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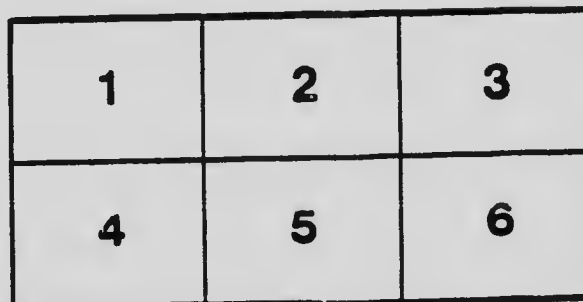
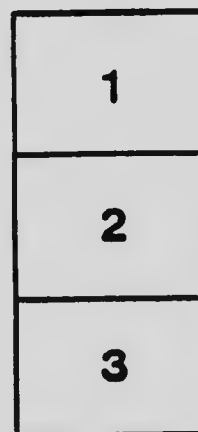
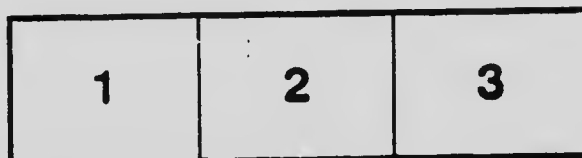
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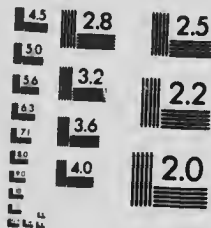
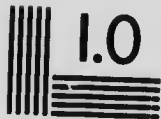
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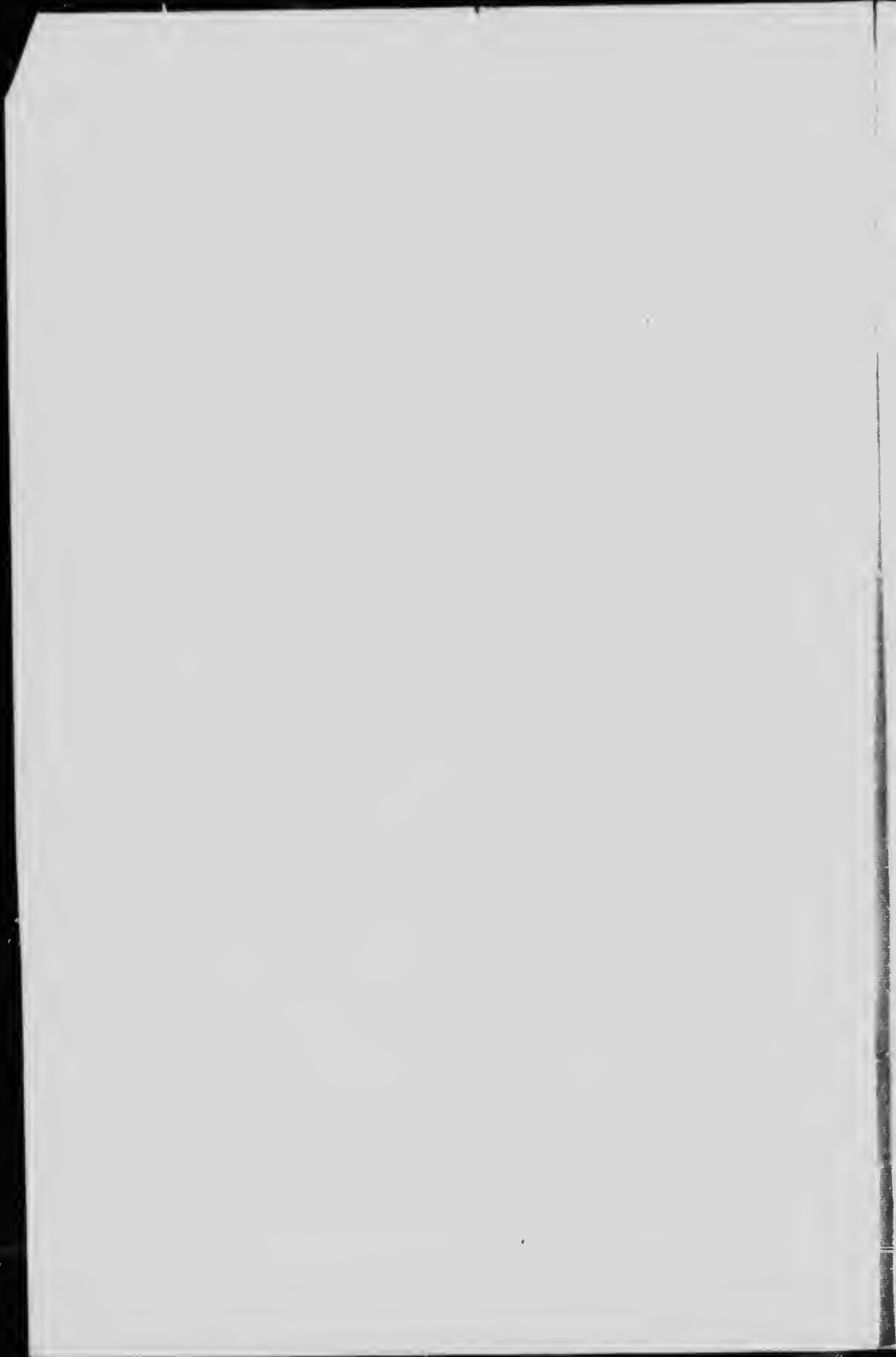
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THE YEAR THAT FOLLOWED

(Sequel to "Pine Lake")

BY
MILLIE MAGWOOD

Author of "Pine Lake," etc.

TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS

1907

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INTRODUCTION

To the friends who so kindly welcomed Daisy Murphy and her Pine Lake experiences, I now submit the story of the next year of her life. It is essentially different from that of the one you have read. We met Daisy as a very young girl, just entering upon the stern realities of life, and keenly enjoying its pleasures, as all healthy girls do. We watched her as she weighed matters, and made her decisions, with an honest heart, never forgetful of the home teaching, and the Christian parents, who trusted her to do the right in the sight of God, no matter what the circumstances.

Now, as she enters upon the deeper experiences of her opening womanhood, as she passes through the first great sorrow of her life, enters with a strong and holy purpose upon the new life that began with her wedding-day, and as her religious experience widens and deepens, may her friends love her better still than they have while following her sayings and doings as the moving spirit among the Pine Lake people.

Daisy is changing; but only as all mortals do change who give themselves into the hands of God, to be moulded into the image of His Son, Christ Jesus, whose name becomes the keynote of her life.

I would just like to add for the benefit of those who may incline to the opinion that in writing Daisy's religious experience I have been reaching after the marvellous and sensational, that there is really nothing unusual about it. Thousands of Christians have experiences far more wonderful, which go to prove the love, sympathy and care of the ever-present Father-God. While I have not given Daisy my own experience, I have given her one that is much less striking in its revelations of the great God who hears and answers the prayers of His children. I know Him of whom I have been writing--know Him as my truest and most intimate Friend; and thousands of His loved ones, all over the world, can testify of experiences such as that which mellowed and sanctified the life of our friend Daisy. May His blessing go with the little story which has as its foundation the experiences of those who know the living, personal Saviour.

My one prayer, as "The Year that Followed" goes from me on its mission, is that each brother or sister who reads it may come nearer to Him, and learn to read the Christian's motto, "ABSOLUTE SURRENDER," and its true and hidden meaning, "THE LIFE THAT IS HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD."

The Year that Followed

CHAPTER I.

WITH the days of early spring a terrible sorrow came to us. Mother had been failing all winter. The doctor said she had no disease, but day by day she grew weaker and weaker—just fading away before our eyes.

During January and February, she was able to sit in her big arm-chair by the kitchen fire nearly all day; but about the middle of March she became so weak as to be unable to sit up longer than a few minutes each day while we made her bed.

Dell was with us now, "for good," as she said, and glad we were to have her. Her bright, cheery face and breezy sayings were the life of the home that winter; and her silent and comforting kiss, in the dark hours when mother lay white and motionless on the bed, unable to speak a word to us, did me more good than all the words that could have been spoken.

Towards the end of the month, mother seemed to rally a little; but the apparent improvement only lasted a few days. On the morning of the first of April she seemed much brighter and stronger than

usual. Angus arrived by the noon train, and she chatted with him for a while, seeming so much better that hope, that part of human nature which dies hardest, sprang up in my heart with new vigor.

But about three o'clock that afternoon, as father and I sat by mother's side, a sudden change came over her features. Angus and Dell had just left the room, and she asked for them, in a tone so clear and strong that they heard her in the next room and came in. She reached out her hand to Dell, and, as she bent over her, tenderly kissed her lips.

"God bless you, daughter," she said. "Give Him your heart. And stay with Daisy, Dell. She needs you."

The unusual strength was fast leaving her, as she held out a hand to Angus and one to me. With the sobs almost choking me, I bent and kissed the dear, dear lips that were already beginning to grow cold in death. So did Angus; and then she laid my hand in his and tried to speak. All the words that we could catch were, "God—comfort—bless —."

Her lips still moved, but no sound came from them, as she feebly reached for father's hand.

Oh, the grandeur of the faith and strength of the Christian, in the most terrible experiences of life. While I threw myself upon the floor at the bedside, weeping until it seemed that my heart must break, father calmly bent over her, holding both the cold, limp hands in his, and kissing her softly, as he began to repeat in a low, comforting voice:

“ ‘When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee,

“ ‘For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. . . . Fear not, for I am with thee.’

“ ‘Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty,’ Mary,” he went on, bending his head until his face was close to hers, “and it won’t be long before we meet again.”

Suddenly a light, as of glory unspeakable, broke upon the quiet face. Her eyes opened widely, shining with a joy not born of this life, and fixed themselves upon Some One—to us invisible, but none the less present in the room. For a moment her voice came back to her, but sounding far away and uncertain, as she withdrew one hand from father’s, and stretched it out, as if clasping the hand of the Person she gazed upon.

“Oh, Willie, heaven is not far off. It is here, and Jesus reaches out His hand—oh, the scarred hand, that was pierced for me. Oh, love beyond all power to realize! Jesus—He died for me. Willie, it won’t—be long. It won’t be long. Jesus!”

Joy, peace, the sweetness of love unutterable—all that the children of God find in Him, seemed to be breathed in that one word, which to us signifies all of good that life present and eternal contains, for He has bought it for us by His own precious

blood. With the last, long-drawn syllable, the outstretched hand sank powerless on the coverlet, the glory died out of the countenance, and gradually an expression of utter peace settled upon it.

“‘To be with Christ, which is far better,’” I heard father say, as he dropped on his knees beside me, and laid his forehead against the cold hand, which lay so still and nerveless in his own. His voice had an odd sound to my ears, as though he spoke through space. Somehow, the sobs which seemed to be tearing the life out of my body, suddenly ceased. I seemed to hear again that sweet, long-drawn cry of “Jesus,” and then I knew no more.

When I came to myself, I was lying on the bed in a room opening off the dining-room. Dell was bathing my lips and temples with cold water, while Angus rubbed my hands vigorously. Dell was crying; and the first remembrance of what had taken place that came to me, was brought to my mind by some of her warm tears falling on my face. Then, as I opened my eyes, and tried to sit up, the terrible feeling of loneliness and desolation came over me, which only they know who have themselves lost a mother like mine. With a bitter groan I sank back on the pillow, and hid my face from the two who would have comforted me if they could. Leaving a tender kiss on my forehead, Dell slipped out of the room, and Angus sat down on the side of the bed. He did not speak, but there was a world of sympathy in the gentle clasp of the hand

which removed one of mine from my face and held it.

For the first time in my life a feeling of rebellion against God took possession of me. Why had He taken my darling mother from me like this? Why did He create human beings to be parted from their loved ones by the ruthless hand of death?—to die, and be buried deep in the cold earth, away from our sight for ever. Surely it would have been far more merciful to have never created us at all. A thought came to me of a debate I had heard at Pine Lake, on the question, "Is life worth living?" And in the depths of my heart, I passionately answered, "No." What would life be worth to me without her?

In the selfishness of a first great grief I forgot the dear ones who were left to me; forgot the loneliness of the man who knelt in the next room by the still form of her who had been as half of his own soul for more than thirty years, and whom he now surrendered to the God who gave her; forgot the dear girl who loved me as her own sister, and forgot the loving heart beside me, which ached now in sympathy with my sorrow, and asked for nothing better in life than to comfort me, work for me, and shield me, as long as life should last.

He bent over me now, whispering words of comfort; but I did not answer him. I could not. My heart seemed cold and dead, and my brain alive to only one thought—that mother was dead—dead.

Oh, the horror of it! There she lay in the next

room, rigid and cold, and pale as the marble which would soon stand in solemn whiteness over her grave. No more sweet words of motherly counsel, no more tender caresses, no more *mother* for me. How could I bear it? The power to weep had gone from me, and the tears that should have relieved me seemed pouring back upon my brain, and burning there until I writhed in agony.

"Daisy, darling," said Angus, with a note of pain in his voice, which somehow found its way to my aching heart and softened it, and I whispered:

"Angus, please leave me alone for a little while. I can't talk, and I can't listen. I want to be alone."

With a silent kiss he went out, and on my cheek, with the kiss, lay a big tear. Poor fellow! I realized how selfish I was in sending him away thus, but I felt that I *must* be alone, and could not endure the look or the touch of even my dearest friends. I sprang from the bed, locked the door, and then walked the floor, wringing my hands like one insane. At last I clutched my head with both hands, for it felt as though it would burst, and threw myself on my knees by the bed. I could not utter a word, and the great drops of sweat rolled from my body, while the veins in my forehead stood out against my hands like hard, knotted cords. The one dim thought I was conscious of was that, if there was help in God, I stood in supreme need of it, and by this sign of kneeling before Him, I besought the help I could not find words or power to ask for.

How long I knelt there I do not know ; but at last the awful strain seemed to lessen a little, and I found myself murmuring, with dry lips and parched tongue.

“ Oh, God, help—for mother’s sake—help her child.”

Was it mother, or was it only memory? Sweet and clear as the moment her dying lips had uttered it, came that one word, “ Jesus.” It fell upon my tortured soul like summer rain upon sun-baked ground, and my hard, rebellious heart unconsciously softened. There I knelt, hearing, feeling only that name—that name all-powerful, high over all—taking possession of my soul, permeating my whole being with its sweet and heavenly influence. The wild, maddening grief was gone, and I was calm ; but, oh, so heartsore and lonely. It still seemed that I could not live without her, that her soul had been so knit to mine that neither could be parted from the other.

Again the name, “ Jesus,” seemed breathed into my soul ; this time with a new comfort, a new significance. Somehow, I felt that mother was not so far away—not dead, but only gone from my sight for a little while. And with that name sounding softly through my soul, I began to realize a little more of what it means, “ Jesus!”—“ He shall save His people from their sins.”

I had sinned blackly in so rebelling against the heavenly Father ; but He who “ knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust,” knew the terrible wrench that had made my weak human heart

cry out against Him; and, "as one whom his mother comforteth," so my Lord comforted me; and with my flesh still quivering from the intense agony that had held me, I whispered,

"Thy will be done."

Who shall say that the spirits of those who are gone are millions of miles away, in some far-off city, walled in by blocks of jewel-studded gold?

Surely there is nought to divide us but the veil of mortality, which the hand of death alone can rend in twain. But, sometimes, at certain places in life, it becomes so thin that the eyes of the soul can almost see through its closely-woven meshes into the glories beyond. Still more frequently does the ear catch snatches of the language of heaven, thrilling the immortal spirit with "the earnest of that which is to come"—its everlasting heritage in glory.

So was my soul quickened that afternoon. My mother was there. Once—once only—I felt the touch of her hand on my head (that caressing touch I knew so well), and it brought me sweetest comfort.

Then again she spoke, as in her dying moments, that one word, "Jesus," and I saw again the enraptured face of the dying Christian, the glory-lit eyes, the lips that had parted in a smile of heavenly radiance, as she had stretched out her hand to clasp the Hand held out to her—that nail-pierced Hand, that for centuries has reached down in pity and love sublime to the children of earth. And now

she was with Him—gloriously happy for evermore. No more weariness; no more weakness; no more care or sorrow. Could I wish her back?

But again the heart-ache and loneliness almost overpowered me, and with utter weakness, I whispered again,

“Thy will be done; but, oh, Jesus, help me.”

Something, I knew not what, raised my head, and I beheld before me a dim vision—my mother. She stood looking down upon me, with eyes full of love and pity, but, oh, so transfigured with happiness that I gazed at her in wonder, scarcely realizing that the sweet, peaceful countenance could become so changed. Her long brown hair was unbound and hanging about her shoulders, her form was enveloped in a long, loose robe, almost transparent in its whiteness, reminding me of the vision one saw of old, when he said that the robes of heaven were “white and shining, so as no fuller upon earth could white them.” She held out both hands to me, with a smile, much as she used to do when I was a tiny child, and thought the one seat of honor in the whole world was mother’s knee. That gesture in the days of childhood meant “Come,” and I understood her now, and answered,

“Mother, darling, I will.”

Her features broke into a still more luminous smile, and gradually face and form took on such dazzling radiance that I could scarcely look upon her. Yet I could not withdraw my eyes. Then a Hand appeared—only one Hand; but on the palm

and back was a livid red scar. It placed a crown of purest gold on my mother's head, and she turned from me to bow in adoration before the Saviour whom she had loved and served, and whom she now saw face to face.

And then the room was filled with a glory beyond all description. Brighter and brighter glowed the radiance from the form before me, until my mortal eyes could bear it no longer; and with a great cry of "Mother!" I lost consciousness.

Dell told me afterwards that they heard the cry in the dining-room, and tried to open the door. Finding it locked, Angus had taken the key from another door, and with some difficulty pushed the inside key through, and then unlocked the door and entered, to find me lying upon the floor.

I slept soundly for hours, and when at last I awoke it was with a sweet feeling of rest in body and soul. The anguish had gone for ever; so had the heart-ache and the loneliness. I would always miss her bodily presence in the home, but I realized the truth of her statement that heaven is not a land that is very far off to those who are the children of God.

CHAPTER II.

NEXT morning I stole into mother's room all alone. Going over to the casket, which stood within a curtained bay-window, among the flowers she had loved so well, I raised one of the window blinds and gazed long upon the peaceful features. Then, turning to the flower-stands, and choosing the blossoms that she had best loved, I laid them loosely about her head, against the white satin folds of the casket's lining; a calla lily on her bosom, and some white carnations in the folded hands. And then I pressed my lips to the cold forehead, and kneeling by the coffin with my hands upon the marble hands of the dead, consecrated myself, my life, and all my powers to the service of my mother's God. Such a feeling of utter peace came to me that when, an hour later, I went out of that room, I was filled with a strength, a resolution, and a holy joy, such as only the children of the Most High can understand.

Dell, with a heart as sore as mine, was bravely doing the housework that always must be done, no matter what is happening in a home, and I remembered how little I had done to help her.

"Dell, dear, you look tired out," I said, putting an arm about her waist. "Go and lie down for a little while. I'll see to the work."

She looked up gratefully, but shook her head.

"I must keep going, Daisy," she answered. "I can't keep still a minute. I tried to sleep last night, and I felt as if I should go crazy."

"But, Dell," I said, "you can't go on much longer like this. You must have rest, you know."

"I'll rest after a while," she answered evasively, dashing the tears from her eyes with one hand, while she caught up a water pail with the other, and ran out to the pump.

All the remainder of the day I worked with her; and as often as was possible, when friends called, and one of us had to be with them, I made Dell go. Somehow, I felt that a frequent look at that beautiful face in the coffin there, would help to calm the overwrought nerves; and, anyway, the necessity for talking to callers would at least help to keep her from brooding over our sorrow. All the evening the house was crowded with friends and neighbors. None of us slept that night. Dell looked worn and feverish, but nothing could persuade her to try to rest. As for father, he sat all night long, as Angus told me he had done the previous night, in mother's big arm-chair by the side of the casket, scarcely taking his eyes for a moment from the face among the flowers, not one of which was more lovely than the waxen features that smiled so peacefully still, with just the reflex of the glory that had transfigured them, when the white lips uttered that last cry of "Jesus." Now and then, his lips moved silently and I knew he was praying.

Once, toward morning, I slipped into the room

and sat down on the arm of his chair, putting my arm around his neck and my cheek against his.

"It is best, my Daisy," he said softly, as if but speaking his thoughts at the moment. "God knows best, and mother is better with Him. I don't wish her back, but—oh, child, it will be lonely when—when we can't see her face."

There was silence in the room for a few minutes; then I told him the experience of the day before, and the change it had wrought in me. He did not speak till I had finished, but big tears rolled down his cheeks. Then he caught me in his arms, and looked searchingly into my face.

"You'll be another such as she has been," he said at last, with a loving look at the dear form before us. "It needed but this sorrow to bring out the likeness in face and character. God bless you, daughter. I can ask of Him nothing better for you than that you may grow more and more like the little mother as you grow older."

He put me gently from him, and leaning his head on his hand, returned to his silent watch, so I went out and closed the door, leaving him alone with his beloved dead.

CHAPTER I.I.

Soon after noon the next day, a succession of vehicles streamed up the lane until all the yard was full, and numbers drove into an adjoining field. Then the black-plumed hearse drove slowly up to the garden-gate, the minister took his book from his pocket, and the service began.

Dell stood, straight and motionless, at the head of the coffin beside father. The heavy crape veil was thrown back from her face, and she stood gazing, white and tearless, at the face of the only woman who had ever seemed like a mother to her. The stern, set look on her face was not good to see.

Father stood with bowed head during the short service, and when the lid of the casket was screwed on, he drew my hand through his arm, and pressed it to his side. Then Angus took Dell's arm, and we followed the pall-bearers with their precious burden down the garden-path, between the beds where the crocuses and primroses were just beginning to show themselves after their long winter's sleep—fit type of the resurrection, when all who sleep shall rise again, having for the corrupted clay the new body, the same, but changed; even as the plant springs from the apparently dead bulb. None of us spoke during that slow ride to the church, but I thanked God that the terrible grief was over.

I missed the dear mother, God knows, but what right had I to selfishly grieve because Jesus had called her home and given her the everlasting portion with Himself in the Father's house of many mansions? It was well with her; and I could but thank Him for leaving her with us so long.

We followed the casket as it was borne up the church aisle and placed before the pulpit, while the choir sang, softly, a stanza of "Safe in the arms of Jesus." How sweetly the tender old hymn fell upon my ear that day—

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love o'ershadowed,
Sweetly my soul shall rest."

She was safe for ever, and supremely happy. The tears ran down my cheeks like rain, but they were not now the tears of bitterness.

The sermon was earnest and touching, for the pastor had been an intimate friend of the one who was gone. He had seen something of her beautiful life and deep spiritual experience since he had come among us two years ago, and he spoke accordingly. Although he had not been present when she went home, he had heard from Angus an account of her last moments; and his description of that triumphant victory over death brought tears to many an eye, unused to such visitants, and conviction to more than one soul hitherto careless or doubtful concerning the realities of the future life.

But to Dell, who had stood by that death-bed, and seen and heard what no human tongue could adequately describe—the glory of the heaven-lit countenance, and that never-to-be-forgotten cry with which she rose to meet her Redeemer—to Dell that tenderly told history was as nothing to the bitterness of the separation; and the earnest, pleading exhortation with which it was concluded, to all who knew not this Jesus, to come to Him and find in His companionship all that the soul of the one just departed had found, fell upon deaf ears in her case. As the people filed up the aisles for a last look at the calm, sweet face in the coffin, she shivered like one chilled through with cold. When the last one had passed by, and the pastor beckoned to us, she rose at once, but the first step she took I saw her clutch at the back of the seat, and Angus sprang to catch her arm. Then father drew me out of the seat and up to the open casket. Heavy sobs shook his frame as he bent to kiss for the last time the lips of her who had been the one and only love of his manhood. Never again would that face be lifted to his to return his loving caresses, but he pressed his face to the cold cheek and whispered,

“Good-bye. It won't be long, Mary!”

Her dying assurance. With these words in my mind, and with a last look upon the still features of my mother, I, too, kissed the loved clay tenderly, and turned away to try to comfort father. The next instant we were startled to hear Dell's voice, clear as a bell and sharp in its utterance,

though not loud enough for those farther back in the church to hear,

"God has taken you from us, mother, they say; and you are happy. Good-bye for ever. I'll never see you again, for I hate Him—I hate Him."

Angus started as if stung, and hastily whispered something to her. She did not appear to notice him, as she repeated, in a voice in which defiance mingled with the agony of the parting grief, "I hate Him!"

Then she took the calla lily from the clasp of the dead fingers, and placed it in the bosom of her dress, murmuring,

"Good-bye, mother," as the beloved face was hidden from her sight, as she thought, for ever.

I tried to think what her grief must be, for she had loved the mother of her adoption better than many a daughter loves her own; and at this moment I knew she had no hope of ever beholding her face again.

What is a parting, which we know is but for a little while, compared with the terrible blackness of the misery of that sorrow which is without hope—when the soul cries out for its loved one, and the only answer it receives is the awful, hopeless silence of the vast Unknown, which spreads itself in endless chaos before the eyes of the mortal who rejects God and His revelation of the life eternal.

Poor Dell! It was indeed a terrible hour for her. As we stood by the open grave, I put my arms around her, and felt her quiver in every nerve as the coffin was lowered into the ground.

But to my own soul had returned the sweet, calm joy; and as the earth clattered upon the casket, I seemed to see again the radiant face, as it turned from her child to the Jesus who had been her joy, her light, her salvation, her all in all.

Once more the beautiful words of the burial service fell upon my ear, recalling for a moment a pathetic scene at a tiny grave in Pine Lake.

“I am the resurrection and the life.”

He who spake the words long ago, who was lifted up in order that He might draw all men unto Himself, was surely there that day, with His tender, human heart full of the love and pity of the Infinite God—there, with His all-sustaining sympathy, to uphold and help us who were left behind.

“And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.”

The solemn voice of the minister seemed to have in it a note of triumph, as he uttered the words. They were no form at this grave, for she rested from her labors, and her works would follow her while all who knew her lived. Still on and on would her influence extend, through the lives of those whom she had influenced, like the ripples of a pool into which a pebble had been thrown, circling ever wider and wider until they break upon the shore. So would the influence of that consecrated

Christian life spread and ever extend, until its ripples lost themselves upon the shores of eternity.

When the mound was smoothly rounded, we turned away. Not a word was spoken all the way home, and the moment we entered the house, Dell went straight to mother's room and closed the door. None of us disturbed her, and in about an hour she came out, and went on with the evening work, still in silence, and with that hard, set look on her face that was so painful to see.

As the day deepened into twilight, Angus called me aside and gave me a folded paper. On opening it, I recognized mother's handwriting, and noticed that the date was but two weeks previous to that of her death. It was a letter to him, in which she told of her fast-failing strength, and her certainty that the end was at hand. She said that she was satisfied to go, at rest in body and soul, and just calmly awaiting the summons home. Her one request was that we should not allow her departure from the home to alter the plans laid for our wedding in June.

"You know," she had written, "that I cannot say much about this to our Daisy. She feels so keenly the thought of parting, that it is impossible to talk matters over with her without making her miserable; so I have adopted this plan of making my wishes known. When I am gone, Angus, show this letter to her. She may wish to postpone the marriage, because her mother has so recently gone

home, but if she knows that my last wish is that not a plan may be altered on that account, she will act accordingly.

"God only knows how soon my dear husband may follow me, and I do not like to think of the girls as being left all alone in the world. Daisy has no relatives, and Della worse than none. To be sure, I can trust them to the care of the great Father, but under Him, in case of their father's death, I leave them to you, Angus. I feel that you are worthy of a dying mother's trust, and I am at rest concerning my child's future. As your wife, I know that she will be loved and cherished as fondly as I have been, and this is the highest commendation I can give you.

"I want you to consider Della as Daisy's own sister, Angus. They share alike in our home and property, for she has taken the place, in the home, of the dear girl long since gone to the heaven which I am nearing. I hope I may see you before I go.

"The Lord bless thee and keep thee in all thy ways."

"How shall it be, Daisy?" asked Angus, gently, as I finished the letter. I had seen her write it, little by little at a time, as her strength permitted, and at the memory the tears would come.

"It shall be as she wished, Angus," I replied.

Then we heard father's slow footstep coming up the garden path, and went together to the door to meet him.

CHAPTER IV.

THAT night Dell and I slept together, and I was awakened during the night by her voice. She was tossing and rolling about, muttering disjointed sentences, and for a few moments I paid no attention to her. At length, however, her bare arm came in contact with my face, and I was startled to feel it burning hot. In an instant I was out of bed, and had lighted a lamp. She stared at me with wide, gleaming eyes, as I laid a hand on her forehead, which was hot and feverish, and her temples were throbbing.

"Mother, you've come back," she exclaimed, grasping my hand in both of hers, and clinging to it as if she never meant to let it go.

"No, Dell, mother isn't here. Don't you know me? I'm Daisy," I replied, but she shook her head. Placing my finger on her pulse, I found that it was flying, and lost no time in calling Angus and father. While they were dressing, I hurried on my clothes, wondering, meanwhile, what I could do for her. That she was already in a raging fever I could see, inexperienced though I was. Oh, if mother were only here to tell me what to do!

Father entered the room presently, and went up to the bed. He, too, felt her pulse, and then turned to me with the question,

"How long has she been like this?"

"I don't know, father," I answered. "She wakened me a few minutes ago with tossing and muttering, and I thought she was only a trifle restless, as she often is when anything has excited her, until her arm fell across my face. It was so hot that it frightened me, and I got up and called you at once."

He went out, and a moment later I heard him talking to Angus, in the kitchen. Then the outside door closed, and father came back upstairs to our room.

"Angus has gone for the doctor," he said, sitting down on the side of the bed.

"Doctor!" exclaimed Della, catching up the word, as it fell in with the fancies of her fevered brain. "There's no use, father. He can't do anything for her. She's dying before our eyes, and nothing can save her. No one can help her but God, and He won't. I've asked Him over and over again. I've prayed till I'm weary of the thought of prayer, and He won't listen. I hate Him."

"Hush, hush, Della, dear!" I whispered, stroking her hot forehead, and for a few moments she lay still.

"I want some water, mother. I'm burning up!" she said presently, and with tears running down his cheeks, father went to bring it.

All the time Angus was gone she talked, with little cessation, the word "mother" seldom absent from her lips for a minute at a time. When the doctor came, he examined her, and asked a few brief

questions. I could only tell him what I had told father.

"Has she seemed to be much worried, or troubled, of late?" he asked.

"She has not seemed so until the last few days," I replied; "but she is not one to show her feelings very readily. Judging from her random talk to-night, and from her behavior since mother's death, I think she has been in a very troubled state of mind for some time past; but she had been bright and cheery, outwardly, up till the day mother died. Dell would be that to help others bear up, even if her own heart was breaking."

"How has she seemed since Mrs. Murphy died?" he inquired.

I told him as nearly as I could, and when I narrated the scene at the church, and of the hour she had spent alone in mother's empty room, he nodded slightly.

"Been working on her for some time, I should judge," he remarked. "The strain of to-day has overcome her completely. A case of nervous disorder and brain fever."

"Is she very seriously ill?" asked father.

"Tell you better in the morning," answered the doctor, opening his satchel. He left medicine, with directions for its use, and for the treatment of the sick girl, and went away, promising to call again in the morning.

Morning seemed long in coming, with Dell tossing about the bed, raving of the days when mother had been with us. She recalled things that had hap-

pened when we were children, and "Mother Murphy" had been her refuge and comfort when her vixenish aunt had made her life all but unbearable, and yet refused to give her up.

But she talked more often of the months she had been with us as our own—as mother's daughter—and I realized more of what life must be without a mother than I had ever before imagined, as I listened to the sick girl, in her delirium, talking more freely than she had ever done in her senses, of the awful want of her childhood, and how sweet it was to find at last a real mother, to love and honor, and to call her own mother. But her ravings always terminated with the one burden of her trouble—God only could have given that mother health and strength, and left her with us—but He wouldn't. She had pleaded and prayed for months, and He had refused her heart's appeal, and the sentence she had uttered in the church was reiterated again and again—"I hate God—I hate Him—I hate Him!"

Sometimes it was in a low voice of concentrated hatred, sometimes in a loud, defiant tone, and often with a bitter wail of agony. Once, just before day-break, she started up in bed, and cried shrilly:

"God, You took my father and mother when I was a child, and put me where I was treated worse than the dog that lay in the stable. Now You've taken the dear, adopted mother who really loved me—the mother I loved better than all other beings put together. You took her—because You had the power to take her, and I couldn't keep her from You. You have the power to take Daisy and father,

too; and You have the power to crush me. But I tell You to Your face, I hate You! I defy You! I hate You!"

Shuddering with horror, I put my arms around her, and with difficulty persuaded her to lie down again. A little later, the powder she had swallowed began to take effect, and she fell into an uneasy doze.

When Dr. Lennox came again, he ordered chopped ice for her head, gave some more directions, left a different medicine, and went away, with the intimation that he would be back during the afternoon, and, if possible, would bring a nurse with him from the town.

The hours wore slowly away. Angus and father did the work as best they could, and I never left Dell for a moment.

When the doctor again arrived, shortly after noon, I was glad to see that the nurse he brought was Mrs. Werry, an old friend of mother's. She was well known as an excellent nurse, although she had not spent months in training in a hospital. Perhaps she was all the better for having acquired her knowledge and skill, not as a business, but only through love and sympathy for her suffering fellow-beings. When she heard that Dr. Lennox was inquiring for a nurse for one of Murphy's girls, she had immediately offered her services, and glad I was to place my charge in more experienced hands than my own.

Then came days of anxious watching and care, of weary waiting for the crisis, which I scarcely knew which most to long for or dread.

CHAPTER V.

Two weeks passed. Dell was worn almost to a shadow of herself. All her beautiful black hair had been cut off, and her head was bound up with cloths filled with chopped ice, for she rolled and tossed about so constantly that it was impossible to keep the ice on her head by any other means, and she could not have borne the pain and fever without it.

And still the burden of her delirium was the old story that she had repeated over and over again during the first few hours of her illness. She often cried piteously for mother, and would never be pacified until I came and sat by the bed, either holding her hands, or stroking the poor, aching head. Perhaps it was my resemblance to mother in face and figure, or it may have been just because mine was a familiar presence, and she thought in her delirium that I must be the one she so longed to see.

At last, one day, the doctor told us that the crisis was near. That afternoon would in all probability witness the change for life or death. Until then I had hoped and prayed, day by day, for her recovery, but a look at his face was enough to send all the hope oozing out at my finger-tips.

"You—you are afraid—" I began, then stopped, for I could not bring myself to utter the fear that was in my heart.

"There is life, so there still is hope," he answered slowly; "but I'm afraid she cannot live, Miss Murphy."

He went out without another word. That was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. Mrs. Werry had gone to bed, after an unusually trying night. Father was out at the stable, and Angus, who had been prevailed upon to stay with us until the worst of Dell's illness was over, had driven to town to see about some business in connection with his purchase of the farm which lay next ours. I was all alone with my poor sick sister, and, oh, how my heart ached for her. Suddenly, her burning gray eyes fixed themselves upon my face and she tried to speak. She had grown so weak that it was but seldom she could speak above a whisper, but, low and distinct, I heard that awful utterance that had so often thrilled me with horror,

"I hate God, mother! He hates me, I know. I hate Him!"

I heard no more of her delirious whispering, for in a moment I had thrown myself on my knees by the bedside. Poor, dying Dell! Little had any of us imagined from the gay, sparkling exterior of the girl, that underneath it all rolled this black, stormy tide of hatred and rebellion toward her Maker.

It seemed that I could not bear the thought, and an agony took hold upon me that was even more intense than that which I had endured the day my mother left us. I could not pray. My lips refused to move, and my tongue seemed paralyzed. But my

whole soul was drawn toward God, until I felt as though it were almost parting from my body.

At last the strain lessened, and words poured from my tongue as though some one else were speaking through me. A prayer, intense and prevailing, went up to the Heavenly Father, that the dying girl might be restored to life. How long I prayed I know not; but at last, as I uttered the name of Jesus, I felt a weak hand resting on my head, and looked up to find Dell's eyes, now, for the first time in three weeks, calm and quiet, looking at me. The wild, feverish light had gone out of them, and she was smiling ever so slightly.

"Jesus—mother's friend," she whispered. "He heard you, Daisy; and I heard you, too. He's taken all the pain and fever away, and He's taken the hatred, too. I know Him now—and I love Him."

In an instant she was fast asleep. I touched her hand. It was cool and moist as my own. I felt her pulse and found it to be as quiet and regular as that of a person in perfect health. Gently I unbound the ice-bandages from her head, removed the cloths placed under it to absorb the moisture from the melting ice, turned the pillow—all without waking her from the deep slumber into which she had fallen—and laid her comfortably upon it.

Then, with tears of joy, I knelt again to thank the Father, who had heard my prayer and so speedily granted it. This was the first experience of the kind I had known, but it has been by no means the last. The same Jesus who raised Simon's wife's

mother from her bed of suffering and fever was there that day, and healed our Della.

She slept for three hours, and we had some difficulty in arousing her sufficiently to be able to swallow a little nourishment. Then, as soon as her head touched the pillow, she was asleep again.

The doctor came between one and two, expecting to find her sinking fast, and he could scarcely believe his senses.

"There is no doubt that she is on the high road to recovery," he said, "but the case is beyond my power to account for."

"The Lord has healed her," I said gently.

"Nonsense," he answered brusquely, "the Lord doesn't do such wonderful things nowadays."

"Indeed!" said I. "He has ceased all His wonderful works, has He? Since when has He decided to cease creating human beings, and all that is necessary for their sustenance on the earth?"

"I didn't say He had," he replied, smiling a little.

"But you said He didn't do such wonderful works as this healing of a sick body," I persisted. "Now, which is the more wonderful—to create a body and breathe into it the breath of life, or to simply renew life and tissue in a body which He had already created?"

He was very busy with his medicine satchel, so he did not reply, and I went on to quietly tell him how the change in our patient's condition had taken place. He listened without a word, until I had finished, then he took up his hat.

"Well, I hope this wonderful thing may last," he said, as he went out of the door.

But Dell was wondrously and suddenly lifted out of the dark valley; and before long she was running about the house as gaily as ever. But there was a great change, for now Dell knew the Lord and the sweetness of the love betwixt them mellowed all her life and character.

CHAPTER VI.

THE morning of the twenty-fourth of June dawned clear and beautiful—my wedding-day.

I awoke at daybreak and lay still, thinking of the plans mother had laid for this important day in her daughter's life. Some of them must be laid aside, for none of us could have borne the thought of the large party she had intended having; neither had I any heart to array myself in the lovely bridal outfit she had meant to have for me, and part of which, indeed, had been purchased some weeks before her death.

Angus had returned home a few days after Dell's recovery from the fever. The night before he went we had talked the matter over, and decided that the marriage should take place on the very day mother had named—June the twenty-fourth—and that Angus, Jean and Norman should come the day before.

Yesterday they had arrived, and to-day "would see the last of Daisy Murphy," as Jean had smilingly remarked the previous evening.

I wasn't thinking a lot of sentimental things as I lay awake that morning. And I had no new home to plan for and think about. According to mother's wishes, father was to keep his one chick beside him in the old home. I believe that down in the bottom

of his heart Angus would have preferred having a new home and a fire-side of his own; but poor father was failing this spring, and sorely needed us both. So, without a word regarding his own feeling in the matter, he was to step into our home and take the place of son to father, taking upon him the management of our farm and his own, adjoining. His constant presence would be the only outward difference that the marriage would make in our home; and I was glad of it, for father's sake.

Dell would still live with us as father's daughter and our sister. The only change, then, that I had to think of was the great change in my own life.

I had often heard girls express a dread of marrying; seeming to look upon the old, old ceremony as a sort of legal form, by means of which they would surrender all freedom, and place their necks beneath a yoke of bondage and blind obedience to the will of—a *man*, forsooth! How my blood used to boil when I heard such opinions voiced! And how I had inwardly fumed and desired to behold the mortal man who should ever command such homage and obedience at my hands!

"He'd wish he'd 'never been borned,' if he tried ruling our Daisy," Dell had remarked one day last winter, concerning a young man, who had honored me with the offer of his name and all the heart he had (which Dell had solemnly declared was only a gizzard, and the smallest of its kind), and had shortly afterwards been unwise enough to openly state in my presence that "weaker woman should obey" her

husband, like any good little child its parent—or be punished.

Like the man in the old song, he was “sorry that he spoke,” for he immediately received a torrent of plain, wholesome English that swept him off his balance, and stranded him, breathless, upon the shores of silence for the remainder of the evening.

To Dell’s infinite amusement, he had made her his confidant, during the weeks of his love-sickness; and that night, just as he left the house, he drew her aside and whispered.

“Who would have thought there was such an amount of fire and temper in that sweet little being? Why, she’d talk a fellow to death if he crossed her.”

“That all depends,” Dell sympathetically remarked. “Daisy is all goodness and sweetness until you interfere with what she considers to be her rights as an independent being. If you do, look out for squalls.”

“But I didn’t interfere with her rights,” he protested.

“See here, Len,” said Dell, “you distinctly stated that a woman should obey her husband, as a child obeys its parents—or be punished. Let me tell you that no being bearing an outward resemblance to a man, who is a *real* man at heart, holds any such view as that. It’s a Turk you ought to be, sonny. There isn’t any room in Christian Canada for such pretensions as yours. Better change your opinions before you ask any other girl to marry you.”

So saying, she had turned on her heel and left him staring after her like a man astounded beyond measure. Our hostess, coming up to him a moment later, had tried to discover the cause of his dazed condition; and, failing to elicit any satisfaction from his rather incoherent replies, had concluded that the boy must be taking la grippe, and as he went out of the door, Dell heard her advising him to take a hot foot-bath, and a bowl of hot gruel before he went to bed. We didn't hear whether that treatment improved his condition or not.

We were hard on him, I admit; but what girl with any sense or independence wouldn't feel indignant to hear a man, who had very little common-sense to begin with, display his utter lack of true manhood by such a speech as that which he had made—particularly just after the same man had, with much apparent, aspiring humility, condescended to ask her to be his wife.

When, a little later, he heard about Angus, he shook his head, and ruefully remarked:

“Well, I wish him luck; but I pity him.”

I thought of the little episode that morning and smiled. Friction of that nature would be almost the last thing I might expect in our married life.

Once, before I left Pine Lake, we had been studying a Sunday-school lesson together, and had found ourselves confronting this text:

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.”

He paused, and I read on:

“For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church, and He is the saviour of the body.

“Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.”

Then he took up the next verse:

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it;

“That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

“That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

“So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

“No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church.”

Then we hunted up all the references bearing upon the subject, and examined it as fairly as we could from the Scripture standpoint.

“Well, what do you conclude?” asked Angus, at last, as he read aloud the last given reference, and closed his Bible.

“What is your conclusion?” I asked, gravely.

“Just this,” he replied emphatically, “that, turn the thing whichever way you may, if one takes both sides into consideration, man and wife walk abreast, if it is a true marriage. The directions

to the husband are just as explicit as those given to the wife; and if any man follows them fully, he won't bother much about whether his wife obeys him or not. If he loves her as he loves his own life, he'll want her to have as pleasant a life as possible, and he won't make her miserable by always wanting his own way. *Obedience is lost in love.*"

"But supposing it was not a question of a mere desire, to either, but a difference of opinion of some importance?" I queried.

It wasn't a bad idea to draw him out on this particular question.

"If both are sensible, intelligent people," he replied, slowly, "they will quietly discuss the matter, weigh the arguments on both sides, and decide accordingly. If it happens to be a case of 'mismatch,' where a clever, sensible woman has made the mistake of marrying a fool, or a selfish brute, who thinks that because he was created a man he must be lord over all creatures that are not men, why—well, what would you do in such a case, Daisy?"

"Break his neck," I answered, briefly. Then, on second thought, I added, "But, in the first place, I wouldn't marry a man like that if he was the last of the race, and I knew another would never be created."

Angus laughed.

"Then, suppose, too," he continued, "that a fine, intelligent man had married a doll of a girl, who hadn't brains enough to take care of herself; or an

indolent, slovenly creature, who made his life miserable by her untidiness; or a gay piece of frippery, who had no aim in life higher than to outshine her neighbors in dress and—”

“But, Angus,” I interrupted, “*the Bible rules do not apply to such cases at all—unless they first become converted.* No one has any right to take that first sentence, ‘Wives, obey your husbands,’ out of its context, and lay it down as a cast-iron rule for all womankind. The Bible’s commands are for the children of God; and besides that, you notice that in this other verse the command, ‘Obey your husbands,’ is followed by the phrase, ‘In the Lord.’ Now, that covers the whole ground. Christians are warned not to marry those who are not like believers; and if a Christian man marries a Christian woman, both will certainly endeavor to live in the spirit of the Bible teaching in this as in all else. Then the word, ‘obey,’ that sounds so hard, dissolves itself into a simple solution, that must form in itself a great part of the sweetness of the life of complete union the Bible describes—the beautiful spirit of unselfish yielding, in all that is not contrary to conscience and right, to the wishes and tastes of the one she loves best. Giving the preference to him because she loves him is not taking an inferior place by any means.

“And if a man lives in the spirit this old Book pictures, he will be just as ready to yield his wishes and his tastes and preferences to the wife whom he is commanded to love as his own flesh.

“That brings us back to your first statement—

they walk abreast. As for those other 'mis-matches,' I see no reasonable way for them but to settle their disagreements as best they can. If a man won't take the Bible, *as a whole*, to be the rule of his life, he has no right to expect his wife to make that one text the law of hers—and the bond of slavery all her life. I should say that, from a common-sense standpoint, it would be a piece of absurdity for a strong-minded, sensible woman to submit herself to the whims and caprices, and the petty tyranny of a weak, foolish, or wicked man. And it would be just as absurd for an intelligent man to let a silly, slovenly, or giddy wife spoil his life, and, worse still, his children's characters, without using all the influence, or authority he could gather up, to better matters. How such 'mis-matches' occur, anyway, is more than I can conceive. One would think that sensible people would stop and consider a while before taking one of the most important steps in life—certainly the most important, after the choice between good and evil."

"Love is blind," quoted Angus.

"Or crazy, in some cases," I added.

He laughed, and further quoted for my delectation:

"Oh, what a funny thing is love!

It cometh from above

And sitteth like a dove

On some.

But on some it never sits,

Unless it gives them fits,

Or scatters all their wits.

Oh, hum!"

"Perhaps the last three lines explain it," said I, laughing. And there the discussion dropped, neither of us feeling any great anxiety concerning it, as far as our own future was concerned, anyway.

I was just thinking of what a beautiful pattern of true married life father's and mother's had been, when suddenly a tiny canary alighted on the window-sill. The window was open, and he hopped in until he was so near that I might have touched him; then, fixing his round, black eyes on my face, he opened his wee bill, and poured forth a flood of liquid music that wakened Dell beside me. Neither of us moved or spoke until he had ceased his song, and hopping from the window-sill to the bed, proceeded to search for food. Dell had thought she was hungry the night before, and had brought a biscuit upstairs. She had left half of it on a stand beside the bed, so she gently scattered some crumbs over the coverlet, whereupon our little friend daintily breakfasted, while we watched him with admiring eyes.

His appetite satisfied, he again mounted the window-sill, and, shaking his tiny wings, burst into a second flood of song, in the midst of which he flew away to the boughs of an apple-tree near at hand, where we could still see his gleaming little yellow body, and hear him piping away with all his might.

"An omen, Daisy, darling," whispered Dell, turning on her pillow to kiss me. "May your life from this day forth be as bright and joyous, and free from hardness as the bird's. I think surely God must have sent the little fellow on this last morning of

your girl-life, to pour out to you, in its sweet music, His own kind wishes and glad sympathy."

"God's best wishes and congratulations, sent by one of His own winged messengers! What a beautiful thought, Dell," said I.

And just then we heard father stirring about the kitchen, and both sprang up and began to prepare for the day.

CHAPTER VII.

ABOUT four o'clock that afternoon Dell and Jean and I put the last finishing touches to the dainty tea-table—the last, that is, that we could do until tea-time, when the good things stored away down cellar would be brought forth—and then went to our rooms to dress. Angus and Norman were already shut in the south room with their valises.

Father had donned his Sunday clothes an hour ago, and had gone to salt the cattle, with a lonesome look in his patient eyes that brought the warm tears to mine. I knew he was thinking of the mother in heaven; and as he passed me on the way out I could not resist kissing his cheek and whispering:

“Do you know, daddy, I can't help feeling mother near me all day. I think she's here, only we can't see her.”

“Maybe she is,” he answered, putting his arm around my neck, and stroking my hair with the other hand. “Maybe she is, dearie. God bless you for the thought.” And then he went away, looking a little comforted.

Up in our own room Dell and I put on our bridal dresses—simple, white muslins; that kind, you know, girls, that is like a dainty white-dot veil. It leaves visible the arms, and the tucks and embroidery

beneath it. It wouldn't take a half-column newspaper description to tell all about those wedding dresses. Bride and bridesmaid were arrayed alike—all in white, pure and simple and cool. The only bit of color about Dell, when her toilet was finished, was the delicate pink of the tea-roses at her throat, while I had none but the green leaves that nestled among the creamy petals of the white roses I wore in my dress and hair. Dell bewailed her own cropped curls all the while she was arranging mine.

“‘All in white, like a dream of the night,’” she began, stepping backwards to survey me, when the last bud had been satisfactorily pinned in place.

“Or a sheeted ghost on a gaunt gate-post,” I suggested as she paused.

“Pretty substantial-looking ghost, with those ros, cheeks and—”

“Red hair, plus freckles innumerable,” said I, interrupting. “Dell, I'm glad this is only a quiet wedding. It's a nuisance to have to go to the bother of fixing up like this, and be afraid to move lest something should get crushed, or my hair get tossed. If I had to put up with all the fuss and bother of a big crowd and an up-to-date bridal outfit—veil, orange-blossoms, train, and all—why, I'd go dead, I believe.”

“Daisy Murphy, you most unaccountable of girls!” exclaimed Dell, sitting down on the bed to stare at me.

“Oh, Della, darling!” I cried in haste. “You mustn't sit down till after the ceremony. Have

you forgotten Jean's directions already? Why, your skirt is all crumpled."

"I don't care a great deal," said Dell, rising and twisting her neck to get a glimpse of the back of her skirt. "I'm not the bride, you know—thank goodness!"

The latter expression was a sort of aside—an audible soliloquy.

"Never mind, Dell Franklin," said I, trying to look offended, "your turn will come some time. For your own sake, I hope the young man may be at least half as—"

"Spare me, Daisy! Spare me, I beseech you!" cried the ungrateful girl, putting her fingers in her ears. "I know Angus is an angel—at least one in embryo. He'll blossom out one of these days—and—"

A voice at the door interrupted her, with an anxious,

"Girls, are you ready?"

"Yes, Jean. Come in," we cried together.

"Can't. The preacher's at the gate," was the rapid reply. "You haven't sat on your dress, Daisy, I hope?"

"No; but Dell sat on hers," I replied, laughing; and we heard a reproachful "Oh, Dell," from the stairway as she ran down to receive the minister and his wife. They had called the previous evening, and Jean had declared herself "in love with both."

"The dreaded hour has all but come upon thee, Daisy," said Dell, with a little tremble in her voice

in spite of her drollery. She came and kissed me as she spoke, and went out, rightly thinking that I would like to be alone just then.

As the door closed behind her, I caught up my crushable muslin, to kneel beside the bed.

One last prayer for God's blessing upon the new life upon which we were about to enter, one more solemn consecration of my life, with all its powers and opportunities, to Him who gave Himself for me—and I went to the door to meet Angus, with a sweet, calm peace at my heart that must have found its way to my face.

"You look as if an angel had brushed your face with its wing," he remarked, holding my hands and looking into my eyes.

"Better still," I answered, "God has spoken to me, and all His message was joy and peace."

"May the joy and peace ever deepen the further we go," was his tenderly-spoken reply.

"Angus, I do beseech you to mercifully remember that dress," cried Dell, suddenly appearing in the nick of time, for his arm was unconsciously stealing around behind me, and in another instant my pretty sleeves would assuredly have been crushed beyond recovery.

"Ready!" said Jean, softly, from the stairway. Norman came out of his room, and the next minute we were down-stairs and standing before the minister.

The sweet words of the tender old ceremony that means so much to the man and woman who take

upon themselves its solemn pledges, seemed but to increase the all-pervading peace that filled me to overflowing. There was a tender, earnest ring in Angus's voice as he made the promises, by the breaking of which many a man has perjured his soul, and broken a woman's heart, and by the keeping of which many have found life's highest happiness.

"Daisy Murphy, wilt thou take this man to have and to hold for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, honor, and cherish until death?"

My whole soul responded to the vow, as I laid my hand in his to whom I gave it, and promised all that would be required of me in the sight of God, as a Christian wife.

A short, earnest prayer and the ceremony was over. It gave me a funny little thrill to hear Mr. Alman call me "Mrs. McIvan." Then father came up, and just took me in his arms, sleeves and all, and giving me one of his loving old hugs, and a hearty kiss, said tenderly:

"God bless my baby!"

Dear old father! I was glad to think that I was his baby still, even on my wedding-day. He turned to Angus with a blessing that I did not hear, owing to the fact that I was nearly smothered by Dell, Jean, and Mrs. Alman all together. Being finally extricated by Norman, who claimed his first brotherly kiss as a reward, we answered the necessary questions, signed the usual papers, and then

sat chatting a few minutes, while the girls finished setting the tea-table.

During the meal Dell suddenly asked:

"Mr. Alman, did Daisy warn you to leave out that 'obey'?"

The minister laughed.

"The race is becoming enlightened, Della," he replied. "That word is oftener omitted than used in the marriage ceremony nowadays—wisely and justly, too, in most cases. Few young people have studied the matter, and so understand its full significance, and it is often used as an unfair advantage. I always omit it. In this case I was requested to do so; but not by the bride. Mr. McIvan himself mentioned the matter to me."

"May the proselytes of his tribe increase!" ejaculated Dell, with great earnestness. "May they increase and spread abroad throughout the earth; for, truly, there are few men like him."

Then began a merry discussion, which lasted until the meal was finished.

We spent a very pleasant evening in the parlor, and on the old verandah, with its honeysuckle and climbing roses. About nine o'clock we had prayers together, and Mr. and Mrs. Alman drove away, with repeated blessings, and a promise exacted of us to visit them before Jean and Norman should return home.

We were all tired, and soon afterwards the girls went off to the room upstairs which had hitherto been Dell's and mine. Norman also went to bed.

Father went to his room to be alone with his God, and I was alone with my husband.

Nothing was said for a moment. Then he laid his hand on my shoulder and asked:

“What are you thinking of, little wife?”

“Of the peace that has filled my soul all afternoon,” I replied. “It came to me just before you came to my room for me. I was giving myself over again to God, and asking His blessing on our marriage—I was sure of that, but I felt that I wanted to ask Him again—and it does seem as if this indescribable peace is His answer.”

“No doubt of it, darling,” he answered. “Let us consecrate our new life to Him again, Daisy. Not only the two individual lives, but the united one.”

And we knelt by mother’s old arm-chair and solemnly consecrated ourselves, our married life, and all that that life should contain for us in the unknown future, to the God of love, who surely leaned from His throne that night to lay His hands upon our heads and hearts in blessing.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE next few days were filled to overflowing with fun; and I was glad that the haying was over, so that father could be with us most of the time. It always did his kind old heart good to see the young folks enjoying themselves.

Endless were the frolics about the old farm-house those summer days. We even went to the barn in a body, sometimes, to hunt the eggs—and bury each other in the sweet, fresh hay. That was childish, but none the less enjoyable for that. What are we but grown-up children at best? Sometimes I think the small children of the race are the wiser in some ways, for they enjoy more, and in a more innocent way, than we grown-ups do, as a rule. Assuredly they are wiser than the children who have grown to manhood and womanhood, and have so far lost the sweet spirit of innocent enjoyment that they cannot enter into a real, hearty frolic without suffering qualms of a misguided conscience, lest they have broken some of the world's thousand and one rules of decorum.

I am sure that during those summer days we must have broken every rule that Dame Conventionality ever laid down to put a stop to undignified frolics. And our minds and bodies felt the fresher and

brighter for our enjoyment, while our souls, by means of that enjoyment, lost not one whit of their conscious nearness to the Saviour.

I do not mean to advocate a life given wholly to nonsense. Any sensible person knows that the work of the world must be done, and that Christians have a large share of it to do. Our Bible teaches us to bravely perform our daily tasks, and other people's, too, when they are weak or overburdened. But although the old, oft-quoted adage, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," is not a scriptural proverb, it is none the less true. God knows it, and has created His human children with a love of enjoyment in our natures. In fact, He has created us so that we need recreation, and cannot live happy, healthy lives without it.

A Christian who goes about with a face resembling a broomstick in length, and who throws up hands in horror at sight of a jolly, innocent frolic, be its participants young or old, must assuredly be unwell, in body or mind. Either that, or he has a most mistaken idea of the good Father, who loves to see His children happy rather than living under a constant sense of His presence as a stern task-maker. Those Christians who help along the innocent enjoyment of those around them, who provide harmless amusement for others, and enjoy life as God gives it, are the Christians who are the best and most useful workers in the Master's vineyard. They are cheery, bright, active, and alert. Their minds are not narrowed, and warped, and

soured by constant, grinding labor, constant straining to do more, and yet more, and continual repression of the innocent desires of their nature.

There are Christians—one meets them at every turn in life—who are brave, earnest, conscientious servants of God; servants who stop at no task, no sacrifice; for whom no labor is too menial or too heavy, if it is for Christ. But they almost deem it a sin to laugh. Life to them is too solemn and momentous a matter to admit of even a moment, waking, for aught else than work and prayer.

God bless them! He loves them, and will reward their conscientious labors with an eternal rest by and by. But they are as people who deliberately choose to be servants—servants under a master whose word and look they fear, even while they reverence and love him at a distance. But “perfect love casteth out fear,” and they might live as children of His household—children who, while they do the tasks the Father gives them, are at liberty to enjoy themselves; and the Father enters into their innocent fun with them, for He loves to see them happy. There is a difference between the children and the servants in most homes—more of a difference than there ought to be in many of the houses of this Christian land. Just so there is a great difference between those who simply enlist as servants of God, and those who accept what Jesus won for us on Calvary—the adoption into the inner circle of the family of God.

We all drove out in the carriage to the minister's

home one evening, and twice during the week Mr. and Mrs. Alman came out to visit us. One of the afternoons that they spent with us, we went to the "bush" and had a private picnic; and the other we visited Angus' newly-purchased farm. On our return, we girls made ice-cream, and Angus, Norman, and the preacher turned the freezer. The latter gentleman had doffed his broad-cloth coat, and was turning with might and main, when someone mentioned strawberries. There were a few in the garden still; and upon learning that such was the case, he immediately "jumped his job," as Norman complained, in lumber-camp parlance, and started for the garden with a little tin pail in his hand. The party then divided, one-half going with Mr. Alman on his berry-picking expedition, while the others remained in the house and took turns at the ice-cream freezer.

When the two parties joined later, and the result of the work of each was shared by all, we had a royal feast.

Each morning and evening, when milking-time came, we all went to the barn-yard. There were just six cows, so, with so many milkers, the work was done in short order.

The boys churned for us also, and Angus even undertook to mix the butter, which Jean pronounced "abominably striped." In fact our work was done so lightly, by so many hands, that Dell informed Angus that he was having his wife spoiled during the very first week of her "double life."

"No danger," he replied laughingly. "Since a long and close friendship with such a terror as yourself hasn't spoiled her, nothing ever can."

No sooner were the rash words uttered than he had reason to regret them. Dell was blacking the stove, and the next moment his face presented a most laughable sight.

"An Ethiopian—in spots," he remarked, dryly, as he surveyed himself in the kitchen looking-glass, and then went to the wash-basin at the cistern.

There were almost no young people in the neighborhood nearer than the town. Some of our young friends visited us during that week; but, altogether, Jean and Norman did not make many new acquaintances. However, as the former remarked, they had come to marry their brother off and see him duly settled—not to become acquainted with Westfield people. She and Dell were fast friends from the hour of her arrival.

Norman had changed greatly since I had known him. He was still full of fun, but totally different from the careless, reckless lad who had gone from bad to worse that year I had been at Pine Lake. There was a firmness about him now, and a manly earnestness in face and action that reminded one of the older brother who had striven so hard to win him from his old, evil ways. He had apparently not forgotten that fact, for there was something really touching in his love and respect for Angus, and his deference to him at all times.

The afternoon before their departure, he asked

me to go for a walk with him. So I put on my big sunbonnet, and we started out.

"If we don't come back, Angus, we'll write you a post-card, some time," he gaily called to his brother, who was vainly trying to persuade one of the animals he had brought with him to remain in the field with father's cattle, with whom he utterly declined to become acquainted.

"All right," he replied, kissing the tips of his fingers to me; and we strolled on down the lane towards the bush.

"I suppose you are pleased with the idea of remaining in your own home?" said Norman, presently.

"Yes," I replied, "since mother is gone. I should never have married as long as father lives, if Angus had not come here. I'm sure he would much rather have kept his own Pine Lake farm, though."

"I don't think he feels that way at all," said Norman. "He likes this part of the country; although I know he would like to be a little nearer mother. I suppose," he added, "that Jean has told you what a change has come over mother this summer?"

"She has told me that she is much better than she has been for years. I was so glad to hear it," I answered.

"Better than she has been since Baby Lou died, ten years ago," he said. "She seems to have taken a new lease of life. Has Jean told you of the plan we have laid out for October?"

"No," said I, on the alert at once, for what bride needs a telescope to see a wedding in the distance?

"Elsie and I are to be married," he remarked, as simply as if getting married were an every-day occurrence in his life, or a weekly happening at the very least.

"Oh, Norman, I am so glad!" I exclaimed.

"Are you, Daisy? Thanks," said he, with a look of pleasure. "You think Elsie is safe in marrying me now, then? I mean you aren't afraid I'll ever go back to the old life?"

"Have you any desire for it, Norman?" I asked.

He actually shuddered, and a deep flush stole over his face.

"I'd rather die this moment," he exclaimed, "than swallow a drop of the vile mixture that made such a beast of me a while ago. Do you know, Daisy, that if I am compelled to pass a hotel, and get a smell of the whiskey, it turns my stomach. I hate it as I hate the devil who invented it—hate it with a hatred as deep as the love I bear to the One who redeemed me from its curse."

His voice softened and trembled as he uttered the latter part of the sentence; and I laid my hand on his arm and said:

"God is keeping you."

It was all I could say at the moment, and he caught my hand and squeezed it hard, as he replied:

"Thanks again, my little sister. You don't know how it helps me to know that you have confidence in me. Elsie has—bless her little heart—and mother and the rest of them at home have; but so many

people seem to think that because a fellow has been down once he is bound to go back to wallow in the mud."

"It was not with that idea that Jesus worked and died," said I.

"No—praise the Lord—it wasn't!" he ejaculated, with a fervour that would have been worthy of the Salvation Army lass who had been the means of bringing him to God. "And Christians have no right to be always on the look-out for a fall, either," he went on. "If they would have some confidence in a new convert's real, earnest desires and efforts, and show him that they *believe* in him—well, there would be fewer backsliders. Some Christians, it seems to me, are very doubtful of the efficacy of the blood of Christ. Many a one hangs aloof and draws a self-righteous skirt aside, just because a man or a woman has been down in the depths. The fact that Jesus has rescued and cleansed such a soul makes no difference to a goodly number of modern church-members."

"In the sight of God," I could not but exclaim, indignantly, "the pride and self-righteousness of such people is just as great a sin—one that as surely bars them from the throne of God—as the crimes that the world holds as unpardonable, in its own mistaken sight. If Jesus were here now He would surely cry as earnestly as He ever did in Palestine long ago, 'Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!' Society has changed since He was here. The world has grown better as His teachings have spread; but we have our Scribes and

Pharisees still, and the rule laid down of old still finds its application. The same Jesus reigns who came to seek and to save the lost, and who long ago pronounced the doom of the proud and self-righteous."

"Can't be otherwise," said Norman. "Earthly church-rolls contain a good many names that would not be allowed on even the back page of the Book of Life."

We had turned, and were walking back as we talked, and just now our conversation was rudely interrupted by a steer, madly rushing down the lane toward us. Angus and father, on the other side of the fence, were in full pursuit, in the vain hope of heading him off before he should reach the end of the lane and run the risk of losing himself in the woods.

"Run to a fence-corner, Daisy," cried Norman, seizing a rail and holding it out as far across the lane as he could.

"What use would I be in a fence-corner?" I demanded, laughing, as I also caught a light rail from the top of the fence and took my stand on the other side, so that our two rails formed a fence across.

The steer, evidently thinking that the novel barricade was too high to jump over, and too low to get under, paused a moment in his wild gallop, looked at us, snorted, and, turning in his tracks, galloped away in the opposite direction.

"Good thing you were there, Daisy," said father. "He'd have run around one rail, but the two headed him off."

"Where do you want him to go?" asked Norman.

"Through that gap," he replied, pointing to an opening in the fence through which the refractory animal had just turned. "We've had a hard run with him, but I guess he's safe for a while now. Poor fellow! he's wild yet after the fright his first train-ride gave him. Then it'll take them a few days to get used to the strange surroundings. Animals are a good deal like people."

"Who are only immortal animals after all," said Norman, as father went on to help Angus put up the bars, wiping his face with his big red handkerchief as he went.

"Seems to me, Norman, there's a lesson there," said I.

"Where?" he inquired, with an amused smile.

"Why," I answered, "if I had let you banish me to a fence-corner, I'd have been no use at all. You remember father said that the animal would have run around one rail, but the two together turned him back. Don't you let mistaken human beings crowd or frighten you into a fence-corner, where you'll be no use to God or man. There are too many souls galloping to perdition who should be headed off. Take up your sword of the Spirit and go to work as bravely as you took up the rail to stop Bouncer."

He smiled at the homely illustration, and a moment later Angus joined us on his way to the house; so the conversation took a different turn.

CHAPTER IX.

That evening we all received an invitation to go to Pine Lake to the wedding during the coming October. Father said it would be impossible for us all to leave at the same time, and suggested that Dell and Angus go, while he remained at home to look after the house and to the criters," Dell said.

"Oh, no, baby," she promptly exclaimed. "Daisy and I couldn't go away, even to Pine Lake, and leave you all alone to keep house, and see to the criters. Oh, no! That would never do. You and I have never seen Pine Lake, though we've heard a great deal about it, so I suggest that we stay at home and let the young folks go."

"But we want you all," exclaimed Jean, not to be denied so easily.

"See here! I have a plan," announced Dell. "Norman, I've never seen this bride-elect of yours, but 'I likes her already,' as Kasper Schnitz says. Now, a wedding-tour is a fashionable institution; so suppose you two come back with Angus and Daisy, when the wedding is over; and so that father and I won't be completely out-countenanced by two billing and cooing pairs about the house, you come along, Jean. You know—"

"Della Franklin! You worst of girls!" I ex-

claimed. "When have you once seen any billing, or heard anybody cooing?"

"Daisy McIvan," she said, with an accusing forefinger uplifted, "didn't I appear upon the scene just in time to save your wedding-dress from being crushed to an unsightly heap? Didn't I tap the back of his head with the broomstick, when he was leaning over your chair with his head so close to yours that if he had been a bear he would surely have bitten you? Didn't I also throw a rubber-shoe at his left ear—and hit it—while he was stroking your hair and gazing into your eyes as if he drew from their depths the joy of his life?"

"Which I do," interpolated Angus, laughing.

"And haven't I come upon you suddenly," she went on, "and without any intention on my part, when you were in the act of making love to each other, times without number? In the kitchen, behind the dining-room stove-pipe, on the parlor sofa, on the verandah—anywhere and everywhere that you thought yourselves for a moment out of sight!—"

"Well, what of it?" asked Angus.

"Yes, what of it?" echoed Norman. "You or I, Dell, in their place, would just make one difference. We wouldn't take any pains to get out of sight."

"Oh, yes, you would," said Angus, with earnestness. "You would if Dell were around. Why, think of being baptized with milk, water, cold tea, or any other liquid handy, or having something thrown at you every time—"

"The baptisms might be calculated to cool the ardor of your affection," interrupted Jean.

"But it doesn't," he replied, with the air of a martyr. "Neither do raps from the broomstick, pokes from the poker, nor even sudden contact with rubber shoes and other articles, sometimes wrongly used as missiles, break one of the habits of being—"

"Spoony," interrupted Dell.

"Your time is coming, Dell," remarked father, laughing.

"Oh, let it be soon," hummed Norman, absently, and every one else laughed heartily, except Dell, who threw a cushion at him with such excellent aim as to effectually stop his song. Then, leaning back in her chair, she remarked:

"This is far from our original topic. What do you say to my plan, folks?"

This renewed the discussion; and it was finally decided that Angus and I should go to Pine Lake a week or so earlier than the date set for the wedding (which would be decided upon later), in order that we might have time for a visit; and that the day after that important event, we should come home, and bring Jean and the bridal pair with us—on condition, of course, that Elsie should agree to the plan. Dell, in spite of all entreaties, refused to leave father, either alone, or with anyone else than herself.

"Dell thinks Daisy is divided up a little now, Mr. Murphy, and she means to make up for your loss by a double devotedness," said Jean, smiling.

"I've suffered no loss, Jeanie," said father, drawing me over to my old seat on his knee. "So far from losing my Daisy, she has stayed with me and brought me a son, who couldn't be more after my own heart if I'd raised him myself."

"Thank you, father," said Angus, in a tone that said more than the words; and I hugged my "daddy" much as I used to do when he brought me some much-desired gift, when I was a little tot.

"Both my girls are all a father could ask for," he added, with a glance in Dell's direction, which she returned with a loving smile.

"Get the Bible, dearie," he whispered; and I went to the shelf upon which the old Book had rested daily since long before my eyes saw the light, and brought it to him. He read the one hundred and third psalm—mother's psalm of praise. How often I had heard her repeat it!

"Bless the Lord, oh, my soul; and all that is within me, bless and praise His holy name."

As father read on down the page, I seemed to hear again the sweet voice of that best of mothers, as she laid her hand on my head, and said:

"That psalm is my special portion, Daisy. Read it carefully, and ask God to help you understand it."

I had loved that psalm ever since, for the grandeur of its promises, for its beautiful expressions of rapturous praise to God; but most of all for its manifestation of God as a loving, sympathizing Father, who is "merciful and gracious, slow to

anger, and plenteous in mercy," who "hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."

"For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him.

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

As father read the words, Norman's eyes met mine, and slowly filled, as the sweet assurance of the next two verses fell upon our ears:

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.

"For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust."

He nodded slightly, and the big tears rolled down his cheeks. Truly, instead of the heart of stone, Norman McIvan had received the heart of flesh. And he was not one of those who are ashamed to feel deeply, either.

The prayer that night must have been a help and comfort to him. As we rose from our knees he drew me aside, and said in a low tone:

"I often wondered how you withstood the temptation to dance, last year, Daisy. I understand it now. You couldn't have yielded, while there was such a wall of prayer built about you. You wouldn't have been your father's child if you had."

"I would, but a most unworthy one," I replied, smiling. Then I added, as I went to kiss father good-night, "I wish you had known mother, Norman."

“The daughter is a younger edition of her,” I heard Angus remark to his brother a moment later; and I wondered if I could really be growing so much like that saintly mother that those who had not known her in her younger days, as father had, should think me so much like her. With the thought a silent prayer went up from my heart, that God might be able to make of me a woman as thoroughly good as that sainted mother had been.

CHAPTER X.

JEAN and Norman had come on a Monday, and they went home on the following Saturday. The evening of the day they went away I was alone in the house for an hour or so. Angus had gone over to his new farm to do some repairing about the stables, and Dell and father had gone to town.

I was sitting in the kitchen, paring potatoes for the morrow's dinner, when I heard a sound as of some one stumbling on the door-step. Glancing up, I was startled to behold a drunken man catching at the door-sill for support. A second look told me that it was old Jim Louder, a well-known character in our neighborhood, ever since I could remember, and long before. He had no friends that any one knew of, and his only home was an unsightly hut on the outskirts of the town, where he lived alone.

People who had known him in his younger days said that at one time he had been a carpenter of some skill. He had been married, but his wife had been a delicate woman, and his abusive treatment of her, when under the influence of liquor, had soon ended her life. To be sure, the doctors said she died of pneumonia, contracted by exposure. But every man, woman, and child in the place, old enough to understand the circumstances, knew that she had been murdered by the whiskey-devil. Jim

Louder, when in his sober senses, had been a kind and loving husband, but when whiskey had control of the man he was often a perfect demon.

One cold winter night he came in from the bar-room, about eleven o'clock, and with brutal curses, kicks and blows, threw the delicate wife, whom he had promised to love, honor, and cherish as his own life, out into a big snowdrift. Then he locked the door, threw himself on the floor in front of the warm fire she had kept burning for him, and fell asleep. In the morning, when his senses returned to him, he missed his wife, noted the locked door, and, putting on his cap, sallied forth in haste to look for her. She had spent the night in the stable among the hay, wrapped up in the only horse-blanket she could find. Always loyal to the man she loved, in spite of his brutality when the whiskey ruled him, she had chosen rather to spend the night in the stable than to go to a neighbor's house, for to do that would have meant an explanation, and she would not tell of what he had done. There he found her moaning with pain, and with tears, carried her to the house, put her in bed, and hurried for a doctor.

But his care and anxiety were too late. She died a few days afterwards.

After that Jim went from bad to worse, until he became the most utterly worthless sot in the community. He did odd jobs wherever he could get them to do—chiefly around the hotels—and earned just enough to keep him in bread and whiskey.

Mother had always been good to him. She often gave him work about the garden, or picking apples or potatoes—anything that the wreck of manhood had strength and sense enough left him to do—and when he wanted to go back to his hovel, she would pay him generously in clothing, meat, groceries, or anything else that he needed, but never in money. Mother had not a cent for the hotels. So seldom did he receive a kind word that the poor old man, in the midst of a “spree,” often found his way back to our place; because, as he never failed to inform us, “Mrs. Murphy was a lady, and used a poor old wreck as if he had been a man once—not a pig all his life.”

I have often seen the tears come to her eyes at the words, and she never once refused to make him comfortable until the horrible effects of the drink had passed off, and he was able to go home again.

Such was the man who stood in the doorway, looking at me with his bleared and bloodshot eyes, while he vainly tried to recollect my name.

“Come in, Jim,” I said, rising.

“You ain’t Mrs. Murphy,” he said, half-inquiringly.

“No, I’m her daughter, Daisy,” I answered.

“Oh, I see,” he remarked. “You’re like her. Thought you was her at first. Ain’t just myself, you see, Miss Murphy—Daisy. You’re the little girl. I mind now. Can’t see just as clear as sometimes, you know. It’s the whiskey, I guess; but I can’t stop. She told me often to stop it, but I can’t

—your mother, I mean. She's a lady, she is. Treats an old wreck as if he was something more'n a pig. Wish you'd tell her I want to see her."

"Mother went to heaven quite a while ago," I replied. "Come in and lie down on this lounge."

He staggered in and threw himself heavily on the lounge. I thought he would go to sleep, as he usually did when he came in drunk, and had sat down to my potato-pan again, when a blood-curdling howl from the man brought me to my feet. He was grasping at his ragged coat just above the heart, with one hand, while with the other he beat at the air, as though fighting some one.

"Oh, that devil!" he shouted. "He has me by the heart—tight. Oh, God, if there is a God, pull him off. Oh! Oh! Pull him off! Pull him off!"

I'll never forget the awful groans and shouts of agony that echoed through the house for the next ten minutes. I could do nothing but helplessly watch him, and listen to his frantic ravings.

Suddenly, he ceased fighting the devil who had come to open the proceedings, and, pointing to a corner of the room with his shaking forefinger, cried to me to look at the monstrous snake. His eye-balls fairly started from their sockets, and foam rolled from his lips as he shrank back against the wall, shivering with fright, while great drops of sweat rolled off his face, and in a few moments his ragged shirt was wet through, so that the moisture began to soak through his coat.

"Oh, it's coming," he moaned, with chattering

teeth. "There it comes, slow and quiet, with its two fire-balls of eyes right on my face. Oh, my God! my God! Save me! Oh, its horrid tongue is darting at me! Oh—"

A torrent of the most awful blasphemy that ever blackened the soul of man burst from his pallid lips, and I shivered with horror. The snake twined itself around him, he said; and he writhed as though actually being crushed in the folds of a serpent. Exhausted, at length, he lay panting and speechless for a few moments. Not knowing how to help him, I brought a large bowlful of cold water, gave him a drink, and then gently bathed his clammy face and head.

"That's good. I'm burning," he gasped.

He had no sooner regained his voice than a fresh paroxysm seized him. He grasped my hand with such force that my fingers felt as though crushed in a vice. I set the bowl on the table beside me and listened again, till my very brain felt seared with the burning tide of blasphemy that flowed from the drunkard's tongue.

Snakes innumerable, toads, frogs, spiders, fiends—all the horrid reptiles of earth, and all hell combined, seemed dancing around him, and trampling, or crawling over him.

Why didn't I pray?

Pray! I called upon God in the very desperation of a praying heart; but there is a time when it is too late, and I almost thought that it must be too late in this case. There is one sin—only one—that

is unpardonable, and I feared that that soul was guilty of it. Times without number had mother and father and other Christian friends pleaded with him, and done all in their power to save him. Times without number had the Holy Spirit of the Lord pleaded with him, offering him salvation from his chosen curse. And times without number he had rejected all offers of mercy and salvation.

Now he had come to this. A man—made in the image of the Creator—a man for whom the Son of God gave His life—and now the sport of devils!

It seemed to me that my heart bled drop after drop of life-blood while I stood there, with my hand almost crushed in the grasp of the tortured creature.

All at once, clear as the toll of a bell in my benumbed brain, a voice seemed to speak the words:

“There is life in a look at the Crucified One.”

Eagerly bending over the writhing form before me, I called, clearly and distinctly, into his ear:

“Jim, look to Jesus. He can save you, even now.”

The anguished eyes opened and fixed themselves on my face. Never shall I forget that look. It was as if a faint hope of deliverance had reached even to his darkened soul, and the horror of the torture seemed lessened with the first glimmer of light. He could not speak, but his lips moved, and I knew he tried to say, “Pray.”

Three times before this had my soul gone out to God in desperate, pleading, persistent prayer—prayer that it seemed must wring from the hand of God the blessing I craved. Each time the promise had

been fulfilled, and He had proved Himself a God who hears and answers. But now, with this tortured soul hanging by a single thread of life over the brink of hell, with fiends tormenting him, and all but his last eternal hope wasted—

“Oh, Jesus, teach me to pray,” was my heart’s cry.

All but one last hope gone, did I say? Yes, but that hope lay in a little remaining life—and the Son of God, He who conquered hell, and I knew as I knelt there that He was on my side in the terrible battle for the eternal life of a dying soul. Filthy throughout his whole being, shattered, all but lost—but oh, how Jesus loved him! I realized a little of what that limitless love must be, while my own soul seemed to cling to the soul that was hanging there between time and eternity. If I, a weak mortal, loved him so, and could not bear to see him die the death of the sinner, what must be the love of Him who filled my poor little heart with its little store?

With the thought, came strength and words. It was only a simple, slowly-spoken prayer—simple and slow, in order that the dull ear of the dying man might not lose a word; but it was full of the love and the power of the Jesus who was present, and, with me pleading, for mercy for the soul who had so long rejected Him. Soon I saw the foaming, purplish lips of the drunkard move, as though repeating the prayer after me; and laying my hand on the clammy forehead, I said:

“God so loved the world that He gave His only

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' He died for you, Jim."

"'Tisn't for me," he whispered, feebly shaking his head.

"God says, 'Whosoever believeth,'" I said, and bent my head close to catch his answer.

"I've put Him off too long. I'm sorry—sorry—for all my wicked life. But it's too late now."

"It's never too late for you, Jim, while you live and Jesus lives," I pleaded. "He sees your heart. He knows you're sorry, and He's promised to forgive you, if you ask Him."

With one mighty effort he clutched the edge of the lounge, and threw himself on his knees on the floor, and I moved aside. For a moment a measure of strength seemed to return to him. His low, shaking voice pronounced the Name of the Friend of sinners, and I still knelt, beside him.

"Jesus," he said, "she says You know I'm sorry for all I've done. You know it, if You see my heart. She says You're ready to forgive me and save me from the devils that stand around her, though she can't see them—waitin' to grab me when she stops prayin'. I know now, Lord, that they can't touch me while she speaks Your name. Oh, Jesus, she says You died for me, and there's hope for even a lost wreck like me if he only believes in You. You know I'm sorry, but I couldn't leave the whiskey alone as long as it was in reach. You know how heart-broke I was for the way I used Martha.

She said she knew it was the whiskey, and she forgave me. Jesus, forgive me—Jesus, save me.”

His voice failed him, and only the long, quivering breaths told that he was still living. With my lips close to his ear, I took up his prayer, in his own simple way:

“Lord Jesus, You are here with us, though we cannot see you. The devils can never touch a soul that trusts in You as its Saviour. You have heard the prayer of this poor man. He tells You he is sorry for his sinful life. We know that ‘whosoever believeth’ shall have everlasting life. Lord, he believes, or he wouldn’t pray. Come and save him now.”

“Come and save me now,” came in barely audible tones from the dying lips. Then there was a feeble groan. The wretched body sank in a heap on the floor.

As the head fell back, and the face was exposed to my view, I shivered at the sight. The eyes were rolled back, and the swollen tongue protruded from the purple lips. The whole face took on a bluish tinge. For a few moments I thought he was dead, but presently the fit passed and he became more natural in appearance. But it was plain that he was very near the end now. As the poor, bleared eyes fixed themselves beseechingly on my face, I called into his fast-deafening ear:

“Jesus will save you. Believe Him.”

A pitiful smile came over the bloated and discolored countenance, and he feebly nodded.

"Keep trusting—" I began ; but a wonderful smile on the dying drunkard's face stopped me. He stretched out his hands. For an instant he gazed, as though he saw some Being whose glory dazed him ; then that wonderful smile broke over his face again, and with a single cry of " Jesus," he was gone.

The devils had vanished from his sight for ever, and at the last moment of the eleventh hour, Jesus, the Almighty Conqueror of death and hell, had rescued even old Jim Louder.

CHAPTER XI.

WHILE I was vainly trying to raise the fast-stiffening form from the floor and place it upon the lounge, Angus came home. A single glance told him the story, and he lifted the body and carried it to a bedroom, then returned with anxious face to the kitchen, where I had found my way to the doorstep, with an odd sensation of stifling.

"Poor little girl!" he said. "It will be a long time before I leave you all alone again."

I didn't feel much like talking, for every nerve in my body felt as though just relaxed from a severe tension, so I let him per me and call me names to his heart's content, without once speaking.

After a while he picked me up bodily and carried me to our room, where he left me and went to put on a fire. He came back a few minutes later with a steaming cup of tea, and having seen me swallow it, drew the window-curtains close, and went out.

After about half an hour he came softly into our room again, and took a black suit of clothes of his own from the closet, and a freshly-laundered shirt and collar from a drawer. He was a long time searching through the different drawers of the dresser, so at length I asked him what he was looking for.

"I thought you were asleep," he said, turning his head in surprise.

"I don't feel like sleeping," I replied. "I've been listening and watching you. Is there anything you want that I can get you?"

"I'll do without it if there is," he answered. "I want you to stay where you are till to-morrow morning."

"But what are you looking for, Angus?" I asked again.

"For a black silk tie—that new one I haven't worn yet."

I told him where it was, and he was soon at work again. He had the body of the poor drunkard washed, dressed, and laid out on the bed with a clean sheet over it, when father and Dell came home.

Then I heard him tell how he had found me. That was all he knew about what had transpired during their absence, and he would not question me, nor allow any one else to come near me for a while.

"Poor Daisy!" said Dell. "It will be a wonder if she isn't sick after such an experience."

Father was too anxious about his baby to go to bed without slipping in for a word and a good-night kiss; and when he had left the room, I heard Dell begging for just one little minute's visit.

"You'll ask questions if you go in there," I heard Angus say, "and she isn't able to talk about the affair to-night."

"No, I won't, Angus—sure, I won't," pleaded

Dell, "You're a perfect Giant Despair. I won't disturb her a bit. I only want to see her, and—"

"Come in, Dell. I'm not sick. Angus only thinks so," I called, and in a moment she was beside the bed, with her arms around me.

Angus anxiously followed, but, true to her promise, Dell stayed only "a minute," and asked not a single question; and I was glad that he insisted on no inquiries being made until the next morning, for, to tell the truth, I couldn't have described the terrible scene that night.

CHAPTER XII.

ON the following day poor old Jim Louder's mortal remains were laid away beside the grave of his wife.

Angus had purchased a plain, neat coffin, and made all arrangements for a respectable burial. Quite a number of people gathered at our home, and followed the hearse to the churchyard—notably Christian people. As for the hotel-keepers, who had pocketed every dime the miserable wretch could get together, why, they were too busy retailing "liquid damnation" to other immortal souls to take time to attend the funeral of the one who had given them all that he had to give, and then wandered to a Christian home to die. Thank God that he reached it in time.

All that evening I was ill at ease, feeling, somehow, as if God's eyes were looking through my heart, and I was not sorry when, remarking that I was far from well, and had better go to bed, father suggested that we have worship earlier than usual; and, that over, I was speedily sent off for the night. It was quite early, and I didn't feel like sleeping; but, glad to have a while all alone, I went to bed.

I thought I was very wide awake; but, presently, I was busy scrubbing the floor of a shed-like struc-

ture, which seemed to become dirty as fast as I cleaned it. There were the barest essentials of furniture in the room; an old stove, a rough, wooden table, a couple of chairs, and an old cupboard. There were holes in the roof above my head, and the ceaseless chattering of birds and the dropping of filth and worms and grain from their perches was very annoying. Yet I scoured away all day, it seemed, taking only a few minutes to eat a piece of dry bread from the cupboard.

Then when darkness fell, and a dreary rain set in, I kindled a fire in the cracked old stove and tried to warm myself. Suddenly a voice called from a doorway at one side of the room:

"Oh, child, thy labors are heavy, and thy weariness is great. And thou art sitting in discomfort and privation, who might be the daughter of a king in very deed. Come in; for life, and light, and joy await thee."

I looked up. The flickering firelight shed its rays upon the open doorway, and above it, in large, black letters, were the words,

"ABSOLUTE SURRENDER."

With an impatient movement I wrapped a ragged cloak more closely about me, and shifted my position, for the rain was dropping upon me from the roof.

"Not through *that* doorway, O messenger," I made answer.

Then the door was shut, and I was alone in my

misery. All night I sat, awake or dozing, keeping my miserable little fire alight, and with earliest dawn was at work once more with broom and mop, sweeping and scrubbing.

I had tried to mend that roof, I remembered. And times without number I had tried to drive those filthy birds away. But when I mended one place, another broke open, and latterly I had only vainly striven to keep my little home clean, while, daily, that messenger called from the doorway the invitation of the King.

There was no bread in the cupboard that morning, so I went out and found some apples to eat; but they were bitter, and I came back to my scrubbing, weary and sick at heart.

Still the rain beat in, and the filthy birds clattered and scratched dirt down upon me and upon my floor. I was cold and wet and weary, and at last had no strength to scrub, for I sank upon the wet floor, too spent even to weep, though I felt the silent tears of utter weakness trickling over my face.

Then a step sounded upon the floor, and I knew that some one had come from that doorway, so I would not look up to see who was with me. But a hand touched mine, and a voice full of ineffable sweetness said:

“Child, child, wilt thou not believe that I love thee? Look up, oh, weary one.”

Impelled by the greatness of the love that was drawing me, I looked up. Beside me stood One who was altogether lovely. His form was that of a

man, but glorified. I wondered, as I noticed upon His forehead little scars, as if some time it had been deeply pierced in many places. And the hand that clasped mine had a livid, red scar, as though it had been pierced through, and torn. But the radiance of love that beamed from His beautiful eyes and face held me so that I could not speak.

"Look now, my beloved," He said, pointing with the other pierced hand to the repelling motto above the doorway, and I looked. A glorified light from within had been turned upon the motto, and in wonderful letters of living gold, running beneath the words were other words, which, as I read them, brought comfort to my weary heart:

"THE LIFE THAT IS HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD.
COME UNTO ME."

And the letters that spelled, "Absolute Surrender" seemed no longer to stand out in such harsh, repellent black angles; but each letter glowed with a warm roseate hue that made the motto beautiful and inviting.

"I have no strength, O beautiful One," I whispered, "but I long to go."

With a smile that looked to me like heaven, He lifted and bore me through the doorway I had scorned, and beneath the motto I had hated, into the Palace of the King.

And within all was glorious peace and beauty beyond utterance. My rags fell away from me and

a wondrous robe like that He wore came upon me. I heard wonderful music, and voices of glory, singing praises to Him who died and lives again, and looking once more upon the face of my rescuer, I fell upon my knees to kiss His feet, crying:

“Jesus!”

And I had cried it aloud and wakened my husband.

CHAPTER XIII.

THERE was no more sleep for me that night. The strange dream carried its message to my soul, and the more I thought, the more intensely wide awake I became. There was an absolute surrender in order to reach that "life that is hid with Christ in God," and I began to search my heart with that in view. Surely I *was* dwelling in an out-house, where I was subject to much discomfort spiritually, my soul pestered by sinful thoughts, and sins that so easily found place in me and defiled my heart; and the One who died and lives again was able to save me "to the uttermost," but only by passing through the door of "Absolute Surrender" could I be thus saved.

Hour after hour I lay there, pondering. Was there anything in my heart that I would shrink from surrendering absolutely to God if he called upon me to do so?

First, I thought of Angus, but that test had already been made. Long before this I had fought and won that battle; and, examining my heart before God, I felt that I could truly say that my love for the husband who was dearer to me by far than my own life was a consecrated love.

But did I love God well enough to part with my husband willingly, if God so willed?

I caught my breath; then unconsciously I reasoned it out after this fashion. I loved God first and best. My love for Angus was but a part of that other love—but a large branch of the tree; not a tree by itself. Therefore, I was sure that if I were called upon to make even that sacrifice I could do it, as I could “do all things through Christ, that strengtheneth me.”

Just here I remembered a piece of advice Mr. Moody gives, to the effect that no Christian need torment himself with questions as to whether he has sufficient grace for this, or that, or the other suffering or sacrifice.

It is Christians living up to the best light they have, and getting more light to live up to, that are needed. We have only to live by the minute, knowing that the God who gives grace sufficient for the present minute will give grace for every other minute, as it comes.

Then I began to examine my daily home-life, in all its little details. Was it all lived for the Master alone? Were all its homely little duties performed in His name, and its simple pleasures enjoyed in the same way? I remembered a saying of mother's, to the effect that it was just as acceptable a service to God to wash dishes for Him, or to keep a farmhouse neat and clean, as it was to go to the ends of the earth to preach to the heathen, so long as one made sure of the fact that one was in the nook God meant one to fill. Surely, then, I was in the one nook of all the world that no one else could fill—in my lonely old father's house, cheering his last

days, caring for him, and making home for him, until his summons should come to "go up higher." That was the duty first and foremost in my life—to my father.

After that, what higher sphere has woman ever filled than that upon which I had entered a week ago? Paul begins one of his epistles with this clause, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle." The words came to my mind and fitted themselves to my own case, something like this, "I, Daisy, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be a Christian woman, daughter, and wife."

I was in my God-appointed place, and cheerfully and lovingly doing my duty as far as I knew it, to father, husband, sister, and God.

But stay—another thought had come. During mother's illness we had all ceased to attend the weekly prayer-meeting, and since her death we girls had allowed first one thing and then another to interfere with our attendance until—well, I remembered guiltily that I had only been at the church for a week-night service three times in as many months. Father had been there much oftener, but I remembered, too, how lonely it must have been for him to start out alone to the service, at which he and mother had, for so many years, been regular attendants.

Then I made a resolution. I would make an absolute surrender of my selfish comfort and interests and go to prayer-meeting every week, for several reasons. It was my duty as father's daughter and Angus' wife to go with them, and help them to

get as much spiritual enjoyment and spiritual help as possible from this "means of grace," that is certainly an absolute necessity to every church member who is physically able to get there. Then Dell had but lately started in the good way, and needed all the help she could get; therefore, she should be encouraged to form the habit of attending prayer-meeting, and by degrees be led into speaking her wants aloud to God, and thus, while helping her own soul, to help others, and bring the blessing promised those who join together to ask anything of God.

Besides, there were the pastor and fellow church members to consider. How better could we help each other on the upward road, and aid and strengthen our hard-working minister, than by being in our places every Thursday night, with some good word of cheer, some promise of God, brought to memory, perhaps, when most needed, or an earnest, sympathetic prayer?

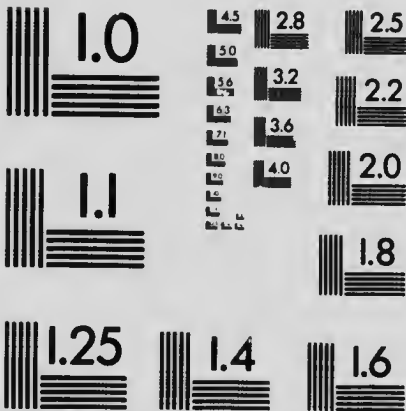
And how better could I gain spiritual strength and be kept near to God, myself, than by this mid-week means of aid on the way?

What of the little amusements of my life? Did God desire me to have no amusements whatever? Assuredly, no; for, as I said a while ago, aside from the unselfish aspect of the case, with regard to the enjoyment of others, the Creator has Himself placed within us the instinct of enjoyment, and its proper development tends to an all-round right development of the being. The wrong comes in



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when we enjoy selfishly, at the expense of others, when we neglect our duty for pleasure, or when we allow the love of pleasure to hold first place in our hearts, shutting out God.

Angus and Dell were very fond of games, we were all passionately fond of music, and I must confess that we did love a "jolly scrimmage," as Dell said; in other words, a regular romp, now and then. For my own part, I cared nothing for the games—croquet, crokinole, authors, etc., but had always joined in the enjoyment of the others. Now, could I make an absolute surrender of all these little amusements to Jesus? And how? Should I drop them for ever? I tried to picture Dell and Angus and father if I told them I could not play any more amusing games, that my music must be given up—all except hymns—and that it would be wicked for me to run about the house, say funny things, or play laughable tricks. Clearly that course would lop off a huge branch of the pleasant home-life, and go far to spoil the enjoyment of my dear ones. But were these things in themselves harmful or otherwise?

First, those games must be considered. Mother had drawn the line for us here, years ago, and I had unthinkingly accepted her opinions. Her test had been a simple one, but worthy of notice. If a game were purely and simply a trial of skill, or an exercise of memory, she held that it was beneficial to those who took part in it, in that it exercised the faculties, and thus brightened and improved the intellect. On the other hand, if the least element of chance were

contained in a game, mother would have none of it, for she said it aroused the gambling instinct latent in every unregenerate human heart, and caused it to enter, to a greater or less degree, into the heart of any child of God who was thoughtless enough to indulge in such games.

Thinking the matter over, I concluded that mother had been right in that, as in almost everything else. It had always been safe to trust her judgment at all times, for her knowledge had been based upon years of prayer and thoughtful study of the Bible, and human life as it is to-day.

Measured by this standard, then, the games which so often whiled away a long winter's evening when we were alone, or when any of our young friends were with us, were not only harmless, but beneficial. The fact that I had, personally, little liking for them, only made my course the more plain, I thought. I could deny myself, as I had been doing, and please the others by taking part in their recreation.

Then what about our music? I must make an absolute surrender of that also. And here I came to a standstill. To sing and play only for Jesus, must I sing and play nothing but what is commonly recognized as sacred music?

Now, I confess to a great love of that kind of music that keeps the musician's fingers flying in a jolly, jingling tune, or medley of tunes, that makes one instinctively keep time with head, hand, or foot. It makes me feel "all alive," as Angus says; cheers me up if I'm feeling tired, or a trifle "blue," as mor-

tals do feel sometimes. I like a good comic song now and again, too; not the sort of comic song that one sometimes hears at concerts, when a man, who thinks he is doing something smart, mounts a platform and sings jokes that are commonly called "shady." I never waste time, nor soil my ears with that sort of song; but I like a good joke set to music even better than I do one that is told otherwise. And what is the difference, except that it gains a great deal in the different style of expressing it? The harm here, again, must be in letting the fun have first place in one's heart, or in singing for self-glorification, or other selfish motives.

The music that we call sacred has a grand part to play in this human life of ours. There is nothing else that has the same power to draw a soul towards its God; nothing else in the world that has the same influence over these intricate natures of ours, which only our God can understand.

There are strains of harmony that draw out the very best there is in us. We have all listened to music that drew us to the very foot of the Throne, brought the tears of repentance to our eyes, and the longing for pardon to our hearts.

Then another strain would bring in its melody the very message of the pardoning God; and every liquid note would fall upon our hearts like the droppings of the boundless mercy and peace that is the heritage of the children of God. Perhaps the very next chord touched would introduce the psalm of praise that goes up from the saved soul

to its Saviour. Have you not heard chord after chord that seemed to compel your soul to shout in unison, "Praise the Lord! Praise ye the Lord! Oh, bless and praise His holy name!"

There is a difference between that kind of music and the kind I referred to just a moment ago. Now, if "Christ is all and in all," what was I to do about the former?

Father, being an Irishman, had a certain predilection for certain side-splitting, vocal, brogue selections. He had also his preferences in the line of instrumental music, and frequently asked for some well-known Irish airs.

Angus, as a Scotchman, is exceedingly fond of "The Campbells are Coming," "The Bluebells of Scotland," "The Reel of Tullochgorum," "Bonny Dundee," "Braes o' Mar," and other pibrochs, reels, and jigs innumerable, which I have enjoyed almost as much as he has. Only that I lack the "Scottish bluid" that is so quick to rise the moment a strain of its national music strikes the ear. He also loves the tender Scotch dialect songs, and will sing them, or listen to them, for hours at a time.

Now, Dell, with her fun-loving nature, had her favorites also, and could sing them well, though she had not yet learned to play any musical instrument. We had none, except the old organ in the parlor, but mother had lately promised her the desire of her heart—a violin, and a course of lessons thereon.

Now, could I carry out my resolution of an absolute surrender to Jesus and go on with this kind of

music? Could I conscientiously say that Christ was all and in all "there"?

Was He not in all that helped to make the home happy for its inmates?

Some one has said that all music should be sacred, and the simple tunes and songs that pleased the dear old father were sacred to me. Who knows what old-time memories and associations came back to him as I played or sang his favorites? And as I did so, not from selfish motives, but for love of the best father a girl ever had, surely Christ was in it all; in its motives and its enjoyments.

And the music that thrilled to the heart of my Scottish husband—a lover of his Scotland still, though he had come to his adopted country in his early childhood—a loyal Canadian, but Scotch to the core—surely that music (which I played for him alone, and which did him good every time he heard it, as he often assured me) was sacred, in its motive and in its enjoyment. And the songs which only knit our hearts the closer, while they cast not a shadow between our souls and our God—were they not sacred?

Surely the human Christ, who understands us, and loves us so well, was in them and blessing them.

And the other music that Dell loved? Was it not a sacred duty of mine to make this home of ours thoroughly enjoyable to this adopted sister, who had never before known the meaning of the word "home"? Surely it was; and as long as the songs were pure what harm could they do her? They

but provided her with innocent amusement; and a girl with a disposition like Dell's *must have* amusement.

Thus that question was settled.

The next query that arose may seem ridiculous to many. Recollect, though, that I was born and bred in the happy, free-and-easy country, and never knew the restraints and particular "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" of certain circles of society. My mother, a natural lady, had taught me that in unselfish kindness to others true courtesy lies. The ordinary sayings and acts of politeness, according to the usages of the people with whom we came in contact, were also taught me from infancy; but most of the thousand-and-one rules of conventionality had been left out of my childhood's training—thank goodness! My mother had never warned me to speak first when I met a gentleman of my acquaintance, and a month or two later, when some new-fangled notion got abroad, warned me over again not to recognize them until they had first touched their hats—as I have heard some mothers do. She taught me, instead, to speak in a friendly, but modest, manner to all the people with whom I had any acquaintance; and if I saw that I could do any one a kindness, or speak a cheery word to a stranger who stood in need of it, to wait for no introduction—for are we not all children of the same Father? She actually taught me to disregard many of the mean little tethering chains with which modern society delights to load and torment her

faithful followers; for, as she often said, it is better to disregard the little laws of etiquette, which in many cases are contradictory (and, by so doing, be truly courteous), than to be a slave to propriety, and so lose half one's opportunities of doing good and helping others.

Common-sense tells us that here again that mother of mine was right. There is no sense in being a slave to custom, when to defer to it is sufficient.

She had watched me, times without number, running about the place like a very child, sometimes engaged with all my might in a good, healthy, childish romp. I felt the better for it, and she was not so fearful that my maidenly modesty would be destroyed in one of those jolly battles that set all my blood in circulation, and expanded my lungs to their utmost, as she would have been had I been daintily whirling about some flower-perfumed ball-room in the arms of—who or what?

Half the time neither she nor I would have known; for, let me tell you, fashionable mothers, who so carefully train your daughters to be bowing slaves of fashion, and teach them from their cradles that the follies and fripperies of so-called society are the be-all and the end-all of life—guard them as you will, you are building their characters of false material, upon a false foundation; you are hedging them about with dangers and temptations, rather than with safe-guards. There is no true character built for this life and the life eternal that is not based on Christ, and hedged about and defended by

His grand teachings, rather than by the oft-times trivial and ridiculous rules of etiquette.

But this is aside from the next question that confronted me, that one night of all the nights of my life.

The question was not, "Is it polite or rude to romp?" It was one that reaches further—could I take Jesus with me into a jolly half-hour like that? To make an absolute surrender, must I renounce this lively style of fun?

I had already decided to my satisfaction that the Lord permits and really enters into all our innocent enjoyment. Then, was this innocent?

Think as I would, I could not see anything harmful in those hearty "scrimmages," which Dell and Angus and I—and even father—so heartily enjoyed. I do believe they did us good. They were healthful for mind and body; and surely the hearty good-will and the free, happy spirit in which the frolics were enjoyed went far to benefit the spiritual nature which is, after all, so closely allied with the physical and mental, that there is really no exact dividing-line between them until death draws it.

Christ is in all the innocent enjoyment of his people; and I decided that this enjoyment was innocent, and that there was no danger of its banishing Him from our hearts or our home.

Then other things came crowding up for consideration. Should I, as a child of God, attend public gatherings, where I knew there would be any one thing forming a part of the plan of enter-

tainment that was harmful to my fellow-creatures, if not to myself?

For instance, Christians agree that horse-racing is sinful. It is cruelty and injustice to the dumb brutes, who are compelled, too often by the terrifying shouts of their drivers, and the never-ceasing cuts of that instrument of torture, a horse-whip, to exceed their strength and prematurely wear out their useful lives for—what?

That their masters may pocket a few dollars of prize-money (which is not honestly earned money at all), and that people may gamble upon the success of this or that horse. God help the poor dumb animals! Who, with a human heart, does not pity them? Whipped, jerked, abused by brutal spurs, often hobbled so that they cannot take a full step, their heads tied up so high that they cannot take a full breath—and then urged by every torture their drivers can devise, to run fast enough to outstrip some other horse. The brutality of modern horse-racing is scarcely eclipsed by the bull-baiting of the Spaniards, upon which we are accustomed to look with such horror and disgust.

I am not supposed to be hard-hearted, but I confess that my one absorbing desire when I hear of a horse-race, is to have the men who drive the poor animals hitched up in some sort of concern, with their heads drawn out of the position in which God placed them, to such an extent that they cannot breathe comfortably, and so that their necks will ache and become stiff; and then let

me sit in a comfortable cart behind them for a few minutes—just long enough to give them a slight experience of their own treatment. I never hurt an animal—but I would lure those men with satisfaction to myself and a large number of other people. I would have the feet of those who hobble their horses tied together securely, so that they could not run without taking very small steps, and even those with much discomfort. Of course their backs would have to be bared to correspond to the modern fashion of clipping horses. Then the flies would have an excellent opportunity of regaling themselves on their bare skin; and the whip, with biting rawhide thong, would have a much more cutting effect.

God help the poor, defenceless creatures, who would not lower themselves to become the tools of such depraved and brutal men if they could help themselves.

Clearly, then, if I would make a full surrender, I must give up attending any public gathering which looks upon horse-racing as a recognized part of the day's proceedings. That barred me from many fall exhibitions; and I have never regretted the fact.

By this time it was after four o'clock in the morning, and I was still wide awake, and thinking intently. At length the suggestion came to me as though spoken by some one:

“Make an absolute surrender of yourself to Jesus now, and let Him direct you in all things, great and small, for the future.”

"What then?" I queried in the depths of my heart, for I knew not to what I was being led.

Clear and distinct, as when the same still, small voice had spoken to me the message of God for the dying drunkard, came the words to my heart:

"'Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost!'"

Like a vivid flash of lightning illumining a tract of unknown country, came a sudden flash of light into my soul. This, then, was the meaning of my sleepless night of self-examination and resolves. I had been pardoned and accepted as a child of God, but I had chosen to work away as a servant, while God had called me to the nearer, sweeter, fuller relationship of a child.

I slid noiselessly from the bed, and knelt on the floor in the darkness, with clasped hands and upturned face, and waited. Then words came to me; and, beneath my breath, I whispered, "Lord I surrender absolutely, myself, my life, my will, my all, to Thee. Take me as I am, and use me as Thou canst. Only take me and hide me in Thyself for ever. Let my life be lost in Thine."

It seemed that my whole being was waiting for something—for Some One. Then straight from God to my soul, into my waiting being He came—that wondrous Spirit promised, and took up His abode in me. Henceforth the "temple of the Holy Ghost!"—the wonder of it held me so that I seemed as one standing aside to behold the advent of a new life in my life, a life Almighty, containing in Himself, of God, the fulness of all life for me.

I could not move. I could not speak. I could only kneel with uplifted face and streaming eyes, seeming to literally drink in the glory of the baptism that came upon me.

* * * * *

“ ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon you.’ ”

How often in His Word we meet with that promise, repeated and re-repeated, in so many different forms and under so many different similes that one would think not one child of God could miss understanding Him. And yet, how many pass the promise by, as referring only to the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem long ago, or as a sort of general prophecy—not a personal promise at all.

But we, too, are disciples of the Crucified Nazarene. We, too, stand as lights, as His representatives in a world of darkness and sin. He who was Himself baptized with the Holy Ghost at the outset of His ministry, is ready and willing to baptize us likewise. God knows we need the power and wisdom of the Spirit of the Almighty, if we are to come to the help of the Lord in His long, long battle with the evil that ever strives to overrun His universe. What can we do without that power? And yet, when we come to God and ask, He gives us His Holy Spirit, so that we can work unweariedly, we can fight with a might that is resistless, and in the height of the battle, all hell cannot prevail against a single consecrated, Spirit-filled messenger

of God. Oh, Christians, lay aside your half-hearted profession, your fear of unpopularity and opposition, your love of ease and pleasure, and all else that makes of you a professor, but not a whole-souled, self-denying worker.

The power of Pentecost was not needed more in Jerusalem nineteen hundred years ago than it is needed here and now.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE next day I told Angus the whole experience. He was deeply moved.

"Is this what is called being 'sanctified,' Daisy?" he asked, when I had finished.

"It must be," I replied, "the beginning of it, at least. When I used to hear Mrs. Cosman preach sanctification, or holiness, I confess that, though I never said so, I did look upon the whole doctrine as a fake—some sort of crank notion that made people, who would otherwise be pleasant and useful Christians, turn into a modern edition of the old-time Pharisee. You remember how she used to hold forth upon that text, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate'?"

"I remember it well," he replied, with a slight smile.

"Well, you remember that she held that, according to that command, the people of God should have no dealings whatever with the people who are not holy—except to preach to them at a safe distance, and warn them of the wrath to come. Was there ever anything more like the spirit of the Pharisee?—'stand by; for I am holier than thou.' That seemed to me a state of pride—the very abomination of it, at that; for surely the lofty pride that claims as its foundation the religion of the meek

and lowly Jesus, must be even more abominable in the sight of God than the pride that is only 'of the world, worldly.'"

"What do you understand to be the teaching of that text?" asked Angus.

"Why, that we are to be separate from the wicked, certainly," I answered, "but not in that sense. I don't know that I can just express the idea as I understand it. But I think it means that we are to keep ourselves separate from their way of life—from their wickedness and carelessness—just as we are to keep ourselves 'unspotted from the world.' We only spoil our usefulness and narrow our influence to a hair's-breadth by shutting ourselves up within our own high walls of self-righteousness. I think Jesus' way of being holy was to live His inner life constantly and consciously in the presence of the Father; and, with God keeping Him, moment by moment, to go out among the people as one of themselves, separate from them only in the purity of His life as compared with theirs. It is by following His example—living with God every moment, filled with His sweet and patient spirit and His great yearning love for the lost and the suffering—that we can carry on His work in the world."

"Do you remember the saying Mrs. Cosman was so constantly throwing at your head, Daisy—you fountain of fun and laughter?" he asked, suddenly. "How do you understand that in the light of your new experience?"

The words "fun and laughter" recalled the lady's oft-repeated assertion that "Jesus wept many times, but he never smiled."

I quoted it enquiringly, and he nodded.

"That's it. What do you think of it?"

"I think what I always thought," I answered, "only I think it with far more certainty. We don't know how often Jesus smiled, nor how heartily He laughed. The account we have of His life is a bare outline with the most important of His discourses. John says that if all that Jesus said and did were chronicled the 'world itself could not contain the books that should be written.'"

"You think, then, that He did smile sometimes?" he queried.

"I certainly do," said I.

"So do I," said Angus. "It is absurd to think that because we have no written record of the Master having smiled we should go about with unsmiling faces. One thing is sure: if Jesus took upon Him our human nature He took it all. He didn't take upon Him the capacity to love and suffer without the capacity of loving and enjoying as well. We are certainly told to 'weep with those that weep,' but before that command comes the other, 'Rejoice with them that do rejoice.' We have the revelation of Jesus in His intense sympathy with the suffering, but if he suffered in sympathy with those about Him, He must surely have been glad to see them rejoice, and to rejoice with them. I believe He not only smiled, but laughed, sometimes. He

wouldn't have been a healthy human being if He hadn't. The religion that makes its possessor solemn and gloomy all the time, and makes him afraid to laugh, because he so little understands his God that he is afraid of offending Him by being natural, is not the real article, Daise. The man may be ever so earnest, but there's something wrong, somewhere."

"'And everlasting joy shall be upon their head; they shall obtain gladness and joy; sorrow and sighing shall flee away,'" said I, with my heart full of the gladness. "That joy begins here, when we learn to know Him, and only grows brighter and deeper the further we go, till we lose ourselves in the glory that awaits us."

"'These things have I spoken unto you, that *My joy* might remain in you, and that *your joy* might be full,'" quoted Angus. "As He loves us, He intends us to be joyful, and to give expression to that joy, according to our differently constituted natures and dispositions. Little wife," he added, placing an arm about my shoulders and lifting my face to meet his earnest eyes, "I thank God from the bottom of my heart that you have discovered and accepted the real open secret of the highest Christian life. I see it now as I never did before."

Just then father called him from the verandah, and he went out. A moment later I heard his voice outside the door, giving the advice father asked concerning some farm arrangements. Then, as they went down the walk together, I heard him say, "I can manage that myself, father. My arms are

younger than yours. You'd better take a rest before we go for that last load of wheat."

Father said something in a low tone just as they reached the gate, and I saw Angus lay his hand on his shoulder for a moment, while he answered. Then he went off to the barn, with that quick, springing step of his, and father came back to the house smiling.

"That boy seems to think he can do four-fifths of the work, and afford to send me to bed for a while every day," he said, as he stretched himself on the sofa.

"A very good idea, daddy, I'm sure," I replied, smoothing the damp locks back from his forehead, for the day was very warm.

"I'm not as young as I used to be; it's a fact," he said, as if just discovering it for the first time. "I feel the work more this summer than I ever did. I think Angus ought to hire a man."

"He doesn't seem to think he needs one," said I; "but he is anxious that you should do less than you are doing."

"He's a good boy, Daisy," said he; and I knew that when father said anything in that tone he meant more than he said.

"Yes, I think he is a fairly good boy," I answered, laughing, as I lowered the blinds and left him to take a comfortable nap, while I went to do my share of the churning going on in the kitchen.

All the while the crank of our Daisy churn spun round and round, I thought of that short conversa-

tion. I was so glad that my husband understood me, and that he at last understood what had so long puzzled us both—the apparently impossible command to fallible mortals, “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” I knew that he would not be long about accepting the invitation the Christ speaks to every one who accepts Him—to come in and dwell with Him, not in the capacity of a weak, struggling follower always, but to live the strong and beautiful life of union with Himself.

Dell came again to “take her turn” at the churn, and had just turned a conundrum out of her ever-active brain.

“Will you tell me in what particular the two ‘Daisies’ of our household differ from each other?” she asked, as she opened the churn to see how the cream fared.

“Take care, Dell,” I entreated. “You haven’t fastened the hook.”

“I’ll hang on to it,” she responded, “to the churn, I mean; not the hook. Answer my conundrum, Daise.”

“In what particular do the two ‘Daisies’ differ?” I repeated. “Why, one goes whichever way it is turned, and the other doesn’t,” I suggested at length.

“Hadn’t thought of that,” she remarked, putting the lid on. “I was just thinking that one ‘has a crank on,’ and the other hasn’t.”

There was a sudden splash, a quick scream from Dell—and, behold, there upon the floor lay our

churning. We were both splashed from head to foot, and in a moment the cream, dotted with its tiny granules of "coming" butter, was running out of the door and down the steps in a tiny rivulet.

Those who are familiar with the "Daisy" churn will understand what had happened. Dell had not fastened the hook that keeps the barrel from tumbling round when one wants to open the churn, so it took a tumble while she was putting on the lid.

"What additional difference do you see between the 'Daisies' now?" I asked, surveying the floor, it must be owned, with some regret. No one likes to see a churnful of rich cream go to waste like that.

"One is wrong side up and the other isn't," she replied, just ready to cry.

"But though they are similar in that both are dripping with cream, the first distinction still holds good," I said, laughing, "for one still 'has a crank on,' while the other hasn't. Never mind, Dell. It can't be helped now. Let's gather up what we can of it. The calves will think they're celebrating the Queen's Birthday, or—"

"Aren't you annoyed with me for my carelessness, Daisy?" she asked, looking straight in my face with those clear, searching gray eyes of hers.

"No," I answered, returning the look with a smile.

"It means that four pailfuls of good, rich cream has gone to the dogs—" she began again, without taking her eyes from my face.

"Cats, you mean," I interrupted, as three fat cats made their appearance and proceeded to leisurely lap their fill from the little river running down the doorsteps. "Cheer up, Dell. We have enough butter in the cellar to last us till another churning is gathered. We won't have any to sell this week, but that won't break the firm. Now come and help me gather up what we can, before it all runs away to water—or cream—the garden."

She went to work then with a will, and in a few minutes as much of the cream as we could gather up was thrown into the big can with the calves' milk, the floor was washed, the churn also washed and put away, and the kitchen restored to its usual order.

"Daisy, why is it?" asked Dell, as she took off her big brown apron, "I've seen the time when an impatient word would have jerked itself out in spite of you for less cause than that."

For answer, I drew her to the shady doorstep, where we both sat down, and, with my head on her lap, I told her the story I had just told Angus.

Father came out just as I began, and sat down to listen, too.

"Do you mean that you'll never do anything that's wrong again, Daisy?" Dell asked, wonderingly.

"I'll make many a mistake, Della, darling, I'm afraid," I replied. "As long as I am human I'll likely make blunders and slips sometimes, just as a child does not do its work as perfectly when it first begins as it does when it has grown older and learned

more. But I believe that God is able to keep us from the power of sin, and that His Spirit is given to crucify the old sinful nature in us; so all my trust for keeping right and living to please Him is in Himself."

"I've often heard of the life people call 'sanctified,' and thought it was only for the people who are called to do some special work in the world—not for us common folks, who have only the round of everyday duties to think of."

"And who needs the power and comfort of the Spirit of God more than the common folks, who have the round of every-day duties to perform, day after day, and year after year?"

It was father's voice that asked the question, with a trembling in its deep tones that told how his heart was stirred.

"Don't let any one lead you astray with that mistaken notion of a 'special' work, daughter," he went on, laying his hand on Dell's dark hair. "There is not a child of God in His world who has not a special work to do—a work that no other could do quite as well. It's like the Chinese puzzle you and Daisy used to spend so many hours over when you were youngsters. Each little piece had its own little place in the picture. Some went to make up the mandarin's head, others to form his fan. One little scrap was his toe, and another the half of his pig-tail. Other bits were only the background of scenery and surrounding objects; but the picture was spoiled if one little piece was put in the wrong place

or left out. It's just so with God's great plan of work. He needs some one for every little part of it, and the place that one fills is just as special as the place occupied by another. His plan would be sadly upset if the common toilers were left out of it. Their work is as specially God's work as the work of the greatest preacher or writer. Jesus lifted common toil to the highest level when He spent His days until He was thirty years old working in his parents' home and at the carpenter's bench. He only spent three years in the work the world calls 'special.' The truth is that one work is as important as any other. The only real test is this—are we doing the work God gives us for just now? If we are, then we are doing a special work for Him, if we are only cutting the grain, or baking the bread."

"It was the common people who formed the bulk of Jesus's audiences," Dell said, thoughtfully.

"And it was to common toilers that His teachings were entrusted, and to them that they were principally directed," said father. "With Him there is no respect of persons! One soul is as important as another. He who once toiled for His daily bread knows the great need of the toilers, for the fountain of grace and strength and patience that He is able to place in their hearts. What He promises and gives to one, He will not withhold from another, for He died to make possible for us this very experience that Daisy has begun. Did you know, girls, that mother was a living example of a Spirit-

filled Christian?" he added, with a pitiful little break in his voice.

We both looked up inquiringly, and he went on:

"She had just such an experience as yours, Daisy. She was unmistakably led to the act of full surrender to God some little time after she had received pardon and the full assurance that she was an accepted child of God. From—from that day till—till the day she went home, she lived in the very light of His smile."

He paused, and the big tears rolled down his cheeks and fell on Dell's hair.

She was nearest him, so she silently slipped her hand into his, while he continued:

"'If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.' Thank God that you have asked Him, Daisy, and received the promise. It will make your path glorious, no matter where He leads you, or what may come to you, for the Lord will go before you, and His Spirit within you will rise to meet every trial for you. And, Della, 'ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,' also."

He went down the path and away to the barn. We watched him until, drawing his shirt-sleeve across his eyes, he disappeared within the stable.

"Poor father! How he must miss her!" exclaimed Dell, with a sob.

"He misses her bodily presence here as mortals

must miss their loved ones who have gone," I replied. "But, Dell, there never was a sting in it for him. He is happy all the time, even if she is in heaven and he here. Do you know that I accidentally overheard him praying the other day? The one bit I caught as I passed the door of his room was:

"'Dear Lord, I thank Thee for the sweet and sustaining presence of thy Holy Comforter. I thank Thee that I love Thy will, and am happy in knowing that my darling is with Thee.'

"I did want to hear all that prayer, but He was talking to his God, not to me, so I went on."

"Isn't it wonderful?" said Dell, in an awed tone; and I said no more.

Thank God the seeds sown in her heart that summer afternoon have not been without an abundant harvest.

After all, are such conversations ever fruitless? I do not think they are. If you do, just look at the latter half of the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah and the last three verses of the third chapter of Malachi.

CHAPTER XV.

THREE or four weeks after the day our churn upset itself so neatly, Dell and I started for the village one day with the accumulated results of several other churnings in a big, flat basket, under the buggy seat. We had also a fair-sized market-basket full of eggs, which Dell held while I drove Dolly—the Dolly of Pine Lake memories. I had particularly requested Angus to bring her with him when he moved to Westfield, even if he sold all the rest of his stock.

My request was scarcely needed, for I soon learned that nothing could induce him to part with Dolly, the gentle, faithful animal who loved him as only an animal can love a master from whose lips it has never heard a word that was unkind, and from whom it had never received a blow harder than a caressing pat. That was the way Angus treated every animal that came under his care; and no trait of his son-in-law's character pleased father more. A whip was an article unknown in our stables, and every animal in them, even the calves and sheep, knew and loved the voice and hand of either master, and when loose would often follow them about the yard.

Dolly had learned to know Dell and me, as well

and was such a favorite with us both that we rarely drove another horse when Dolly was to be had.

"I'm tired holding this thing up in the air," said Dell, when we had driven about a mile.

"Let me hold it for a while, then," I suggested, offering her the reins.

"I hate driving," she replied. "No, thank you, Daisy. I like to sit still and view the surrounding country, while some one else holds the leather straps. I think this basket would be all right on my knee. The road isn't very rough."

"I should think it would," I answered. "Put it over this way, Dell; half on my knee—there. Now you can hold it steady and I'll have half the weight. The thing is heavy. I don't see how you held it so long."

We met several acquaintances, and more than once stopped for a chat. It was two miles to the town and we enjoyed the drive, for it was a pleasant afternoon, not too hot, and yet bright and sunshiny. We were chattering agreeably and the lines lay loosely on my lap when one wheel of the buggy jolted over a stone.

"Oh, the eggs!" cried Dell, holding the basket high, when the danger of breakage was over. Apparently no harm had been done, though, and I sat up straight and attended to my business more carefully.

We had not gone many yards farther when suddenly down went my corner of the buggy. The top had been set back, so I neatly rolled out in the dust,

and Dell, basket and all, lit on top of me. Dolly stopped at once and did not attempt to take another step, although she was standing in a most uncomfortable position, with one shaft up as high as the harness would let it go, while the other had some way (how, we did not know) got between her fore-legs and was pressing upwards against her body. I still held the reins when I picked myself up, unhurt, out of the dust and broken eggs, and without looking at myself turned to Dell. She was immediately seized with a paroxysm of laughter, so I knew she was not hurt; and as poor Dolly turned her head, and whinnied pitifully, I hurried to relieve her.

“Poor girlie! Were you hurt and frightened, too?” I was saying in soothing tones while rapidly unfastening the traces, when Dell shouted, in a fresh burst of merriment:

“Oh, Daisy! What wouldn’t I give for a five-foot mirror to show you yourself as you are this moment!”

I took a look at her, as I led Dolly out of her uncomfortable shafts, and retorted:

“‘O, wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oorsel’s as ithers see us.’”

You wouldn’t wax hilarious over the spectacle you present at present yourself, Dell.”

Then I sat down on the grass beside Dolly and laughed as heartily as she did.

Truly we were a spectacle—both of us. We had

arrayed ourselves in our most comfortable dresses—soft, thin grenadines; and as Dell sat in the dust picking broken egg-shells off her skirt and scooping the mass of raw egg off with her hand, she was indeed a sight to behold.

“Hen-fruit is exceedingly juicy, Daisy,” she remarked.

“It is, indeed, Dell. Its color is very becoming to your particular complexion, too,” I replied, standing up to survey my own dress. It was smeared with yellow from the throat to the frill at the edge of the skirt. Most of the egg had dripped off while I was unhitching the horse, but I was truly a ridiculous sight.

“Dell, do get up out of the dust and tell me what we are to do,” I exclaimed, helplessly.

“Mrs. McIvan,” she replied, putting her head on one side, and with one eye shut, squinting into my face like the proverbial hen looking for signs of rain. “Mrs. McIvan, you are an old married woman, and I’m but a young and frivolous girl. Tell me what to do and I’ll do it, ‘immediately and to order,’ as the immortal Samantha puts it. Even if I might presume to offer you any advice, I have none. Recollect that I alighted partly on the hard earth, partly on your solid self, and partly on the hen-fruit. The latter was the only substance that didn’t hurt me worse than I hurt back. My head struck Mother Earth—and behold my hat!”

She held up a battered black mass of ornamental straw, ribbon, flowers, and lace, smeared with a

yellowish mud that suggested eggs and dust combined, and went on, with a reproachful look and tone:

"Now, although I congratulate myself that I haven't got any egg mixed with my brain, yet I'm not sure that it has yet returned to its normal state, owing to the rapid slide, the shaking up, and the sudden stop when I reached you and Mother Earth and the egg-basket. So it is really unkind of you to ask me what to do. I appeal to you as—"

"Get up, Dell, do; and talk sensibly for a minute," I interrupted, coaxingly; and she slowly arose. Holding out her skirt with both hands to its full breadth, and turning slowly round and round, she called upon me to witness to the fact that egg-yellow contrasted beautifully with black.

"If I only could wash the dust out and keep the egg in," she ruminated, "I'd keep the dress for my wedding-day, in the dim and uncertain future."

It was impossible to help laughing at her, but seeing that she was impressed with the ridiculous aspect of the situation more than with any other phase of the question that confronted us, I could only join in her fun and try to think out a plan for myself.

There were no houses within sight. We were in a hollow between two hills, a mile or more from town, with one wheel off our buggy, a large basket of butter to think of, and ourselves in a plight that would make us food for mirth in the town if we did manage to get there.

Examining the buggy, I found that a nut in the hub had come off. Probably it had become a trifle loose, and the jolt against the stone further back had loosened it completely and let the wheel spin away to the fence, where it now lay. I found the missing nut, but with no wrench we could not fasten the wheel in place.

"I see nothing for it, Dell," I said, at last, "but to drag the buggy to the side of the road, get out our butter, and one of us climb on Dolly's back and ride home with the heavy basket, while the other walks. Or, no—she can easily carry the two of us."

"Your words are full of wisdom, O wise and beautiful lady—as full as the eggs were of meat, a while ago," she responded, with a ridiculous little bobbing curtsey. Then, roused to action by the mention of anything like a definite plan, she seized the shafts of the buggy, while I pushed behind, and we soon had it over close to the fence, out of the way of passers-by. Then I took the bridle off the patiently waiting Dolly, and led her over to the fence also.

"Will you ride?" I asked, as Dell, with difficulty, hauled the big basket of butter out of its dark nook under the buggy-seat.

"Oh, you'll have to ride without me, Daisy," she replied. "I was never on a horse's back in my life. I don't know, I'm sure, how you're going to carry this heavy basket, though. It has no handle, you know, except those little 'catch-holds' at the

ends. Hadn't we better leave it here till Angus or father can come for the buggy?"

"Wouldn't it melt before they can get here?" said I. "They are both in one of the back fields of the new farm, you know."

"It would be more certain to melt in the hot sun on Dolly's back, even if you could hold it," she replied. "We have nothing to put over it except the towel that is on it."

So we finally decided to leave the basket under the seat, and both ride home on Dolly, although it was only after much persuasion that I could coax Dell to climb up behind me. At last, however, she did; and we had just started, with the linen duster belonging to the buggy gracefully draped over our egg-plastered dresses, when we heard a sound of wheels and the rapid footfalls of a horse just over the hill, and coming from the direction of the town.

Dell groaned, and I went into a fresh fit of laughter, as a light buggy came into view. We stopped and waited; for, since someone was coming at last, we might have a chance of sending our butter home, if the person driving should happen to be going in that direction.

"It's Mrs. Alman, thank goodness!" ejaculated Dell, as she slid to the ground and went to meet the rapidly approaching vehicle.

I turned Dolly's head in that direction and waited while, with much dramatic effect, Dell described the accident.

Our friend laughed so much during the recital that she could scarcely speak, and at length Dell leaned over, and catching her by the shoulder, gave her a hearty shake.

"Will you stop laughing and own that you're sorry for us?" she demanded.

"I sympathize with you both most deeply," said Mrs. Alman, wiping her eyes; "but, oh, girls, I'm sorry I didn't bring James with me."

"Sorry you didn't bring the preacher to view a spectacle like this!" exclaimed Dell, with a horrified countenance. "Mrs. Alman, I'm surprised at you. If the Rev. James was here, and laughed at my bedraggled condition, as you are doing, I'd throw the five remaining whole eggs at him. But," she suddenly broke off, with a mischievous glance, "just wait till you see Daisy without that convenient duster!"

With a quick spring she caught and pulled me down from the horse's back, saying, sweetly, "Come off your perch, Daisy, my love, and come and shake hands with the lady."

Which I accordingly did, amid much laughter.

We soon learned that Mrs. Alman was on her way to our house, so our basket of butter was transferred to her buggy; and wrapping the duster about us once more, to keep our skirts from coming in contact with hers, we climbed in, and Dolly trotted along behind.

Upon reaching home we put Dolly into her stall, unhitched Mrs. Alman's pony, and led him into the

stable, and then took our butter to the cellar, from which it had so lately been carried.

When we had washed the egg and dust off ourselves, and changed our dresses, Mrs. Alman told us her errand. She was planning to organize a Woman's Christian Temperance Union in Westfield, and had come to talk the matter over with us, and, of course, to enlist us in the work.

"I know you'll both be with us, heart and hand," she concluded.

"Sure!" said Dell, briefly, but emphatically.

She was a year younger than myself, and had not had such advantages in the line of home-training as I had had; but though she was only eighteen she already had the temperance cause deeply at heart, and was much better qualified naturally for the work than I was. We talked the matter over to its smallest details that afternoon, but the result of that long conversation must be left for another time.

When father and Angus came in at tea-time, there was what Dell called a "question-drawer."

They had seen Dolly safe in her stall and munching away complacently at her hay, but had failed to find the buggy, and were naturally a little anxious until they found that we were both unhurt.

Dell described the whole affair in her comical style, and Mrs. Alman added her quaint description of the scene, as she came upon us so unexpectedly.

As Dell told how we had been dumped on the road, Angus looked a trifle anxious, but before he could ask a question she laid a hand on his arm

and said, in the tone one would use in soothing a frightened child:

"Don't look so worried, I beseech you, Angus. Your wife wasn't even bruised. Why, she had a soft bed of dust under her, and I fell as gently as I knew how, if I did light on top of her with the eggs. Oh, Angus, if you had only seen her! Eggs and dust mixed into a beautiful yellow paste all over the dainty grenadine you admire so much—egg in her hair—egg running even into her slippers—egg all over her! Oh, she looked sweet enough to eat! You'd have fallen in love over again if you'd been there."

"You didn't see yourself, Dell," I protested.

"I couldn't have presented as pretty a picture as you did, Daise. Impossible!" she declared; and without waiting for any more on that side of the subject, she vanished into the kitchen.

"Which buggy had they?" asked father.

"Yours," replied Angus. "There was something the matter with the cover of the other one and I hadn't time to fix it."

"I knew that wheel wasn't safe, but I never thought to mention it," said father, "that buggy is so seldom used since yours came."

Just then Mrs. Alman made some remark to father, and under cover of it Angus drew near me and asked in a low tone:

"Are you sure you aren't hurt, Daisy?"

"Quite sure, thank you," I answered, laughing.

"The only part of me that was injured was my dignity, and I've entirely recovered."

"Your dignity?" he repeated, with a mischievous laugh. "Were you really injured at all, Daisy?"

"Do you mean to insinuate that I haven't any dignity to hurt?" I demanded, reaching for his ear.

He speedily took himself out of the room, and the next moment I heard him disputing with Dell in the kitchen, accusing her of having wilfully broken the basket of eggs, because she had grown weary of holding them, and didn't want to carry them home after the buggy broke down.

Dell defended herself in her usual lively manner, and a pitched battle would in all probability have ensued had I not called them in to tea and thus stopped the argument.

CHAPTER XVI.

By the first week in October that afternoon's plotting had begun to bear fruit. The Government, then but lately elected, had, as every one knows, before its election promised a plebiscite vote in connection with the temperance question—on condition, of course, that it was elected to power.

Now, some time during its four years of office, we confidently expected the fulfilment of its promise.

They had promised something else, too—a law prohibiting the liquor traffic, if the majority of the people of Canada expressed themselves as in favor of such an Act of Parliament. Women cannot vote ("more's the shame," as Dell never fails parenthetically to exclaim), but we can work, and we can talk, and, better still, we can pray. The need of something in the nature of the Women's Christian Temperance Union had long been felt in Westfield; and we rightly felt that now, if ever, was the time for us to organize and help on the interests of prohibition. If we could not vote for it, we could interest our fathers, brothers, husbands and friends. We could draw their attention to the horrors of the deadly traffic in souls which has so long gone on unheeded by more than half the men of our land. We could reason with them, point out to them the benefits prohibition would bring to our country at

large and to thousands of individual homes. And we could touch their hearts, if those hearts were human, by pointing out the terrible danger of the open bar to the innocent boys of the land. We could incessantly preach, teach, and sing the gospel of temperance in a manner that would bring votes for our cause, even if we were not allowed to mark a ballot for God and the right ourselves.

"Oh, but," says someone, "woman has her sphere, and she has no business to step out of it."

Yes, thank God, we have our sphere, and a glorious and God-appointed sphere it is. No woman worthy of the name has any desire to step out of it. But tell us, little man—who, after all, are but mortal, and an atom in God's sight, just as we are—what right have you to limit our sphere?

The Anglo-Saxon race boasts of its love of fair play, but we see none of that spirit when we come to the franchise question.

We are using the power we have. God grant that the women of our land may become more and more intelligent, and more and more womanly, while the day draws ever nearer when we shall stand on equal footing with our brother-men in every department of life; they in their sphere, and we in ours; but our sphere no longer limited by the will of men, and theirs no longer embracing their own God-given rights and ours, too; as free children of civilization, equals with themselves.

That day is coming, sisters. And if we haven't won prohibition for Canada before then, we'll make that our first lookout.

CHAPTER XVII.

On the Saturday of the second week in October, Angus and I started for Pine Lake.

As we stepped from the train at the familiar Rosston depot, Jean caught me in her arms before I had well realized that my feet were on the ground.

"Bless your heart! I'm glad to see you!" she exclaimed, hugging me rapturously, then turning to receive as hearty a greeting from her brother as that she gave his wife.

"Norman is just around the building, with the team," she added, tucking her hand through my arm and leading me off, while Angus went to get our valises, which had that moment been thrown from the baggage-car.

Norman was there, glad and expectant, and we were soon on our way to Pine Lake.

How every foot of the way reminded me of that first dreary journey in the jolting old stage, with the weary child leaning her sleepy little head on my lap, the lank, lean passenger on the front seat, staring at me as though I had just escaped from a wild beast show, and the musical driver's nasal tenor lulling us all to drowsiness, as he sang the heather-scented ballads of his boyhood. Here and there, too, I was reminded of the last journey I had made over that uneven road. It had been a much more

enjoyable one than the first one. After all, I was glad I had taken that first trip, for without it I shouldn't have had the last one, nor the present one, either.

As we neared Blue Bay we now and then met a familiar face, and were greeted with a hearty "Hello, Angus!" or "Hello, Miss Murphy!" that sounded to us like the first notes of a welcome home.

"Those people seem to think you haven't changed your name, Daisy," remarked Angus, laughing, as the third cheery, "Hello, Miss Murphy!" rang out from a driver of a log-sleigh. "I think I'll introduce my wife to the next person we meet."

Passing through Blue Bay we were, as might be expected, the cynosure of all eyes. The usual knot of men and boys were standing, or lounging, on the platform of the Farmer's Home, the only hotel we had to pass, and Ted Cork himself stood in the open doorway, nearly filling it with his capacious dimensions.

"Aren't you getting tired in the neck, Daisy?" inquired Jean, as we turned up the lonely shore-road from the village.

"Why?" I asked, turning in my seat to look at her. I had taken the front seat with Norman.

"You've been lowing so constantly," she began; and just then we met a waggon with Mr. and Mrs. Weber on its high spring seat.

"Well, so sure as I lifs, dere she vas! und Angus, too, mit her along!" cried the lady, shrilly, as she snatched the lines from her easy-going husband and

brought the horses to a sudden standstill just as we reached them.

"Stop, Norman," said Angus, and he sprang out just in time to catch the excited woman, as she jumped from the waggon-wheel to the ground. Then he turned to lift me down, for of course I must get out, too.

"Vell, of all de tings vot happens, I vas glad dis day," she exclaimed, shaking my hand until, Jean said afterwards, she began to fear that she would "dislocate some of the joints of me, somewhere."

"And I'm just as glad to see you again, Mrs. Weber," I replied, heartily, as I put the arm that was under my own control around her neck and gave her a hearty kiss. "And how are you, yourself, and all the little folks?"

"All vell, pooty mooch," she replied, beaming with satisfaction, as she turned to set Angus in motion with the force of her handshake, and, released at length, I turned to greet the smiling Mr. Weber. He had just time to utter his pleasant wishes of "mooch joy" to us when his wife caught me by the shoulder and exclaimed:

"Oh, but you did took dot same man vot I always vished you vould. Undt I makes von pig parrel of dot molass in de shpring, vat vos so tick you nearly can't run him outd. I vos pooty sure you be married ven Angus he goes down in de shpring already; but he tells me ven he goes dot he comes pack alone—ven I ask him. So I shusht puts dot parrel in de cellar, vat it near fills oup, already, und

vaits a vile, bis I knows you vas married all right. Den I wants to send him by de oexpress; but my man he tells me vat dose trainmens dey knock him aroundt so dey makes all de molass run oudt mit de cracks dey makes in der parrel. 'Nefer mindt, Katrine' he say, 'Angus andt Miss Murphy dey cooms oup dis year, like. Dot molass it keep safer in dot cellar dan it does on dose cars.' You takes it home nit you, ven you goes; und den you keeps it safe, Angus. Gell?"

"Thank you," replied Angus, heartily. "I'll keep it safe, if I have to sit on it the whole way home. We know what good molasses you make, Mrs. Weber."

I added my thanks for the truly generous present promised us that never-to-be-forgotten evening of the maple-taffy party, and with oft-repeated invitations to visit them, the generous soul climbed up to her seat again, with some unaccustomed help in doing so from Angus, who then picked me up and tossed me into the carriage.

"All aboard," he cried, springing in himself; and the horses started off at full speed.

"Are we going past Laidlaw's?" I asked.

"The other road is nearer, and mother is anxious to see you folks," said Jean. "We couldn't pass there without going in."

"Better take the other road, I guess," said Norman. "You'll see them to-night, anyway. They're all coming over."

"Oh, that's good news!" I exclaimed; and Nor-

man sent a laughing glance over his shoulder at Jean.

It was nearly five in the afternoon when we drew up at the door of the homestead. Little Bruce had the gate open long before we got to it, and closed it so close after the carriage that the wheels scraped its nicely-painted cross-boards.

"Jump up here, you sly-boots. It's a ride you're plotting for," said Norman, drawing up the horses for a moment, while Angus reached down, and, catching the little lad, swung him to a seat on his knee. He immediately clasped his big brother tightly around the neck, and half-crying with delight, exclaimed:

"Oh, goody, Angus! I'm glad you're home! It's lonesome when you're away. Norman's good, but we want you, too. You'll stay now, won't you?"

"I'm deeply grateful for your kindly remembrance of me at this exciting moment, bub," said Norman, laughing. "Haven't you a word or one of those bear-hugs for your new sister?"

The child looked inquiringly at me, but at once leaned over, put his little arms around me, and kissed my cheek.

"I'm pretty near as glad to see Miss Murphy as I am to see Angus home," he remarked, with his most old-fashioned air; "but she isn't my sister, Norm. She's my teacher."

"The teacher wot never give one of us a licking, eh?" said Jean, laughing. "I'm afraid, Angus, she'll be 'Miss Murphy' and 'teacher' still, while you stay at Pine Lake."

"Oh, well," he replied, smiling, "I won't kick, I guess. She's Daisy McIvan, at Westfield, anyway. As long as they don't go to calling me 'Angus Murphy,' I don't mind."

The father was out in the yard with Mary and Janet. As the horses stopped, Angus sprang out, and was immediately seized upon by the girls. He managed to shake hands with his father, and was speedily dragged to the door, where his mother stood smilingly watching the scene. He cast a glance over his shoulder to see how I was faring, and seeing that his father was lifting me bodily out of the carriage, he went without opposition.

"What a welcome!" I exclaimed, out of breath, as at last I found myself in a big rocking-chair, with Mother McIvan removing my hat and jacket, and giving me a pat now and then that reminded me of my own dear mother in heaven.

"And how well you look, mother," I added, looking at her in wonder. She had gained in flesh, and there was a glow of pink in her cheeks that added much to her healthful appearance. She smiled as I spoke, but made no reply; and someone else speaking just then, the subject was dropped for the time being.

After tea the girls went out to do the milking. Angus went with his father and Norman to the barn, little Bruce proudly marching beside him, with the new tassel cap Angus had brought him on the back of his head, and his mouth and pockets stuffed with candies. The thoughtful brother had not forgotten one of the family, but had in his pocket or

his valise, some little token for each. I had come likewise provided, neither of us knowing of the other's gifts.

Thus left alone for a little while, we had a quiet chat. The dear old lady asked many questions about father, and about the mother who had gone home.

"I hope," she said, with tears in her kind eyes, when she had heard all about that home-going, "that your father is as fond of Angus as we are of his wife. He's a good boy—always was. But men have different ways, and—"

She paused a moment, and I answered, laughing, "Why, you never saw a greater pair of cronies. Father thinks there never was a man like Angus. He declares that if he had been brought up under his own personal supervision he couldn't be a son more after his own heart."

"I'm so glad," she remarked.

"Do you feel as well as you look?" I asked, suddenly, as I saw her put her hand to her side, while a quick spasm of pain crossed her features.

A strange smile was her only reply. Then I went to her and, laying a hand on her shoulder, looked searchingly into her face. It had struck me more than once since our arrival that the "new lease of life" that her children talked of with so much joy was not a very real one.

"Tell me," I said, tenderly; and she answered in a low tone:

"I feel much stronger than I have for years, but I know, and so does father, that it is only a tem-

porary relief. It's heart trouble, you know, and the doctors say I may go at any moment. We haven't told any of the children. Father only warned them never to leave me alone."

Just at that moment the girls came in, laughing and chattering like three magpies, so, of course, nothing more could be said.

About seven o'clock, as we were all sitting in the dining-room, hearing and telling all the news that each was anxious to tell or to hear, there was a knock at the door.

Jean opened it, and it seemed to me the next moment that all Pine Lake was trooping in. As the first person, "faither" Laidlaw, crossed the threshold, Angus and I stepped forward to greet him. Thus we were near the door to greet the whole crowd.

All the young people of the neighborhood, and most of the older ones, had turned out to bid us welcome. Each person carried some mysterious-looking package or parcel, which he, or she, laid on the table as each in turn greeted us, wishing us joy, and happiness, and prosperity, and good luck, and every other good thing, until Angus declared that he had almost forgotten that he had been married four months, and thought that the ceremony was just over.

In a few minutes the house was crowded, and we had to manufacture seats, besides bringing all the chairs from upstairs, and some benches from the woodshed and verandah.

"Did you invite all these folks, and then never say a word to us about it?" I whispered to Jean, while we were carrying away hats and wraps.

"No," she answered, laughing. "We just told them that you were coming, and then prepared for them."

"Ye'll be the better o' yer year at hame, Miss Murphy," said Mrs. Laidlaw, viewing me, critically, as we returned to the big dining-room. "I dinna ken but ye're fatter an' better-lookin'."

"Her hair is getting darker. That accounts for much of the change," said Angus, at my elbow. "It isn't nearly so red now." I turned suddenly, and he vanished through the open door.

"He's surely ta'en muckle gude care o' ye, at ony rate, if he hasna forgot hoo tae tease," said Mrs. Laidlaw, smiling.

And Mrs. Weber chimed in:

"I'll pet he vas shusht so goot like he always vas."

"You're right, Mrs. Weber," I answered, "I haven't spoiled him a bit."

"I canna see bit ye're gettin' a bit bonnier, though," said Mrs. Laidlaw, returning to her original topic, and gazing critically in my face. "Yer no sae child-lukin', an' there's e'en mair o' the airnest i' yer e'e nor there was. Ye waur aye fu' o' frolic, but wi' it a' there was the airnest aneath it. Noo, there's the mischief there still, but there's mair o' the deid airnest."

"There's more of the religion she was living and learning when she came to us," said Angus, from

the doorway. Mrs. Laidlaw cast another searching look at my face, as she remarked:

"There's a muckle differ, onyway."

"Games!" announced a voice from a corner of the kitchen.

"I tinks you petter make away mit all dis, fust," said Mrs. Weber, with a gesture in the direction of the table.

No one moved for a moment until Mr. Laidlaw said, quietly:

"We brung wi' us a few bit gifties fer the ticher an' Angus. She's aye bin a favored yin wi' us here, an' she's marrit till ane o' oor favored lads. They didna hae their weddin' at Pine Lake, but it's no sae lang syne that we canna gie them oor guid-will gifties. Elsie, lass, ye'll coom wi' Bessie an' tak thae papers awa', wull ye no?"

Thus singled from the crowd, the two girls came forward and unwrapped the presents, announcing the name on the ticket attached to each as they did so.

What an array of wedding presents! Was there ever such a place as kindly as Pine Lake for giving gifts to its favored friends, anyway?

Glassware, chinaware, knives and forks, spoons, lamps, table-cloths, towels, fancy articles—anything and everything that the good people had thought might prove useful to a young couple just commencing housekeeping. When the last and largest parcel had been undone, disclosing a large granite kettle, "from Peter Laidlaw," I found myself in

very much the same condition as that in which I had met the presentation and address which had so taken me by surprise nearly a year ago.

There was silence. I tried to speak, but could find no words to express the gratitude that filled me, and no voice with which to utter them had they been forthcoming. Like a veritable grown-up baby, I could only cry.

Seeing that I really could not say a word, Angus came to the rescue. He laid one hand on my shoulder, and smilingly said:

"You see, friends, that being changed into a married wife hasn't changed your 'Miss Murphy' otherwise. She wouldn't cry for the world if you tried to make her do it, but just because you've been good to her she must cry. It's only because she's glad, you know. Don't you remember how she cried at the Christmas tree last year? I've found out that it's a trick of hers. Do you know I was afraid she might interrupt the preacher in the middle of the ceremony last June, and make him wait till she got through with a 'cry'? She didn't, though. Maybe it was because she wasn't glad enough."

He had effectually cured me; and I found my voice just here to remark that he and the preacher had not made a surprise of that ceremony. Then I managed to thank the donors for their thoughtful and much-valued gifts, and the girls carried the things to a room upstairs for present safe-keeping.

While they were thus engaged there was another

rap at the door, and a tall, very dark young man entered with a large bundle under his arm.

"Am I late?" he inquired, after a general good-evening, and a very polite greeting to Angus.

"Just in time," said a chorus of voices. Then he was introduced to me as Mr. Travell, my successor at the school; and, having made his bow and expressed his pleasure at "meeting the predecessor of whom he had so often heard," etc., he unrolled his bundle and held before my astonished gaze a large quilt made entirely of rich velvet, the exact shade of our Blue Ribbon badges. It was elaborately worked with embroidery silk, and on the centre block were our names—Angus's and mine—in large written characters.

"Mr. and Mrs. McIvan," said the teacher, with a low bow, "you did not appear at Pine Lake at the time of your wedding, but the Blue Ribbon Society had evidently not forgotten its founders at that time. I have been requested to present you with this autograph quilt in behalf of the Society, and to tender you their most earnest wishes for your future happiness and prosperity in life."

Angus was almost as deeply moved as I was, but of course he didn't cry. Instead, he stood with his hand on my shoulder again, and made a speech that was remembered in Pine Lake for many a day. Every member of the Blue Ribbon Society was present, and I heard more than one of them remark that that speech had put fresh courage into their

hearts, and made them feel like entering into the expected plebiscite campaign with all their might.

Then, besides the little temperance talk, he spoke in feeling terms of the deeper religious experience into which we had both entered, urging all present who had not yet given their hearts to Him who died for them, to lose no time in coming to Him. He also expressed our gratitude for the unexpected and most generous welcome we had received, and our appreciation of the many gifts our friends had brought us, particularly of this last token which had been presented to us in the name of the Temperance Society.

Then, amid much clapping of hands and stamping of feet, the kitchen was cleared of all movable furniture, and the fun began.

We chased the squirrel, dropped the handkerchief, guessed proverbs, made and upset the fruit-basket, spun pie plates in the middle of the floor, threw coppers into a boot-leg, planted and picked up potatoes, and did a lot of other things as jolly. Even Father McIvan and old Mr. Laidlaw took their turn in the kitchen games, while the mother sat in an out-of-the-way corner by the cupboard, and laughed, and enjoyed herself as heartily as the rest of us.

About half-past twelve the girls brought up the lunch, which Jean had ready in the cellar. The company sat in couples, trios, or groups about the rooms, and amid much banter and friendly chat we began our midnight meal.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"MAY I sit beside you, Mrs. McIvan?" asked Mr. Travell, setting his chair beside mine. "I've been wanting a chat with you for a long time," he added, with a most agreeable smile.

"Bet he's wishin' she wasn't married," came from the other side of the room in Ned Graham's stage-whisper. Ned was impolite enough to do a great deal of whispering in company, but he always did it so loudly that nearly every one in the room, as a rule, was sure to hear him.

"Unfortunately she is," said the young man, not at all disconcerted.

"Fortunately—I think, myself," I replied, glancing at my husband, who was bending over his mother's chair near by.

"Doubtless Mr. McIvan feels the same," he remarked. "I'm sure that I should were I in his place."

I looked at the fellow, in some doubt as to how to meet his advances. His manner, as well as his face, gave me an uneasy feeling of repulsion and distrust. I had noticed him acting very sweetly toward Jean at every opportunity during the evening, and, somehow, I instinctively hoped that she would have little to do with him.

He bent his black eyes smilingly on my face as

he spoke, and the impression of flattery was so strong in my mind that I had almost uttered the word when I recollected myself, and answered, quietly:

"You would be a disloyal husband to your wife if you thought otherwise—whoever the girl might be."

"There are differences in girls," he remarked, in a low tone. "Mr. McIvan, I think, is to be envied."

"Angus," I called, and with a half-smile he came over and sat down beside me.

"Mr. Travell has some pleasant things to say concerning you and me, Angus," I said, pleasantly, "and I wanted you to hear them."

I had spoken in an ordinary conversational tone, so that many around us had heard me. Mr. Travell seemed slightly taken aback, and Angus, who had known the gentleman well before our marriage, smiled broadly, as he waited for the "pleasant things" he was to hear.

"I was merely telling Mrs. McIvan that you are to be envied," said the teacher, easily.

"I think so, myself," replied Angus; and Mr. Travell changed the subject.

"I've often wished for a chat with your wife regarding her method of discipline in the school," he remarked. "Will you tell me, Mrs. McIvan, how you ever managed those children without whipping them? I've been told by the Inspector and others that you kept excellent order and had a good record otherwise."

"I believe I had," I replied, slowly, foreseeing an argument.

"Will you tell me something of your plan?" he asked, blandly.

"Well," said I, quietly, "I simply did my best for the children, and encouraged them to do their best for themselves and for me. I tried to be gentle with them and firm at the same time, while I made the lessons as interesting as I could, and did not overtax their minds with long ones. I made allowance for difference in the children themselves, too, and did not allow those who were slower by nature to hinder those who were brighter, and thus discourage the latter, while no real benefit would be gained by the former. It meant more classes for me, but was more satisfactory to the pupils, as well as to myself. As much as possible I did my teaching individually, and thus did all in my power to give each pupil a fair chance, while not expecting as rapid progress in the case of those who were not naturally clever as in the case of those who were. That wouldn't be fair at all, you know. In short, I treated the children as I should have liked my teacher to treat me, had I been a Pine Lake pupil, instead of teacher. Then I loved them, every one, and did not hide the fact from them. 'Love begets love'; so very soon they loved me, and, as a result, good order and well-prepared lessons slipped in quite naturally, and without any forcing, or scolding, or whipping. If I couldn't manage a child, no matter what its previous training had been, with-

out being so brutal as to beat it into a forced outward submission, I'd never presume to enter a school-room as teacher."

"You must be naturally fond of children," said Mr. Travell, with an unconscious frown, that contrasted not beautifully with the sweetness of the smile that suddenly succeeded it, as he looked up, to find that I was looking at him. "I suppose that is your secret. Now, I never was. I could never manage a school that way. I've neither the tact, the patience, nor the—the interest in the thing."

"You're not fond of children?" I exclaimed. "You forgot that you must have been a child once yourself. Why do you teach school, then, if you don't like children, and 'haven't interest in the thing'? It must be a wearisome task."

"It is!" he replied, with a bored look on his face. "Why do I teach? To make money, I suppose. Most teachers do."

"I'll tell you what I'd do if I were you," I said, with more animation than I had felt since the conversation began. "I'm interested in your case. If you'll take the advice of a friendly stranger you'll give up the profession. If I were you I'd go and dig ditches before I'd do such an injustice to my own manhood and to the innocent children committed to my charge as to drum their lessons into their brains day by day, and compel them to sit still and silent during the process, with no higher aim in the work than that of putting a few paltry dollars into my own pocket."

He laughed in an amused way and replied, "I'm teaching to earn something to see me through college. I expect to be a medical doctor some day. It would take me too long to earn the amount by digging ditches—even if I were fond of that style of labor."

"Worse and worse!" I exclaimed. "If you have no higher aim than making money and advancing yourself in life now, you'll take the same spirit with you into the medical profession. Lord help your patients! I say it with all reverence."

"Why, Mrs. McIvan!" he cried, sitting up straight to look at me curiously. "Isn't it one's duty to look out for No. 1 in this world?"

"Where did you get hold of that doctrine?" I asked.

"Why, I've learned it all the way along," he answered. "It's the lesson life itself teaches."

"Life is just what you make it, Mr. Travell," said I. "You'll find that 'look out for No. 1' doctrine ruled out of God's law-book—and out of the lives of the most successful men of the world, likewise. You'll never find any satisfaction in your life, and you'll never be a real success, no matter what business or profession you enter, so long as No. 1 is your only interest. It's such an exceedingly small one that your success, and your enjoyment in life, will be warped accordingly. When you learn that the real business of every man's or woman's life is to live to benefit others, then you'll serve your

own interests best; for then, and then only, can you do your best work."

I was called just then to help in the arrangement of some new game, and when I came back to my seat I found Mr. Travell and Angus discussing something, quite earnestly. Mr. Travell at once appealed to me.

"You never whipped your pupils, Mrs. McIvan," he said. "Now, tell me, do you think a child can be properly trained from its infancy to years of accountability without punishment?"

"By punishment do you mean whipping?" I inquired.

"Well, principally."

"I certainly do," I answered, emphatically. "I think that if parents and teachers thought only of the real welfare of the children under their charge there would be more real, steady firmness and less spasmodic discipline in their management. Whipping would be ruled out. In nine cases out of ten there is more of a conscious or unconscious desire for revenge in the mind of the person who does the punishing than there is of a conscientious desire to teach the child right from wrong. The little one has, intentionally or otherwise—it matters little which—annoyed its parent or teacher, and that annoyance is then vented on the child, in proportion to the state of mind of the person annoyed, rather than to the real nature of the offence. Then, besides, no human being is capable of judging a child justly, or punishing accordingly. We don't

know what thought, or motive, or strong temptation may have come to the little mind; and we don't know, either, how keen or how blunt may be its sensibilities, morally or physically. Some feel more keenly, physically and otherwise, owing to the fact that they have a more highly-strung nervous organization. Therefore, it is impossible for us to judge justly and to punish accordingly."

"What plan would you adopt then?" asked the teacher, looking as if he was hearing something new.

"The plan I outlined a few minutes ago," I answered. "If you are human you must have a love for innocent childhood somewhere in your heart. Every one has, to a greater or less extent, and it is sure to show itself some time. Let the child see that love, and live in its atmosphere from its earliest infancy. That's the first lesson of life it learns, as a general thing. Being at once gentle and firm with it, the child soon learns that the parents' will is law, and will learn to govern itself accordingly. We hear a great deal about conquering a child, breaking its temper, etc. If a child is not spoiled in the first place, it will never need to be conquered. It is not conquering it needs, but knowledge and the acquired power of self-government. Any parent, or teacher, who has learned to govern himself, or herself, can teach a child to do the same. There are millions of cruel, bad-tempered people in the world, at present venting their ill-nature on animals and people just because they have not been

taught to govern themselves. No human being can conquer the evil that may have grown in the heart of another, even if that other be a little child. Only God can do that, for only He sees its extent and its strength; but, by careful training, any right-minded guardian of a child can teach it the principles of right and wrong, and teach it to govern itself."

"You would do away with corporal punishment, then, in the training of children?" said the teacher, with an incredulous look.

"In the training of all animals, brute as well as human," I replied. "The religion of Jesus is one of love, and nothing can long resist the power of love. All that is required in the management of any child the Creator ever sent into the world, is love and judicious firmness, with patient instruction in the principles of right and wrong. The Bible puts it in a nutshell—'Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord!'"

"But doesn't the Bible say, 'Spare the rod, and spoil the child?'" asked Mr. Travell, with a bland smile, but a gleam of triumph in his snaky, black eyes, which seemed to say, "Now, surely, I have you in a corner, for I've your beloved, oft-quoted Bible on my side of the argument this time."

"To my mind," said Angus, smiling a little, "a better translation for the benefit of the children of the Christian era would be, 'Spoil the rod, and spare the child.'"

"That isn't what Solomon said," replied Mr. Travell.

I felt strongly inclined to ask him if he could repeat any other Scripture texts. Somehow, I couldn't help thinking that he must be one of those men who single out that text, "Wives, obey your husbands," and without taking any other portion of Scripture into consideration at all, hold up that as God's sanction for the treatment of our sex as a part of the race inferior to man. There are such men, and I was almost sure that this gentleman would prove himself to be one of them, if I drew him out a little.

However, I answered, quietly enough:

"Solomon lived in the old, old times, Mr. Travell, and since Jesus was here the world has steadily been getting wiser. Solomon is said to have been the wisest man that ever lived. So he was, up to his own time. But one of his lineal descendants, years after Solomon died, proved Himself to be a wiser man still and a much better one. Solomon lived and wrote under the stern dominion of the exacting Jewish law, and at a day when civilization had not reached its present state. Any Christian will tell you that the old law of 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,' is not our rule now. Jesus won forgiveness for us all and taught us to forgive in turn. He Himself, the Man who was God, introduced and taught most thoroughly the doctrine of love to all living creatures. If Jesus had ever said, 'Spare the rod, and spoil the child,' I shouldn't know how to reconcile that with His other teachings, and with His love in my heart it

would be impossible for me to carry out the maxim. He who loves the innocent children so well cannot be pleased to see them suffer. We live under the reign of King Jesus, the very heart and source of love and wisdom—not under the rule of the stern, old Jewish king, Solomon, in an age of semi-barbarism. Let children be taught of Him, and taught how to please Him from their earliest infancy. That is all that any child needs in the way of training, if it is taught and managed with love and constant firmness, so that it learns to have full confidence in the parent or teacher who guides.”

“I always thought children had to be conquered, and their tempers broken,” remarked the teacher, in a tone that almost said, “I think so still.” Evidently this last line of argument was not within his comprehension, or much to his taste.

“Nonsense,” I exclaimed. “Such ideas for the weakening and ruin of human character are enough to make one cry for the blindness of one’s fellow-beings. Break a child’s will-power and you make a namby-pamby character that goes whichever way the wind blows it. Teach it to turn the strong will God has given it in the right direction and you help make a character that will be worth something to the world and its Maker as it grows to manhood or womanhood. There are strong-willed children who cannot be conquered. You may, by superior strength, force them to outward obedience, but you only develop sullenness, dogged determination, and often a desire for revenge that in after years either

spoils a character that might otherwise have been grand, or gives its possessor much trouble to control. Teach such children, gently and constantly, how to govern themselves, and you are doing a glorious work.

"Other children are weaker by nature. Such would need, not conquering and breaking, but guiding and strengthening, if they are to become useful and self-reliant moral citizens—not weak tools of stronger natures, good or bad."

"Daisy, do come here," cried Jean, from a far corner, where she stood among a group of school-girls, who were trying to learn to play a new game I had brought for Jean, particularly, because she had a fondness for such recreations. They were at a standstill, so I went over and joined in the game until they were familiar with it. Then I was in demand for a game of charades which lasted until every one was tired and wanted to go home, so I had no further chat with the teacher that night.

It was very late when the company dispersed; but Mrs. Laidlaw remarked, as she put on her bonnet:

"It's no sae mony bit sprees we'll hae wi' oor Angus an' oor Miss Murphy, the noo. She'll aye be 'Miss Murphy' til' us, Angus," she added, turning to him. "We canna mind the 'missus' ye've tacked till the lassie."

"Never mind the 'missus,' Mrs. Laidlaw," he answered. "I'm sure she feels more at home with you all here without that unhandy handle. Don't you, Daise?"

I had to confess that I did; and indeed it was seldom during our visit that any one, besides the stranger teacher, thought of calling me anything but the old familiar "Miss Murphy," sometimes "teacher," even yet, or "Daisy." The latter soon became most frequent, and pleased me better than any other.

Just before the folks left the house, I found time for a word with Peter. He was standing in the open doorway, with one hand in his trousers pocket and the other smoothing his moustache. I took the opportunity to thank him privately for the fine, big kettle he had given us. You may smile if you like, friends. That kettle was a good one—thick, solid granite—and it has proved a very durable and useful article. Any housekeeper knows what a blessing a great big graniteware kettle is, especially when preserving time comes.

"Glad ye lak it," he replied, briefly.

"Let us know when your wedding-day comes," I added, jokingly; and, to my surprise, the big fellow blushed to the roots of his hair. Then he was seized with a paroxysm of chuckling, and I waited patiently until he had recovered a little. Then, noticing his eyes fixed pleasantly upon Jessie Smith, a bright, smart young girl who stood talking to Norman close by, I began to suspect Peter of having matrimonial designs concerning her. Of course I said nothing; and presently Peter remarked, between his giggles, that "he didna ken but he'd sen' us a line ta come."

"Do," I replied.

"She's a gey bonny lass—Jessie," he went on, with a serious expression and his gaze still fixed on the girl herself.

"She is," I answered, "a smart, fine-looking girl, and a good one, too."

"Ay," said Peter, "I hanna axed her yit; but I think I'll gie her a chance o' me the nicht. She's ta'en oup wi' me weel a' the simmer."

Just then the friends began to file out, each shaking hands with us as they went, and giving us pressing invitations to visit them all, which we promised to do.

Bessie and George Smith were the last to leave, going out in the wake of Norman and Elsie.

"Seems to me, if one may be allowed to judge by appearances, there'll be a few more weddings in Pine Lake before long," remarked Angus, laughing, as he closed the door.

"Little doubt of it," answered Jean.

"What do you think of Mr. Travell, Jean?" asked her brother, bluntly, with his eyes on her face. He, too, had evidently noted the gentleman's evident preference for the society of his handsome sister. She glanced up, as he spoke, but seemed to have no suspicion of the nature of his question, for she answered, simply:

"I don't like him. Bruce says he's a 'crabbed cross stick' in school. I never could bear a man who is ugly with children, as he certainly is. He's cruel. Anyway, there's something about the fellow, outside school, that I don't like. He's always say-

ing sweet things, and I know very well that half the time he's lying. I often tell him so."

"Jean, Jean, you're as blunt as Daisy," laughed Angus; but he looked relieved.

Before we parted for the night we spread out the autograph quilt, and all gathered round to take another look at it. It was truly a beautiful gift. The boys had purchased the material—finest velvet—and the girls had provided the embroidery silks, and done the work. On the eight blocks surrounding the centre one, which bore our names and the inscription, were embroidered the names of the members of the society, and on the other blocks were the names of nearly every member of every family in Pine Lake. All the school children were thus represented.

Altogether, that was a gift which we should dearly prize all our lives. We have it still—laid away in a drawer of its own, with geranium leaves between the folds. Once a week it comes out for an airing; but not even the most honored guest we have ever had has slept under it.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE next two weeks were filled with good times. We visited every house in Pine Lake, and Angus declared himself to be developing symptoms of dyspepsia, owing to the enforced frequency of his meals. Of course, we could not stay for dinner, or tea, at every house, and where we could not stay for either of the regular meals we were sure to have to partake of a lunch before we went further.

Don and his wife had not been over the evening of our arrival, owing to the fact, as Mrs. Laidlaw, senior, had explained, that "they had a bonnie laddie, not abune five weeks auld, an' Emma couldna come oot wi' sic a sma' bairn, an' Donald thought sae muckle about them baith that he wouldna leave the hoose an evenin' wi'oot them."

So our first visit was to their house. The baby was indeed a "bonnie laddie," with blue eyes, black hair, and a good strong pair of lungs. Don was so proud of him that his wife laughingly asked us if he hadn't added at least two inches to his previous six-feet-two.

"What do you call the boy?" I asked.

"Angus James Peter," she replied.

"Mercy!" I gasped.

"We call him 'Angus,'" she added, smiling.

"Don wanted him called after your Angus here, and after his only brother; and, of course, then my only brother mustn't be left out, so we just gave him the same names."

"That means three new dresses for you, young man," said Angus, taking the tiny bundle in his arms.

Whatever, real or imaginary, came to him at the moment, he knew not, but Master Angus James P. laid down a sudden yell that caused his unpracticed horse to transfer him to my knee in a hurry.

"You do well to make him cry and then give him to me," I said, turning the baby over on my arm.

"Oh, well, if I'd known that turning him wrong side up would have been a hint to stop his music, I might have done it myself," he answered. "A fellow's never too old to learn. Next time I see you cry, Daisy, I'll just hold you over one arm, with your head hanging down like that, and pat you on the back."

"I've outgrown that method," I answered, laughing.

We were there for dinner, and then, during the afternoon, we all went over to the Laidlaw homestead. Among us, we managed to coax Mrs. Don to bundle up herself and the precious bairn and drive over with us in the buggy; then Don came over just in time for tea.

We had a very pleasant visit. Faither and Peter and Bessie took us out to the barn, and to different parts of the farm to show us some purchases in the

lines of stock and machinery and some improvements about the place; while Mrs. Laidlaw remained indoors with Mrs. Don and the baby, proudly dandling the latter in her arms, and giving his young mother much useful instruction from the stores of her own maternal experience.

After tea we were sitting chatting, when in trooped all the Pine Lake young people for another party. It was only two days since the last one, but that was nothing in Pine Lake.

Games were again the order of the evening. Once, as I stood near Peter for a moment, he said:

"Ye'd maybe be expectin' a dance when ye saw the folk come ben? The mither thocht ye'd maybe no lak tae stay while the dancin' went on, so she telt the fiddler tae leave his box at hame."

"That was very kind of her, Peter," I said, gratefully. Here was Mrs. Laidlaw, the strongest advocate of dancing in the whole community, bidding the "fiddler tae leave his box at hame," for our sakes. We knew her well enough to appreciate her thoughtfulness.

It was indeed a jolly evening, and we entered into the fun the more heartily because we knew that the usual amusement was omitted on our account, and we wanted all present to enjoy the party more than they would have done had they danced all night.

Once, during the evening, I felt my hair becoming loosened, and slipped into Bessie's little room to fasten it up. There was no light there, so I left the door ajar. A moment later a group of young people

gathered just before the door, and I could not avoid hearing one of them remark:

"Miss Murphy is nicer than she used to be, somehow. Getting more religious hasn't made a crank of her at all. I thought she mightn't care for parties, or fun, any more, when I heard she had gone into religion so deeply, and being in mourning for her mother, besides, poor girl! But she seems to think of nothing else all evening but making the rest of us enjoy ourselves."

"Angus has changed, too," said another voice. "He always was a first-class fellow, but there's something about him now that sort of makes a fellow look up to him."

Unwilling to be an eavesdropper, I softly pushed the door shut, but I could still hear snatches of the conversation.

"They're both different," said someone else; "an' there's no gettin' round it, boys an' girls, it's that religion of theirs that's doin' it all. It's makin' 'em better all through, an' it can't help showin'."

The group scattered in a moment, and I was just pushing the last hairpin into place, when I again heard my name mentioned, this time by the teacher's voice.

"Mrs. McIvan is not in the room," he remarked.

"She has gone to put up her hair," replied Jean's voice.

"She has some gift of gab," he remarked.

"What do you mean?" asked Jean, a trifle shortly.

"I mean that she can talk," he replied.

"She always could, I think—since I have known her, at least," answered Jean, laughing.

"You are as merciless as you are pretty," he said, in that honied tone he saw fit to use in addressing a woman.

Jean's reply was inaudible, and a moment later he went on:

"Mrs. McIvan has some very odd ideas, and she upholds them with vim enough to shut me off every time."

"Is that possible?" exclaimed Jean, in tones of amused surprise. "Why, I didn't suppose that any woman could do that. Do you mean to tell me that you've really met a woman who could 'shut you off,' and uphold her own ideas in opposition to you? Aren't women men's inferiors, Mr. Travell? I've never heard you say so in plain words, but you often leave that inference. And aren't we a set of beings who are only fitted to keep house, and darn men's socks? I haven't forgotten your theory concerning our sex, you see. I'm heartily glad you have met our Daisy. She'd talk you to annihilation if you mentioned your ideas concerning women to her."

Just as I had surmised. Angus says I always do scent from afar the approach of an enemy of woman's rights. I sat on the bed, wishing that the pair outside the door would move away. To go out while they were there would betray the fact that I had unavoidably heard what had been said, and very likely plunge me into another discussion with Mr. Travell, for which I had no desire whatever.

I did not hear his' reply to Jean's half-laughing, half-indignant speech, and the next I heard was:

"After the 'talking-to' she gave me at your house the other night, on the management of children, I don't think I'll venture to oppose her again. She talks plainly and to the point, but she doesn't spare one. She isn't a bit afraid of treading on one's private corn-patch at all."

Jean's musical laugh rang out, as she answered:

"Not a bit. We all like her the better because we know that she says what she means."

"I see," said the teacher. "An admirable quality, I'm sure; but Mrs. McIvan is like yourself—a trifle merciless. Mr. McIvan would not find it safe to cross her, I imagine."

Then did Jean turn on him with indignation in every tone:

"If my brother were like you, Mr. Travell," she said, "he certainly wouldn't enjoy his wife's company very much. She has a mind of her own, and he always admired her for it, from the first evening he met her. She has ideas of the right and wrong of things in general that would either make a better and truer man of you, or keep you out of her presence altogether, especially if you wanted to air your present opinions comfortably. Angus has no occasion to cross her, because, as you can see if you use your eyes, they are both living for God in the first place, and after that for each other."

I waited no longer, but quietly raising the low window, crept out, and stood alone for a few minutes beneath the clear, starry October sky. My heart

was filled with love and gratitude to the great Maker and Father of all, and before I turned to enter the house, I looked up to the fathomless heavens, type of the infinite and omnipresent God, and whispered:

"Father, I thank Thee that they see that we have been with Jesus. Oh, let Thy light so shine in us while we stay here, that others may be drawn to Thee."

On the steps, at the front door, stood Angus.

"Where in the world have you been for the last half hour, Daisy?" he asked. "Every one is asking for you."

"Hush! I've just crawled out of the window," I answered, slipping past him to mix with the crowd inside.

I had no sooner appeared than Mr. Travell made his way to my side, and sweetly remarked:

"Miss McIvan said that you had gone to arrange your hair, Mrs. McIvan. I had almost grown weary of waiting for you. Would you mind walking with me for a few minutes just outside the door? The night is beautiful. I do so much want a talk with you, and one can't converse in such a crowd as this."

"Thank you, Mr. Travell," I answered. "If you care to ask my husband to come, I don't mind."

Perhaps the request was simple enough in itself. The small house certainly was crowded, and a connected conversation was impossible indoors. All the same, I was a married woman, and he was well aware of the fact. Perhaps if the request had come from someone else I shouldn't have thought any-

thing about it; but there was so much of the honied flirt in Mr. Travell's manner, he reminded me so much of a sugar-coated pill, that I would have seen him some miles further than Joppa rather than go for a moonlight stroll with him even in the doorway. I had no desire for any prolonged conversation with him, and was not sorry that he showed no inclination to request Angus's company for the proposed walk.

"What made you get out of the window?" Angus asked me, on the way home.

I told him of my unintentional eavesdropping, and wound up by saying that if I had known I should have to get out of the window in the end I might have done so sooner. He laughed a little, and chucking me under the chin, remarked:

"I don't believe it *would* be safe for me to cross you, wife. I'd be pretty sure to be going in the wrong direction."

"If you did, I'd stop short to consider, thinking that it was time to turn, for that you would be pretty sure to be going in the right direction," I answered.

He drew me a bit closer to him, in much the same style as he had done on the way home from that well-remembered Queen's Birthday celebration. I didn't object, as I had the other time, nor complain about the narrow bounds of the covers of modern buggies either. This buggy was no wider than that other one, now in the shed at Westfield, but one learns to accommodate oneself to circumstances.

CHAPTER XX.

WHEN Sunday came, we went to Sunday School in the morning, and then out to Blue Bay Church in the evening.

The wedding was to take place on the coming Thursday, so that this was the last Sunday of little Elsie's girl-life. Of course she and Norman were expected to be invisible for that day; but to everybody's surprise they were both out to Sunday School in the morning and to church again in the evening.

"I don't see any more reason for hiding ourselves, and staying away from church to-day any more than any other day," Norman had said this morning.

"What does Elsie think?" asked his mother.

"She says she isn't ashamed of the fact that she intends to be married on Thursday, and she won't stay in the house all day and miss the Sunday services."

So they were out as usual, and, moreover, we called for her and took her with us in the evening, so that she and Norman entered the church together. There was a little stir all over the congregation when they came in, but I don't think anyone was seriously injured by their setting aside of a very foolish custom.

Tuesday evening we had another pleasant gather-

ing at Mrs. Weber's. The young people were all there again, and we spent a very jolly evening. No one mentioned dancing, and some new games were introduced, which proved very interesting and amusing. Mrs. Weber had enough syrup ready, boiled down to the second last degree of thickness, for a big potful of maple taffy, an unusual luxury at that time of the year; but she insisted that she had made one "bilin'" extra, with this very event in view, and had kept it until our coming.

The baby and Master Willie were at first a little shy of us, but we were soon as friendly as ever, and Miss Baby could by no other means than that of superior force be persuaded to go to her cradle. Once there, she cried so lustily, and beat such a tattoo on the footboard, that I coaxed her mother to let me rock her to sleep in the old rocking-chair in the bed-corner. The poor wee mite was tired out, and when she found that I was going to sing her a "Birdie-song," she cuddled down with her nose under my arm and one eye on my face, and was soon fast asleep.

Much to our amusement, Master Willie attempted once more to appropriate Angus's moustache as a plaything, and even curiously tried to dislodge it, in spite of his mother's shrill protests, until at length he was gently placed on a chair and made to stay there, with a cake for a solace.

Wednesday afternoon we were all in the kitchen, talking over to-morrow's arrangements, when a Rosston livery-rig drove up to the door, and what

was our astonishment to behold father and Dell alight therefrom. The family in a body met them at the door, and great was the rejoicing over their unexpected arrival.

When the first hubbub had somewhat subsided, father explained that they had engaged a neighbor's son to stay at our place and look after things till Saturday. He knew that Dell was secretly very anxious to come to the wedding, and he couldn't persuade her to come without him. They were both anxious to visit the Pine Lake of which they had heard so much, and to meet the other members of Angus's family, so they had at length decided to pack their bundle and come.

"And glad we are that you've got here," said Mr. McIvan, shaking his hand again, while his wife echoed his welcome, and Jean hugged Dell over again.

It was a great pleasure to us to watch the "old folks" getting acquainted with each other, and to see Dell at once thoroughly at home, and taken possession of by the younger girls, who were delighted with her, from the moment of her arrival. Once during the evening Angus was silently watching the two fathers, chatting away as if they had known each other since their boyhood, and I noticed his eyes fill with tears. Then, catching my eye, he said, in a low tone:

"I was just thinking how much we would all enjoy having the other mother here, too."

"She may be here," I answered.

But we all missed the gentle bodily presence of her who would have made the circle complete.

When father went to his room, I went with him. He had enjoyed the evening, but that lonesome look was in his eyes again, as he went upstairs.

"Dell and I got along nicely," he said, setting his lamp on the dresser and turning to bid me good-night, "but we missed you and Angus more than we could tell you. I miss the mother more, Daisy, when you, her little image, are out of my sight for a few hours."

"Poor father! We shouldn't have left you," I exclaimed, bursting into tears.

"Hush, dearie, hush," he whispered, patting my head. "You needed the holiday—both of you; and, you know, if you hadn't come, Dell and I wouldn't be here. Then, you see, the four of us would have missed a treat."

Nevertheless, as I kissed him goodnight, I inwardly vowed that I would never again leave him for a visit like this. And I am glad now that until the day he went home to mother I never did.

The next day was one long to be remembered. Elsie's home was a story-and-a-half frame house, and not a very large one; but by arranging the furniture so as to take up as little room as possible, and by making use of a very large woodshed, that summer built to the back of the house, it could be made to accommodate all the people in Pine Lake and a few from the village—on condition that they made themselves as small as possible, and did not object to

being jammed and jostled now and again, especially during the ceremony and the supper-hour. But whoever was so crabbed as to mind having his ribs crushed in, or his toes tramped upon, so long as the occasion was a wedding? We weren't anxious about that, but we were anxious that not one of the Pine Lake people should be left out. The children of most families would be left at home, of course, where there were one or two old enough to be left in charge. Others, who had little people old enough to leave with others, would take them to such neighbors' houses. There were a few babies who would have to come, but not many.

Don's son and heir was there, of course; but he found so many nurses, and was so well waited upon and fussed over that he very graciously kept quiet, except for an occasional gurgling sound in his throat, which was unanimously declared to be a cute little coo—and one indignant solo just after supper. He had been dandled about, and kissed, and squeezed, and examined, and remarked upon, until Angus declared that he must be possessed of more than an inherited stock of good-nature, or he would have protested sooner. When he did object, however, he did it so lustily that the young lady who was petting him, and calling him "lovely dear," was glad to deliver him to his mother.

Jean, Dell, Angus, and I had come over early in the afternoon. Bessie, as George's acknowledged "intended," had been there several days that week, helping the two girls, and Jean had also spent much

of the week there; but still much remained to be done that last afternoon.

The boys went to the woods for evergreens, and when they came back we all joined forces to make that woodshed a bower of greenery. Three long tables, made of planks and trestles, were soon stretched from end to end of the shed, and seats of a corresponding style placed on both sides of each. Then we covered them with snowy cloths, and set on the dishes.

When the work of table-decorating was finished, we viewed the result with satisfaction. Here and there were bouquets of cut flowers, and saucers of pansies, or belated daisies. Colored Japanese table-napkins were twisted into fantastic shapes, and laid beside each plate. At frequent intervals, a high glass dish, full of crisp white celery stalks, sending out their appetizing odor, seemed to invite one to come and dine. Each table was loaded with cold fowl, ham and beef, salads, sauces, catsups, plates of bread and butter, cakes and pies innumerable, while on a side table were great plates and dishes ready piled with apples, oranges and grapes. At the head of the table, nearest the house-door, stood the five-story white bride's-cake, with its wreaths of wintergreen and crown of white flowers.

Altogether, it was a feast fit for royalty, and the general effect of those white-draped tables, with their bright flowers and loads of good things spread beneath the wreaths and festoons of dark evergreen, was really beautiful. Here and there, hanging low

over each table, was a festoon of odorous pine, which was passed through a cord fastened to the ring of a Chinese lantern, and when darkness fell, and these were lighted, that woodshed was like a fairy's bower.

For the occasion, I had thought to lay aside my mourning dress, and had brought my own wedding muslin. Dell had remembered to bring hers also; so, when evening approached, we arrayed ourselves in the white dresses, with pansies for Dell's bouquet, and white daisies for mine, and started for the room in which Jean and the bride were awaiting our attendance. As we were on our way upstairs we met Angus, who stopped short, and with extended arms stopped our passage.

"Very pretty, indeed!" he exclaimed, viewing us critically. "But this isn't the twenty-fourth of June, lassies. Do you mean to say that you're going to wear those gauzy garments to-night?"

"Why not?" asked Dell.

"You'll catch your deaths—both of you," he replied. "If you've left your other dresses on under those it's all right, but it's too cold for muslins this time of year."

"Black dresses under Swiss muslins!" scoffed Dell. "We'd be curious spectacles indeed. Let us go, Angus. We're fixed up just comfortably for a hot, crowded house, let me tell you. We'll be glad we brought our muslins before the night is over. You'll soon be glad to take off your waistcoat brother mine."

"But there are sure to be draughts, girls," he

further objected; and he was grumbling still when we darted under his arms, one on each side, and fled up the steps.

When the bridal party came down-stairs, Dell and I were standing with father at the other side of the room.

They were a pretty sight, little Elsie and the tall girl who had been her staunch friend and comforter and helper all through the two years of trial before Norman's conversion, and her adviser and confidant since. Of course they were all in white. No Pine Lake bride ever wore anything else; and the long, filmy white veil, in which the little bride seemed to float across the room to her place, was more like a white mist in the lamplight than ordinary chiffon. There was no newspaper reporter present to enlarge, in terms long since threadbare, upon the beauty of bride or maid; but no newspaper man would have done them justice, anyway.

Norman's eyes shone, as they rested on the sweet and dainty little lady who stood waiting beside him for the words which should make her his wife. But many eyes wandered from the little bride to the beautiful bridesmaid. Truly Jean became more and more lovely with every added week of her deepening womanhood.

"Isn't she gloriously beautiful?" whispered Dell.

"Who? Jean?" I whispered back.

She nodded, and I did not answer her question, for just then the ceremony began.

No one had taken a third glance, since their en-

trance, at the groom and his helper, Elsie's brother George. They were immaculately "got up" for the occasion, of course—"shusst like dey shumped a band-box oudt, undt no vind slitrike vere dey vas since dot," Mrs. Weber was heard to remark during supper. But stern custom forbids men to array themselves in anything other than their regular black, gray, or brown, and white—even on their wedding-day; so a couple of comprehensive glances takes in their whole outfit.

But all eyes were on Norman for a moment, as he held the hand of the strong-hearted girl who had been true to him during the years of his wild wanderings from the paths of right, and reverently promised to be to her all that the sweet and solemn relationship upon which they were entering requires of a true man.

There was a barely perceptible flutter of surprise all through that portion of the crowd that was near enough to see and hear what went on (for try as we would, we couldn't get them quite all into the room) when, for the first time since he had come among them, Mr. Brown omitted to require the bride to promise to obey her husband. It would have been a mere matter of form in this case—interpret the word as you will—but Norman, loving and reverencing his staunch, strong-willed little bride as not many men do, owing to the experience through which they had passed, had insisted upon its being left out; and so it was.

"Sorry there isn't another McIvan boy grown

up," Dell whispered in my ear. "I believe I wouldn't mind marrying him myself if there was."

A few minutes later there was a general stir. The short, concluding prayer was over, and friends were flocking forward with their congratulations. After giving the newly-made Mrs. McIvan my kindest greeting, I turned to clasp Norman's hand; but he smothered the good wishes on my lips by a very hearty and brotherly kiss.

"Treat us alike, Daisy," he said, gaily.

Now came the hour of business. All those people were to be fed and waited upon, and that meant work, and lots of it. While the first tables were being filled, Mrs. Smith bustled up to me, exclaiming:

"Daisy, dear, will you run into that room there and see about those things? They're lying about anywhere, and I'm afraid some of them will be broken. Your place is near the other end of the first table, this way, I'll keep it for you."

I went as directed, and with the help of Angus, who came to look for me, soon had the dozens of presents safely arranged on the tables, which had been carried there for their reception. Elsie and Norman were two of Pine Lake's most popular young people, and had been treated to as generous an array of gifts as had surprised Angus and me on the first evening of our visit. Most of the gifts were useful articles.

When we had finished our task, we found everybody waiting for us at the table, and soon the meal was in full progress.

I was glad when it was over, and the great bride's-cake had been cut. I knew that Mrs. Smith and her two helpers, Bessie and Jessie, needed Dell and me badly, though they had insisted upon our sitting down at the first table.

The Rev. Mr. Brown was compelled, to his regret, to go home immediately after supper, on account of the illness of his wife, and having said good-bye to him at the door Dell and I went to work with the others, and among us we soon had the tables ready for the next set of hungry people.

It was late in the evening when we piled up the last lot of dirty dishes in the wash-tub, and set it under a table to wait till the next morning. Some of the boys took the long table to pieces and carried the planks and trestles outside. Then the plank-seats were ranged round the walls, the floor was hastily swept, and the woodshed was ready for fun.

And fun we had, for the next three hours. Even the older men and women joined in the jolly games, and we kept them going without cessation till after midnight. Then the shed was fitted up with rows of plank seats, and when everybody was seated a lunch was served, after which we elected a chairman, and the programme began.

In the crush of the evening we had managed to introduce Dell to most of the young people, and she had speedily made for herself a place among them, in her usual free-and-easy style. She became quite a favorite, and found herself in great demand. Mr. Travell, in particular, being very assiduous in

his attentions and barefaced in his flattery; but Dell would not listen to him.

Then did Mr. Travell betake himself to Jean, and pour a few compliments into her unwilling ear, until Dell's turn in the game was over, and he once more made his way to her side.

"See here, Brother Travell," she exclaimed, at last, laughing, as she beheld him again, "I can't take any more sweet things to-night. Give your surplus taffy to Daisy, here. She's used to such speeches from her own good man. I'm not, and neither my brain nor my stomach can stand any more."

So saying, she took refuge behind father, and peeping over his shoulder received the disappointed fellow's assurance that she was heartless with a merry grimace.

Father had been in Mr. McIvan's charge all evening, and had become acquainted with nearly every person present. When the moment arrived for the choice of a chairman, Mr. Smith, senior, arose and proposed "the gentleman they had all been so pleased to become acquainted with, and who was just the sort of gentleman they had all expected he would be from knowin' his daughter. He had much pleasure, then, in proposing Mr. Murphy."

There were a dozen seconds in a moment, and father had to take his place in the doorway between the house and the woodshed, in which nearly all the guests were assembled, and make his little speech. Then, amid much applause, he was handed the programme, a wholly impromptu arrangement, and the entertainment began.

The new organ had been carried out, and placed near the doorway, so we had plenty of music, instrumental and vocal, and also a goodly number of recitations. Everyone who could sing or recite, ever so little, took part, and everybody enjoyed it all immensely. Dell sang one of her laughable songs and brought down the house. She had a splendid soprano voice, and that night she sang even better than usual. Encores were so pressing and so deafening that she went back, but, instead of another comic selection, she sang softly and tenderly that old, old love-song, "Will you love me when I'm old?"

As I rose from the organ when she had finished, I noticed Norman's eloquent look, as he nodded ever so slightly to his smiling little bride, and, smiling a little myself, I returned to my seat—to be met with a surreptitious hand-squeeze from my own husband, who, I think, will never be so long married as to forget that he is still a lover.

Next moment he had to go forward to make his impromptu speech, which was uproariously applauded.

Then father smilingly announced that "Miss Murphy" was to be called upon for something, and, amid much laughter, I arose. Not knowing that my name was there, I was at a loss to know just what was expected of me until someone called out, "A song! A song! Miss Murphy!"

Father suggested one of his favorite Irish songs, and being encored—not for the excellence of my

singing—but because my audience happened to like me, I sang, at Father McIvan's request, one of the old Scotch ballads that Scotchmen love.

The programme had about reached its close when our chairman, looking a little mystified, announced a "Blue Ribbon Address."

That noble Blue Ribbon Society to the front again! Two of its members were married; and though every other individual member had handed in a token of regard, the society, as a whole, had its address and its gift to offer. So the bridal pair had to stand and face the crowd, while a girl Blue Ribboner read a very friendly and appreciative address, and one of the boys presented them with a very fine hanging-lamp.

Then—to his anguish—Norman had to reply. He got over his embarrassment after the first couple of sentences, though, and gave us a very entertaining little speech. When he had been duly applauded, father began to say that the programme had come to an end, with the exception of "God Save the Queen," but immediately the voice of a young man who was seated on the cool cooking-stove, sang out a request for "another song from Miss Franklin."

A round of cheers ensued; then a steady clapping of hands and peremptory cries of "Platform! Platform!" So, much against her will, Dell had to sing again. As I sat down to the organ she whispered: "Play 'Good-bye, God bless you!'"

It was a touching little farewell song, not very widely known, and she sang it so well as to bring another chorus of "encores."

"God be with you!" she whispered, and as I struck the opening chords, she stepped forward and lifted her hand, with a hearty, "Everybody sing," that brought the folks to their feet in a moment, and the very rafters rang with the hearty good-will of that grand song-prayer that seemed to find its echo in every heart.

"Till we meet at Jesus' feet."

Little did we think that one of our number would indeed kneel at His feet and behold His face before the dawn of the morrow.

"God Save the Queen" followed, and I almost wished the dear old lady could have heard those Pine Lake people singing, with such whole-souled loyalty, Britain's daily prayer.

We who expected to start for Westfield the next afternoon would need all the sleep we could get during the remaining hours of darkness, so we at once began to prepare for leaving.

As Angus helped his mother into the buggy at the door, I thought her face looked somewhat drawn, as if she were in pain, but she said nothing. She had been lying down most of the night, and the drive from home was so very short that she could scarcely be very much fatigued.

Mr. McIvan insisted on taking father home in the buggy with them, so that there was only Jean, Dell, Angus, and I to walk across the fields home, the younger ones having gone shortly after supper. Dell and I were just starting for the bedroom to don our warmer dresses, when Peter and Mr.

Travell waylaid us, with different purposes in view, Peter drew me aside, and while he a-hemmed and hesitated, I heard Mr. Travell, just beside me:

"May I have the extreme pleasure of walking home with you, Miss Franklin?"

"No, thank you, Mr. Travell," answered Dell, pleasantly. "I'm not going home until to-morrow, and I much prefer some other means of getting there. It's too far to walk."

"You are even more utterly heartless than Mrs. McIvan," he began, reproachfully; and Dell hastily interrupted, "Don't, Mr. Travell, I beseech of you. I'm not worthy of so much flattery and attention."

She spoke half-laughingly, and half in earnest, and for once the teacher answered without any of the oily flattery in his tones, and with an earnest look straight into her eyes.

"You are very straightforward, Miss Franklin. Compliments seem to take no effect on you, whatever, no matter how they may be intended."

"'A compliment is a lie and a half,' according to a recent authority," laughed Dell, drawing a little nearer to me and looking a trifle uneasy.

"A mistaken authority, I assure you," answered Mr. Travell. "I have been sincere in every one that I have uttered in your presence, Miss Franklin."

"I believe you say the same sweet little nothings to every girl you meet," said Dell, bluntly, in return, looking him straight in the eyes.

"Be that as it may," said the teacher, "I have said no 'sweet little nothings' to you. I never met a young lady before for whom I—"

"Excuse me," said Dell, gently, but decidedly, "you should not speak to me like that. You never met me until this evening, and it's quite unlikely that you will ever see me again. I intend to walk across the fields to-night with Jean and my sister and her husband. That would only take you out of your way, and as I have their company it will not be needful to trouble you. Thank you, and—good-bye."

She held out her hand as she spoke. He took it, and just as Peter began his little speech I heard a sentence to the effect that "this meeting should not be the last if—"

"I've gi'en Jessie my offer, an' she's ta'en it," said Peter, at last, with an effort. "Ye'll need tae coom tae Pine Lake till anither weddin' afore a twal' month, ticher."

Dell passed me, looking flushed and annoyed, as I grasped Peter's hand and congratulated him with a hearty good-will; and Jessie appearing at the moment to bid Peter good-night, I caught her in my arms and kissed her in genuine gladness. That was the best news I had heard since I came to Pine Lake.

CHAPTER XXI.

I WAS just preparing for bed when we were aroused by a hasty knock at our room door, and Dell's voice, exclaiming:

"Daisy—Angus, come, quick! Jean sent me to call you. Mrs. McIvan is very ill."

In an instant we were both dressing. When we reached the bedroom down stairs we found the half-distracted husband with his arms around the sufferer, holding her in a sitting position, while Jean fanned her. Both windows were wide open. Perspiration rolled from her face in great drops and she seemed struggling in agony for breath.

"Go for the doctor—quick, Angus," exclaimed his father the moment we appeared; but the mother shook her head and gasped:

"Norman."

He was out of the house in a moment; and in an incredibly short time was back with his brother and poor little frightened Elsie, all out of breath with her rapid run across the fields.

In the meantime, father had come downstairs. He at once asked if any one had gone for a doctor.

At the mention of the word the sick woman again shook her head, and no one felt like starting on the twenty-five mile drive for the nearest physician against her wish.

When her sons came in and stood by the bedside she smiled, but could not speak.

The terrible struggle for breath lasted for some little time longer, then she became much easier and was able to talk.

"It has come at last, father," she said, looking into his face with a smile. "There's no use going for a doctor. He can't keep death away. Where are all the bairns?"

I hurried out of the room and upstairs for the younger children. Poor little Bruce was hardly awake when I carried him up to the bed, and he opened his sleepy eyes and stared about him wonderingly. The two girls, with wide-open, frightened eyes, came in a moment later. Then, looking around, the mother saw that her children were all present, and asked them to kneel around her. Angus caught my hand and drew me, with little Bruce in my arms, down beside him. Norman knelt with Elsie sobbing by his side, and the others gathered at the other side of the bed. Father and Dell alone remained standing, thinking that she had asked her children to kneel for her last blessing, for that she was dying none of us had any doubt. She motioned to them to kneel with us, and then asked father to pray.

With the ever-present memory of that other triumphant death-bed in his mind, he thanked and praised Him who has conquered death for His redeemed ones, and who alone can make the dark valley radiant with heaven's dawning glory. Then he

asked that the child of God who was even now entering the waters that mortals call the river of death, might feel only the warm waves of the waters of eternal life, that her feet might find solid footing on the Rock of Ages all the way across, and that she might feel beneath her every moment the everlasting arms of Him who has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

Her gentle "Amen," and the subdued sobs of her children were the only sounds to be heard in the room for a few moments. Then, laying a hand on the head of each in turn, beginning with Jean, she blessed us.

Surely the gratitude she expressed to God for her loving and faithful elder daughter will linger with our Jean as a blessed memory all through life.

Then she turned to Janet and Mary. One by one, the dying hand was laid on each head, and the failing, faltering voice breathed the mother's last prayer and blessing. For these younger girls her heart went out in prayer that they might become pure and earnest Christian women.

When she came to the wayward son who had caused her so many tears and prayers of sorrow and anxiety, he sobbed aloud, and she patted his head gently, as she said:

"God bless richly and grandly my prodigal boy who has come home to Thee. Thou knowest what a comfort he has been to me this year, dear Father. Bless him, as my heart blesses him and his young

wife. Then they shall be blessed indeed in their souls and in all their ways."

The hand rested on Elsie's bowed head as she mentioned her name. Then I felt a quiver go through the strong frame of my husband, as the mother said:

"Angus, my first and dearly-loved boy, may the richest blessings the Father has to give crown your life with happiness and usefulness. God bless you, my son; and God bless your wife. May you both dig deeper in the mines of priceless riches, and find yourselves filled anew each day with all the fulness of God."

As the unsteady hand lay for a moment on my head, I felt that with its touch came the assurance of the blessings she asked for us.

Then she touched little Bruce's cheek; and the child, dimly realizing that something was taking place, though what, he could not understand, crept up on the bed until his head lay against her.

"Mamma, what's wrong?" he asked, with his little lip quivering pitifully.

"Mamma's going to Jesus, Brucie," she answered, smoothing his tumbled curls. "Be a good boy and love Jesus always. Then you'll come to mamma some day. God bless my baby boy," she added, with the first tears she had yet shed trickling slowly down her cheeks.

"Will you come for me some day, mamma?" asked the child, beginning to cry.



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"Some day, my pet," she said, gently. Then, when she had kissed little Bruce, she turned her head and held out her hand to father; and as he clasped it in his she said, with a rare, sweet smile:

"I'm so glad I've met you. I'll tell the dear wife when I meet her over there. I'll know her, even if I didn't meet her here. Good-bye."

Then she turned, with eyes brimming over, to her husband, who still held her in his arms, while he vainly strove to stifle his sobs.

"Good-bye, darling," she said, as he held her, and gazed into her eyes as if he would hold her back from the hand of death itself.

"God has given us a long and happy married life, dear," she went on. "Let us thank Him for that. Death is not hard. It's all brightness and peace. God comfort you, love."

She lay for a long while with her head on his shoulder, looking into his face; then, as her breath began to come shorter and shorter, she looked around, and in one gasping sentence asked Dell to sing, "Nearer, my God, to Thee."

Never in her life before had my sister sung so sweetly. Surely one of the angels who hovered about that bed must have lent her a little of heaven's melody for the time being. Her grand, pure voice seemed to fill the room and lift our souls nearer and ever nearer, in the presence of the Almighty Father.

As she sang the last stanza, the eyes of the dying woman were raised, as though she, too, like my mother, saw something that we could not see; and

her lips moved as though repeating with the singer the words of the hymn :

“And when on joyful wing,
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upward I fly.
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee.”

As the sweet voice ceased, she whispered something that none of us could hear but her husband.

“She wants you to sing, ‘Safe in the arms of Jesus,’” he said, brokenly.

Tenderly and triumphantly, the grand old hymn arose, that has been the stay and comfort of so many dying saints.

“Hark! ’tis the voice of angels,
Borne in a song to me,
Over the fields of glory,
Over the jasper sea.”

The light increased on the face of the dying one, as she whispered to her husband, “I hear them, sweetheart.”

“Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe from corroding care,
Safe from the world’s temptations,
Sin cannot harm me there.”

Dell omitted the last half of that stanza—because, as she said afterwards, she didn’t believe that a woman with a face like Mother McIvan’s ever did

doubt God—and softly sang the chorus. While she was singing the last verse we who knelt, watching that peaceful face, saw the smile brighten and grow sweeter, as her eyes sought the face of her husband, and then looked upward, again and again.

“ Jesus, my heart’s dear refuge,
Jesus, who died for me,
Firm on the Rock of Ages,
Ever my trust shall be.
Here let me wait with patience,
Wait till the night is o’er,
Wait till I see the morning,
Break on the golden shore.

Safe in the arms of Jesus——”

“ Jesus,” said the voice from the bed, strong and clear, and Dell stopped singing; for, with that Name on her tongue, Mother McIvan had entered upon the life eternal.

A little bird twittered at the open window, and the daylight began to brighten, making the lamp-light dim and uncertain. In a double sense “ the night was o’er ”; but the light that dawned on us was not to be compared with the morning that she beheld “ on the golden shore.”

I lifted the sobbing child from the bed and tried to quiet him. Then Dell took him and the two younger girls out of the room (for their cries of “ mother ” were heartrending), and putting my arms around my husband’s neck, whispered words of love and comfort.

A moment later he rose, and true to his unselfish nature, put aside his own grief to comfort his father

in his greater sorrow. With gentle words he persuaded him to relinquish his clasp of the dear form; and, gently laying it back upon the pillow, he closed the dim eyes and drew his father away out of the room.

Nothing could hush the passionate grief of the boy, who, but a few hours since had been the proud and happy hero of the wedding-feast. He kept saying between his great, choking sobs:

"Oh, it's hard for us all; but I'm the only one of the lot who ever cost her an anxious hour. I helped to kill her."

At length Angus, leaving his father with mine, out in the cool, fresh air of the morning, came back just in time to hear the last bitter sentence. With tears choking his utterance, he bent over his brother, and putting an arm about his shoulders, said gently:

"You know she had that heart trouble long before you—gave her any anxiety, Norman. You know she often said that the change in her wayward boy had lengthened her days. I believe it did; certainly it has cheered her and helped her during the last months of her life, and comforted her in dying."

Elsie, the bride of a few hours, now weeping with her husband, coaxed him from the room. Then Angus went and lifted Jean from the floor, where she sat with her head buried in the bed-clothes, heeding nothing that we could say to her.

"Jean, you mustn't," he said, firmly. "If ever you needed to be strong and brave, the time is now. Don't give way like this. Mother wouldn't

have believed it of you, Jeanie, lass; now when we all need you so much."

He had struck the right chord; and, with one pitiful look at the calm face on the pillow, she took up her burden—choked back her own tears, and went with him to help soothe their heart-broken father.

And I was alone with the dead. As I stood looking down upon the calmly smiling features, through my whole being again and yet again seemed to sound that Name of all names most sweet and powerful—the name of our Redeemer—"Jesus."

Three times, within the last few months, had I witnessed the departure of a human soul, and each had gone out with that Name on its lips, as the last word uttered in this life, and the first in the life to come. Call it a coincidence if you will, you who neither know Him nor call upon Him. But it surely goes to prove that in life present and eternal Jesus is the "all and in all" of the human race, for whom He gave His precious life, and for whom He "ever intercedeth at His Father's throne."

As I knelt again by the side of the dead in the gray dawn of the morning, my heart cried out in the words which one of old heard, sounding from the tongues of every living creature:

"'Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.'"

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