their earlier courtship, and his chief reports to the honorable Mr. Sterling, who occasionally enquires about his progress, that he has developed into a capital office man and that he wouldn't be surprised if he should become a deputy head some day.

Mr. Hatfield has made good the promise of his early parliamentary days, and is now a Cabinet Minister. He has once or twice dined at Rashfellow's and has apparently recovered his disappointment at Gertrude's refusal. He has not yet married, but it is hinted that his frequent flying trips to Montreal will result in his bringing a handsome bride to the capital ere long. Mr. Duffy reports that she will bring him an additional fortune in time, as well as further political influence.

Mr. Graham, occasionally when he is at Ottawa, drops in upon Arthur, who takes him off to lunch with his wife, and tell her how he helped him, (Arthur), "keep heart and try his luck again." He says Graham has almost made an Imperial Federationist of him.

Mrs. Watkins, since the Kickaway fiasco, has taken the Senator in hand, and has almost succeeded in making a practical politician and useful legislator of him. She knows that these are the best *roles* he can assume with any hope of preferment, and, being still ambitious, she does not despair of helping him some day into a more exalted position than that he as yet occupies. The Senator still privately hints at grave abuses in the administration of the Indian Department, but says that he will never make a positive assertion on the subject until he has time to go personally to all the reserves to judge for himself; but as his wife insists that she must in such case go with him, but exhibits no anxiety to set out and in fact has privately made up her mind to temporize until he becomes disinclined—or too old—to go—it is safe to predict that he will make no more attacks upon that department from his place in the Senate.

THE END.

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The young man, taking for granted that Ilva will never wed the slayer of her father, enters a monastery, under a vow of perpetual silence. Thence he is sent on an errand of mercy to the cottage of Vandebec, near the sea. On the sands he encounters Ilva. A reconciliation is effected. All at once he is called to rescue Ilva's little cousin, the child Lotta, who is sinking in a neighboring quicksand. Saving the child he is himself engulfed. Lotta runs to procure aid. Ilva, perceiving the death of her lover inevitable, jumps into the quicksand beside him, and wreathing her arms around him they sink together—the sun the sole witness.

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