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LIFE IN A PARSONAGE

OR  
*LIGHTS AND SHADOWS*  
*OF THE ITINERANCY.*

BY  
W. H. WITHERDIN, D. D.







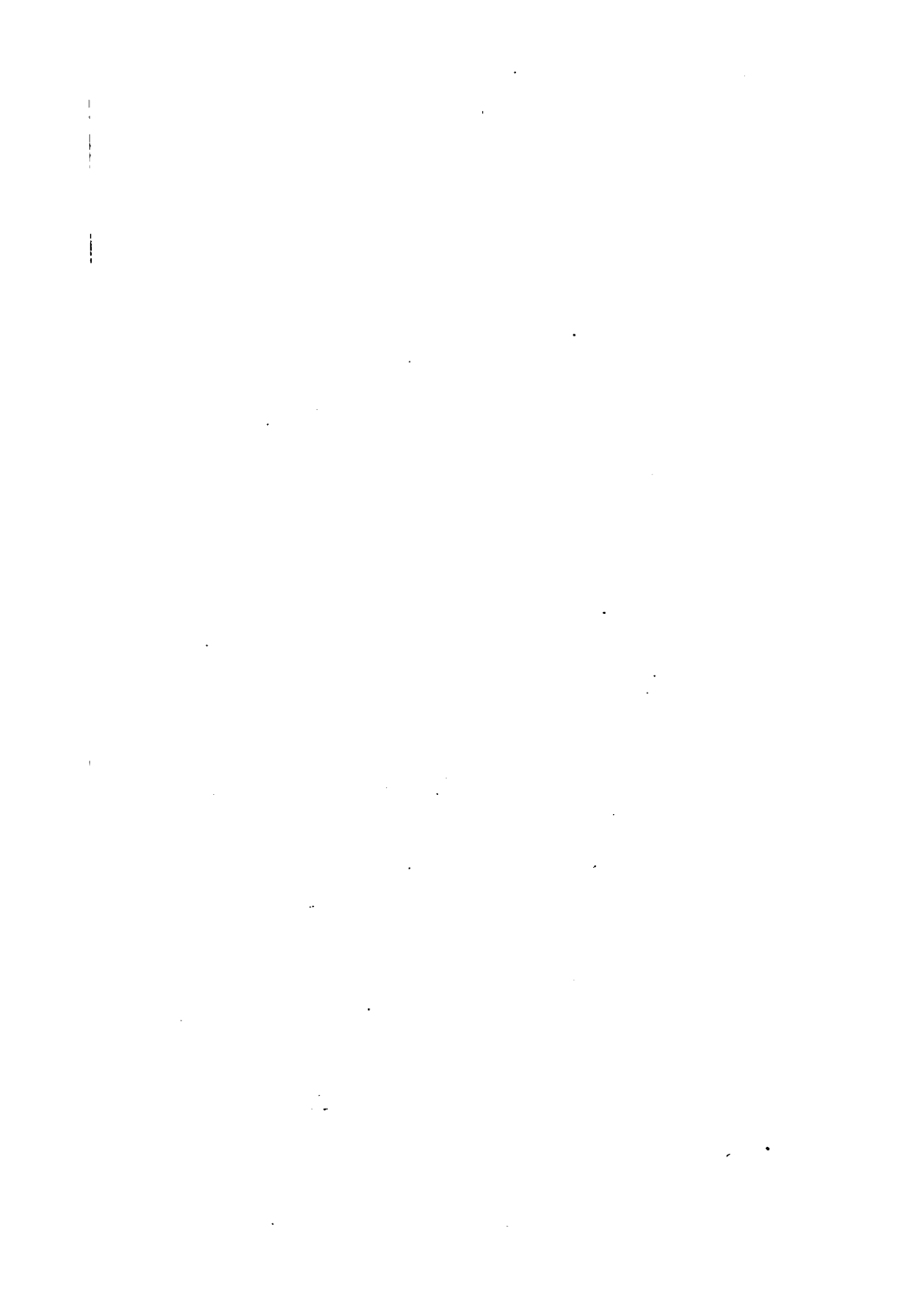
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5. The fifth part of the document provides a summary of the overall findings and recommendations. It emphasizes the need for continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of the implemented measures.





"She had accepted his invitation to share with him a sunset sail upon the lake."—Page 12.

# THE IN A FALSE CLAIM

BY

W. G. B. B. B.

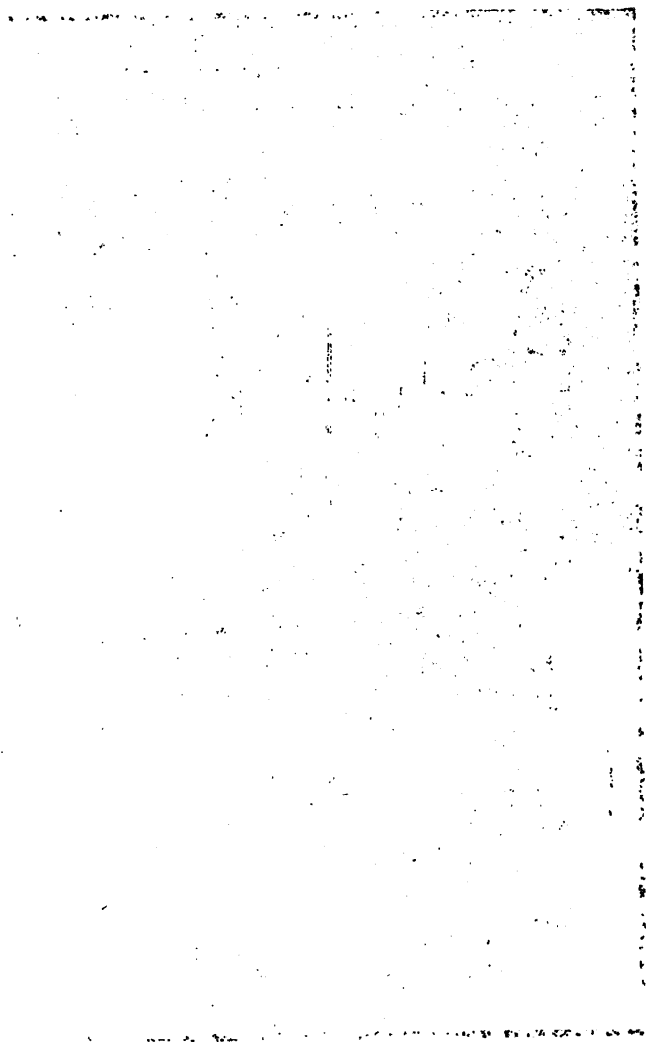


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1885.

1885.





# LIFE IN A PARSONAGE;

OR

Lights and Shadows of the Itinerancy.

BY

W. H. WITHROW, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF

"THE KING'S MESSENGER; OR, LAWRENCE TEMPLE'S PROBATION," "VALERIA,  
THE MARTYR OF THE CATACOMBS," ETC.

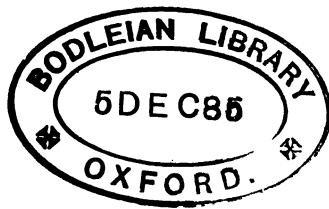


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# LIFE IN A PARSONAGE;

OR,

*LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF THE ITINERANCY.*

---

## CHAPTER I.

### FIRST GLIMPSE OF FAIRVIEW.

“She is most fair, and thereunto  
Her life doth rightly harmonize.”

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

IT was the close of a sultry summer day; not a breath of air was astir, and the leaves hung as if lifeless from the trees. A feeling of languor seemed to pervade all nature, vast masses of thunderous-looking clouds were piled up almost to the zenith, and their snowy and golden heights and dark ravines were brought into sharp contrast by the light of the setting sun. Ever broader grew the shadows, and afar off could be heard the sullen rolling of the thunder.

“O, Lawrence, drive on faster! We shall be caught in the rain.”

The speaker was a fair young matron, with soft brown eyes and a wealth of chestnut hair. She was enveloped from head to foot in the voluminous folds of a

linen "duster," but even that could not disguise the grace of her slight and girlish figure. Her companion was a tall spare young man with a fair complexion, embrowned by the sun, and with hair of the sort politely known as "sandy." He was neither an Apollo nor an Antinous, although one might imagine that he possessed the combined manly beauty of both, to judge by the love-lit look with which his young wife regarded him.

"Jessie is going as fast as she ought this sultry day, after our long drive," he said. Nevertheless he touched his active little mare lightly with the whip, and the willing creature put forth extra speed which carried them swiftly over the ground. The vehicle in which they rode was a somewhat old-fashioned, but comfortable, covered carriage; and he who was addressed as Lawrence drew up a leathern apron to protect them both from the threatened storm.

"Are we getting near there?" asked the lady with some little anxiety of tone.

"It can't be more than a mile or two," replied her husband. "From the top of yonder hill we ought to be able to see Fairview."

"I hope it will correspond with its name, when we do see it," said the young wife. "I confess I am half afraid to meet so many strangers." And the words, which began with an effort at a laugh, ended with something very like a sigh.

"Cheer up, Edith dear! They will receive you not like strangers, but like old friends. See what it is to be a preacher's wife. You have friends made for you beforehand."

"Yes, I know," said the lady, "but I miss my old friends for all that. Do you think they will like me, Lawrence?"

"Like you! of course they will like you. They can't help it, you know." And as there was no envious eye to witness the act, he gave her a kiss on the spot to emphasize the remark.

“Well, there is one I know who will,” said the young wife, between smiles and blushes, happy in her husband’s love; “and so long as *he* does, I am perfectly content.” And then, as they reached the crest of the hill, she sprang to her feet and cried, “O, Lawrence! isn’t that glorious?” and she stood with dilating eyes and quickened breath, drinking in the beauty of the scene.

And a beautiful scene it was, well worthy such keen appreciation. For five-and-twenty miles before their eyes stretched one of the loveliest lakes of even this land of lovely lakes—the Lac de Baume, as the first French explorers had named it from the wealth of balsam foliage by which it was surrounded—like a sapphire in a setting of emerald. Numerous wooded headlands jutted out into the lake, and several rocky islands, clothed with richest verdure, studded its azure expanse, while broad uplands, covered with fields of ripening grain, swept to the far horizon. In a valley between two richly cultivated hills nestled the village of Fairview—a single, broad, elm-shaded street, with pleasant villas and gardens climbing the slopes on either side. Over all hung the vast rain-cloud, black in the shadow, golden in the sun, and spanned by a glorious rainbow, where the trailing fringes of the storm swept up the lake.

The young wife clapped her hands in almost child-like glee. “Could the young earth have been more fair when God pronounced it very good, and placed thereon—

‘Adam, the goodliest man of men since born  
His sons; the fairest of her daughters, Eve’?

And of all her sons and daughters were any ever happier than we? And that glorious bow is God’s pledge of faithfulness to His covenant.”

“It looks indeed an Eden,” said Lawrence. “Pray God the serpent mar not its beauty and its peace. ‘Seed-time and harvest shall not cease.’ Lo, now the



harvest of souls awaits the sickle. God give me grace to thrust in the Gospel sickle, for the fields indeed are white unto the harvest."

While the happy pair drive down the long hill to the village, let us briefly indicate who they are, and how they came thus into the field of vision of our story—a sort of *camera obscura* across which shall flit, like pictures in a magic lantern, certain scenes of Canadian social life.





## CHAPTER II.

### A RETROSPECT.

"The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect woman, nobly plann'd."

WORDSWORTH.

LAWRENCE TEMPLE, it will be remembered by readers of *The King's Messenger*, a previous story by the present writer, was an ingenuous Canadian youth, the son of a Methodist preacher, who died, leaving his family, of whom Lawrence, then a mere boy, was the eldest, with very meagre means of support. Eager to help his mother and sisters, and to earn the means of obtaining an education, he went to a lumber camp far up the Mattawa, where he laboured as axeman, teamster, and clerk, with a sturdy strength of character which was the sure guarantee of success. Having earned enough money to pay his way at college for a while, he devoted himself with as much enthusiasm to mental as he had to manual labour, and laid at least the foundation of a broad and liberal education.

The Church of his choice, discerning his gifts and religious graces, laid its hand upon him, and employed him first as a lay preacher, and afterwards as a Missionary amid what was then the wilderness of Muskoka, as a probationer on trial as to his fitness for the regular ministry. His own heart responding to

this call of the Church, and to what he felt was a call of God, to preach the Gospel, he laboured with great diligence and success in the hard work of a pioneer preacher.

On this backwoods circuit lived a family of singular refinement and culture, that of Mr. Norris, a village schoolmaster. The fair Edith Norris, the assistant of her father in the school, a young lady of rare charms of person and of mind, made a deep impression upon the heart of the young preacher. Although he cherished her image in his soul as the ideal of all that was loveliest in woman—beauty, culture, piety—yet, as a probationer with his future undetermined, he did not feel at liberty to divulge his feelings or seek to engage her affections. Even after his probation was successfully accomplished and he was ordained to the regular work of the ministry, it was some time before he could ask one who seemed to his chivalric soul almost of a superior order of being, to share the hardships, and trials, and uncertain fortunes of an itinerant Methodist preacher.

But so great was the fascination and inspiration of her society, that he hailed with peculiar joy the occasion of his fortnightly visit to the preaching appointment where dwelt the kindly Norris family, with whom was his home during his transient sojourn. Their house was situated on the banks of the lovely Lake Muskoka, with its islet-studded expanse and rock-ribbed, tree-covered shore. It was a great delight to the young preacher, in whom was a strong poetic sense of beauty, to sail over its glassy surface and to gaze into its crystal depths; and the delight was ten-fold greater if he could on these occasions enjoy the society of the fair Edith Norris.

One lovely summer evening, when the whole western heaven was ablaze with gold, she had accepted his invitation to share with him a sunset sail upon the lake. The tender crescent moon hung low in the sky, and soft Hesper gleamed like a lamp in the casement

of heaven. The spiritual pensiveness of the hour brooded over them like a spell. Every rock and woody cape, every tree and leaf, and the gorgeous clouds of even, and the golden glory of the sunset, were mirrored in the glassy wave.

"Is it not," said the maiden, all her soul glowing in her eyes, "like the sea of glass, mingled with fire, on which stand the redeemed and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, saying, 'Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty'?"

And they talked of the holy city, the new Jerusalem, with its gates of pearl, and streets of gold, and river of water of life; but of the deep desire that was burning in his heart the young man said not a word.

As they walked home, after landing, through the lingering twilight, the whip-poor-will uttered its plaintive cry, and the balmy odours of the forest breathed forth, and Lawrence, gaining courage, perhaps, from the sympathetic aspect of nature, after faltering once or twice, began:

"I wished very much, Miss Norris, to say something when we were on the water, but I thought it ungenerous to take advantage of you when you could not escape; but now that you are almost home, will you let me say it here?"

"I am sure that you would not say anything ungenerous here or elsewhere," replied Edith, trembling a little with a woman's prescience of the great crisis of her life. She knew by the swift intuitions of her heart what his wish would be, and the same monitor revealed what must be her own response.

"I have spoken to your father, who loves you as his life, and have his permission to tell you the great wish of my heart. I wished to ask you," continued the young man, taking her hand as reverently as he would the hand of a saint, "if you would sail with me down the stream of time on the voyage of life, till we, too, reach the haven of everlasting rest, and stand within the Golden City?"

Her hand trembled a little, but she did not remove it from his grasp; and presently in a low soft voice she whispered, "Whither thou goest I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy fortunes shall be mine."

"O, Edith!" exclaimed the young man, a new and strange joy thrilling his soul, "you have made me happier than I dared to hope;" and there in the twilight hush, beneath the beaming stars, the holy compact was sealed that knit two loving souls together for time and for eternity, and in sacred lovers' talk the swift hours passed away.

"Your blessing, mother," said Lawrence, as he led the blushing girl into her parents' presence. "Your daughter has made me rich and happy beyond my utmost dream of joy."

"Bless you, my son," said the matron, printing a kiss upon his forehead, and then folding her daughter in her arms; and the father warmly wrung his hand, saying, "Take her, my son; she has been a good daughter, she will be a good wife."

So these two young lives were brought together like streams which had their sources far asunder, but which after many windings meet, and blend their waters into one, and flow on together to the sea.

Lawrence abated no whit of his zeal and energy in his sacred calling. On the contrary, he preached with unwonted power, and only on the occasions of his regular fortnightly preaching appointments permitted himself the great joy of a visit to the home of his betrothed; the vast extent and many engagements of his circuit employing every other hour.

The stern necessities of the itinerancy, the roughness of the field, and the poverty of the people, often rendered it impossible for these backwoods missions to support any but a single man. It was so in this case, and Lawrence, cheered by the great hope shining star-like in the future, devoted all his energies to toil and study in his great life-work.

One Saturday, when he reached Elms, as the pleasant

home of the Norrises was named—it was in the fall, and the whole forest was ablaze with the bright crimson, and gold, and russet, and purple of the trees, arrayed like Joseph in their coat of many colours—he was met in the porch by the fair Edith. As she stood, framed, like an exquisite picture, by the crimson foliage of the Virginia creeper, she exclaimed: “I have news for you, my *preux chevalier*; father has given me leave to go to college for a year, perhaps for longer. It is what I have been longing for, I cannot tell you how much.”

“But how do you know that *I* will give consent?” replied Lawrence, with rather a crestfallen air.

“O, I am sure of that,” replied Edith. “You will be glad that I have a chance to go. We girls ought to go to college just as well as you men. If I am to be a help-meet to you in your work,” she added, blushing prettily, “I want to be able to keep up with your studies and reading.”

“You are right, as usual,” said the young man; “the chief advantage of college is not what one learns while there, but learning how to learn afterward—the systematic habits of study, the mental drill and training of the faculties. Education is the work of a lifetime—something always going on, but never ended. We will, by God’s grace, pursue this glorious object through the long future, keeping step side by side through the march of life, and then through the grand for ever. For eternity, I believe, will be a continual unfolding of all the powers and faculties of the being in the light of God’s countenance, as a flower unfolds petal after petal of its blossoms in the light of the sun.”

“And yet,” said Edith, “how many waste their lives and dwarf their faculties; by neglect of the God-given powers within them! And how many are cramped by circumstances, and denied the opportunity of growth and development!”

“Yes,” replied Lawrence, “that is true of many, the toiling men and women who bear the world’s burden

and care, and who have had scant schooling, if any, in their youth. To such the services of God's house are almost the only influence to lift them above the sordid cares and grovelling thoughts of a life bounded by the narrow horizon of time. Yet the younger generation, thanks to our common schools, within the reach of all, have placed in their hands the key which can unlock all the stores of knowledge in the universe. If they have awakened within them the *sacra fames*—the sacred hunger and thirst for knowledge, they can conquer every difficulty. Any education that is worth anything in this world must be largely *self*-education. Masters and tutors can only help one to help himself."

"Yes, I know that," said Edith. "After a single term of French, I read the whole of Corneille during a summer vacation. I used to read thirty pages every morning before breakfast. At school it would have taken a whole year."

"All you want," said Lawrence, "is help to help yourself, and that you will get at any college where they understand their business. I once taught a class of girls to read Virgil in a single winter, a thing which often takes two years at college. But there were only six girls in the class, all anxious to learn, and I helped them all I could."

"I've earned some money by teaching, and father is going to help me," said this true-hearted Canadian girl; "and I'm going to the Ladies' College, at Wentworth, for a year or two."

"Well, if you catch the inspiration of my old friend, Dr. Dwight, who is now President of that institution," said Lawrence, mindful of his own college days, "you will receive an intellectual impetus which you will feel for the rest of your life."



### CHAPTER III.

#### GIRL GRADUATES AND COLLEGE HALLS.

“ In shouts, and knells, and dying throes,  
And merry marriage chimes,  
The plastic Present forward goes  
To shape the aftertimes.”

REV. SAMUEL WRAY.

SO our young friend soon found herself duly enrolled with a hundred others in the large and flourishing Ladies' College of Wentworth, under the charge of the Rev. Dr. Dwight. At first she felt somewhat lonesome, although forming part of so large a family. The other girls were a little reserved in manner, and all of them scrutinized her with that feminine criticism which took in at a glance every item, however minute, of her dress and appearance. These did not seem to give universal satisfaction; for, as she passed through the corridor, she became aware, by a mysterious intuition, that a group of school-girls who were laughing and giggling about the stove were speaking about her. One of these, an American girl whose father had “struck oil” in the Pennsylvania Oil-Dorado, and who wore as much of a stylish New York costume as the school discipline would allow, exclaimed, with a satirical laugh,—

“What a guy! I wonder who's her dressmaker; I believe she made it herself!”

“Where does she come from, anyhow?” asked another.



"From the wilds of Muskoka, I heard some one say," remarked a third.

"Where is that, I wonder?" asked the first.

"O! somewhere back of the north wind," replied a fourth.

"She looks as if she might have come from back of the North Pole," sneered the girl from Oil-Dorado; "I wonder she doesn't wear an Indian blanket. But here she comes; mum's the word," and she demurely assumed a long face as Edith passed by.

The new student could not help hearing enough of these rude remarks to make her feel very uncomfortable. She felt vexed at herself to think that the stinging of such a gnat should irritate her. She thought herself too much of a philosopher to be affected by such shallow chatter. But when does a woman become quite insensible to adverse criticism of her dress and appearance? Certainly our unsophisticated friend had not reached that point.

She soon had the satisfaction, however, in the classrooms, of finding that her hostile critic was much more vulnerable to criticism in a much more important respect. She proved herself ignorant, incapable, ill-trained, and was at or near the foot of almost every class. The superior abilities and training of the new comer soon showed itself in her class standing, and in her rapid progress in study. She soon formed congenial friendships with both teachers and the more thoughtful scholars, which enriched her entire social being. Under the skilful guidance of Dr. Dwight in mental and moral philosophy, and in the fascinating study of science with Professor Rectus, she felt her whole mental horizon expanding day by day, and experienced the unspeakable joy of conscious growth. Nor did her higher nature lack the opportunity of generous nurture. The religious life and services of the institution surrounded her with an atmosphere most favourable to the growth of the moral graces, the result of which she realised in the deepening of her

piety and the richer communion of her soul with God. So the long winter passed rapidly away, the routine of school life broken pleasantly by a visit home at Christmas. Every week came an expected and welcome missive that caused her eye to brighten and her cheek to glow, and filled her heart with sweet imaginings. One day in the leafy month of June came a summons to receive a caller in the reception room. The Conference of the Methodist Church was being held in a neighbouring town, and Mr. Temple could not resist the temptation to seek an interview with his *fiancée*. The good Doctor Dwight, who maintained an Argus-like care of his precious charge, had first to be encountered. But he, after a little good-natured banter, granted the interview sought, and added an invitation to dine in the Institution—an invitation which Temple very gladly accepted. He felt a little disconcerted, however, at being made the target of the hundred pairs of keen and critical eyes which noted at a glance every item of his appearance, dress, and deportment.

By a sort of intuition, known only to female minds, the girls all divined the relation subsisting between the young backwoods preacher and the most accomplished student of the college. Many were the whispered comments at the table, and much was the school-girl gossip that followed, of which had the object of it been aware, his ears would have been uncommonly warm, if there be any truth in the popular adage on the subject. The general verdict was that if he was not very handsome, he looked at least rather "clever;" and if his country-made coat did not particularly adorn his manly figure, he had, at least, a rather distinguished air. The American girl from Oil-Dorado wondered how any one could throw herself away on such an awkward creature, or bear the thought of becoming "a humdrum country parson's wife, to teach stupid girls in a Sunday School, and make possets for all the sick poor of the parish."

This style of philippic, however, did not meet with much favour. Girls, for the most part, are more merciless critics of their own than of the opposite sex; and while some thought that their schoolmate might "do better," others thought that she had "done well" to accept him; with which I presume the parties most concerned were quite content. The slight brusqueness which he manifested under a somewhat stern exterior attracted general favour. So, too, the quick, decisive speech and somewhat imperious manner of the President of the college commanded the respect and admiration of all the students—we suppose, because women, however they may protest to the contrary, admire the influence of a strong will; in fact, as one of themselves expressed it, "they like being bossed."

But we must not delay upon these halcyon college days. They passed all too quickly, and even the tasks which looked irksome at the time were looked back to with a lingering regret. The months spent in this seemingly monotonous routine were regarded by Edith Norris as amongst the most profitable of her life. She experienced such a mental development and received such an intellectual stimulus as gave her greater power of study, and keener appreciation of its pleasures and privileges for the rest of her life. When she left those college halls, it was not without a dislocating wrench in the severance of many tender ties of friendship. Many were the exchanges of keepsakes and photographs, and the pledges of faithful correspondence and mutual visits. Even the haughty damsel from Oil-Dorado wept a few furtive tears, and declared that she had heartily recanted her unkind judgment, and with a very effusive embrace gave Edith, as a parting gift, a handsome locket, containing some of the donor's hair, with the injunction:—

"Now, you must wear this upon the happy day, so that you will be sure to think of me; I wish I were only more worthy of your thought."

"Thanks, dear," said Edith, kissing her fondly;

"we have learned to know each other better. You must come and see me in my new home."

"Be sure I will if ever I can," said the impulsive girl; and, amid a chorus of "good-byes," Edith rode away.

Although life was opening so beautiful and so bright before her, it was not without a twinge of regret that she turned her back upon the dear old college halls. These thoughts, however, were soon forgotten in the anticipation of deeper and richer joys.

It comes not within our scope to describe the modest marriage ceremony at the Elms. It was observed with an innocent hilarity which might have marked the marriage feast of Cana of Galilee. And the Master Himself was present, sanctifying and blessing the union there formed. With mingled smiles and tears the parents saw the daughter of many hopes and prayers pass from the shelter of their roof to meet new responsibilities, and doubtless new trials as well as new joys. After a short wedding journey, in which Edith enjoyed the rare delight of travel amid some of the fairest scenes of her native land, the youthful pair addressed themselves with the enthusiasm of Christian confidence and zeal to their life-work.

We have now brought down our narrative to the period of the opening of our story. We must postpone to another chapter the account of the reception of the young pastor and his wife at the village of Fairview, and of their initiation into their new relations, and into itinerant life and work.





## CHAPTER IV.

### THE RECEPTION.

“Play thy part, and play it well ;  
Joy in thine appointed task ;  
And if pride or flesh rebel,  
Courage of thy Father ask.”—EMMA TATHAM.

“WELCOME to Fairview!” exclaimed a cheery voice, as Lawrence and his wife drove up to the broad piazza’d house of Father Lowry, which they had been invited to make their home for a time. The cheery voice belonged to a large cheery-looking man with twinkling black eyes, iron-grey hair, and merry wrinkles written all over his broad cheery face.

“An’ is this the Missis?” he went on, after shaking Lawrence with immense energy by the hand. “Blessings on your bonny face, Ma’am; the blessing that maketh rich be upon you! But hurry into the house, we are all waiting for you. You’re just in time to ‘scape the shower;” and he gallantly helped Edith out of the carriage.

“Here, Tom, take the preacher’s horse, and give him of the best,” he said to a long, lank, shy-looking youth who was taking furtive glances at the new arrivals.

Passing through an elm-shaded gateway and up a gravelled walk, bordered on either side by fragrant

June roses, they were met on the verandah by a matronly-looking woman, who grasped Lawrence's hand with both of hers, and said: "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Then throwing her arms around Edith, she kissed her with motherly tenderness on both cheeks and said, "Welcome, my dear, to our hearts and home. Here are some of our folk come to wish you joy and bid you welcome;" and she introduced several blushing girls and some of the village matrons who were present to assist at the reception.

Father Lowry meantime introduced Lawrence to a few of the circuit officials. "This is Uncle Jabez, our class-leader; he is everybody's uncle, you know. And this is Father Thomas, our local preacher; he will be your right-hand man. And this is Brother Manning, the circuit steward; he will be one of your best friends."

Thus Lawrence was made acquainted with his future allies and co-workers in the cause of God, and in turn introduced them to his wife. Personally the new comers felt far more at home than they could have imagined it possible to become so soon among strangers. They felt not only that they were among friends, but that they were knit together by bonds of spiritual kinship far stronger than the ordinary ties of friendship.

"The new preacher and his wife must be tired and hungry after their long ride," said the matronly Mrs. Lowry; "let us have supper;" and she bustled about, "on hospitable thoughts intent," to serve the bountiful repast prepared in honour of the occasion.

Nothing tends more to promote acquaintance and good fellowship than the enjoyment of a common hospitality. Under the genial influences of tea and cake the last ice of timidity or reserve melts away. The good farmer folk asked Lawrence many questions about his last circuit, about the soil, the crops, and other bucolic matters, and seemed somewhat surprised

that he knew apparently as much about rural subjects as themselves. The matrons praised their hostess's good tea and discussed domestic matters, and kept up meanwhile a pretty keen and critical observation of the young preacher's wife—for the most part apparently with very favourable results. In listening to the conversation, even the most bashful boy became unconscious of his shyness and general awkwardness, and the most timid girl forgot to blush when that awful dignitary, the new preacher, asked her some question, in order to "draw her out" and get acquainted.

After tea, as the rain had cleared off, and the fresh fragrance of the roses drifted in at the open windows, in the long twilight several of the village friends dropped in. Edith felt a pleasant sense of enjoyment at the manner in which their kind hosts seemed to take possession of them, and introduce them as "our new preacher," and "our new preacher's wife." It was not without some feelings of embarrassment that she found herself the object of so much interest, especially when a somewhat severe-looking person, old Mrs. Marshall, in a black bombazine gown, said to her, "You must be president of our Dorcas Society," and a chorus of matrons echoed, "O yes, and we want you to lead the young people's class, and take charge of the female prayer-meeting."

"Wait till you get settled a bit, dear," said Mrs. Lowry, "and see where you are, and get to know the people; then you'll take a class in the Sunday School, won't you?"

"I am sure I will be glad to do anything I can," faltered Edith, a little disconcerted by this array of honours and duties thrust upon her. "But I have had no experience except as a Sunday School teacher."

"O, we shall look up to you as our leader in every good word and work," said Mrs. Marshall, smoothing her silk apron. "As the preacher's wife, you will be expected to take your place as his help-mate, you know."

To two persons Edith felt her heart drawn out in loving sympathy—the kind motherly Mrs. Lowry, and a pale delicate girl with violet eyes and golden hair, Carrie Mason by name, the only daughter of an invalid and widowed mother.

“You’ll come and see my mother soon, won’t you?” shily whispered, in the twilight, the timid girl; “she is sick and cannot come to see you.”

“Yes, dear,” replied Edith, kissing her smooth white forehead. “It shall be the first call I will make,” and they fell into loving converse, and soon felt like very old friends indeed.







## CHAPTER V.

### PUBLIC OPINION.

“Opinion is that high and mighty dame  
Which rules the world, and in the mind doth frame  
Distastes or likings; for in human race  
She makes the fancy various as the face.”

HOWELL.

“WELL, I must say,” remarked Mrs. Manning, the small but bustling wife of the circuit steward, to her neighbour, Mrs. Marshall, the tall ascetic lady who wore the costume of severe black, as they walked home together through the elm-shaded street—“Well, I must say she is not a bit stuck up; if she hev been to college, as they say she hev, though for my part what call girls hez to go to college I can’t see. There’s my girls, now, they’ve never been to no college, an’ more capable girls, and better housekeepers and butter-makers you won’t find nowhere, if I do say it myself.”

“That’s so, Mrs. Manning,” replied Mrs. Marshall, with a sigh of resignation. “The times is changed since you and I was girls. It’s nothing but music, an’ book larnin’, and fine art now. For my part, I think they just spoils women. The preacher’s wife don’t seem to have a realizin’ sense of her duties and responsibilities; do you think she hev now?”

“O, we mustn’t expect too much at first, you know,”

said the fussy little matron, in a chirping, bird-like manner; "she's only a young thing, and will learn her duty, I make no doubt, under your instruction. You always was famous for guiding the preachers' wives."

"Well, I feel it an obligation to tell them their duty," said Mrs. Marshall with another sigh. She almost always sighed when she spoke, especially in class-meeting, when she told of her trials and tribulations as a pilgrim through this "howling wilderness," and lamented over the degeneracy of the times.

Mr. Manning and Uncle Jabez, who walked behind the ladies, confined their remarks to the preacher himself, as coming more within their purview than his wife.

"Well, Uncle Jabez, how d'ye think he'll do?" asked the circuit steward, with an air of considerable personal responsibility in "running the circuit," as he was wont to phrase it.

"Well, he seems to have the root of the matter in him, and that's the main thing, I 'low," replied the old man, who was of a sweet, spiritual nature, and always looked at the spiritual aspects of character. "He seems modest, and sensible, and hearty. He shakes hands as if he meant it; and they are hands that have seen hard work, you can tell by the grip of his muscle. He knows how to swing an axe, I 'low." The latter expression, a somewhat common contraction in parts of Canada for "I allow," was evidently, through force of habit, a favourite with the old man.

"O, there's no nonsense about him, you can see that," said the rather more worldly-minded steward; which quality, we suppose, was one of the principal reasons for his appointment to that office. "He've kep' his eyes open. Was right peart at college, I hear tell."

"I don't, as a general thing, think much o' these college-larnt, man-made ministers," said Uncle Jabez; "they is apt to be perky and stuck up, and ain't no

ways as good preachers as some as never see a college. There now was William Ryerson, and Ezra Adams, and Henry Wilkinson, and others of the old pi'neers, who never saw the inside of a college; and yet there's no young men now-a-days can preach like they could, I 'low." The old man, like most of those who are haunted with a feeling that they "lag superfluous on the stage," was rather a *laudator temporis acti*; but the pious sweetness of his spirit prevented any bitterness of expression.

"I guess there's preaching timber in him," said the steward, "if he is like his father, whom I used to hear, years agone, out to the front. An' they say he's a chip off the old block. I think his comin' would have been a main chance for the Fairview Circuit, if it wasn't for his wife; not that I have anything against her—she seems a nice-mannered young thing. But, you know, we didn't expect to be sot off as a separate circuit this year, an' we can't afford to keep a married man. Where's he going to live, I'd like to know?"

"Why can't he and his wife live round among the people?" asked Uncle Jabez. "They'll be expected to visit a great deal. I'm sure they're welcome to stop at my house as often and as long as they like," he went on, in the genial hospitality of his heart. "That's the way the old pi'neers used to do."

"Yes," said Mr. Manning, with a dubious expression, "but times is changed, and not for the better, either, as far as I see. Preachers expect parsonages, and furniture, and everything fixed up slick, now-a-days."

"Well, it would be nice if we had one," said genial Uncle Jabez; "I'm sure I wouldn't grudge it to 'em. The labourer is worthy of his hire, an' they do have to labour purty hard. The Lord'll provide, some way, Brother Manning, doan't you be afeared," said this optimistic philosopher.

"Yes, but the Lord works by means," remarked, a little testily, the more practical steward. "He won't work a miracle to do what we can do for ourselves,"

“Doan’t be afeared, Brother Manning,” said the old man, “the Lord’ll provide, that’s my motter—‘The Lord’ll provide.’” And the two Church officials parted for the night.

But the steward, who felt the financial responsibility of the circuit resting, to a large extent, upon himself, passed a rather restless time. Probably the Chancellor of the Exchequer of a kingdom, in prospect of a deficit of the budget, might have been less anxious and disquieted than this honest farmer, who did not see how the young and comparatively weak circuit, of which he was financial minister, was going to meet its increased obligations. It had, as has been intimated, previously formed part of a large and influential circuit, and was quite willing to remain so. But the expansion of the work had led to its being “set off.” There was, as yet, no parsonage, nor any provision for a married man; and this caused the officials considerable perplexity when the Chairman of the district wrote that Conference had found it impossible to send a young man, but that the minister whom it did send would be found just the man to “build up the circuit, and prove a great success.” Like loyal Methodists, the officials resolved to make the best of it, to give the new preacher a warm welcome, and do as well for him as they could.

The members of the society and congregation expressed, without reservation, their delight at having a minister all to themselves. It added, in no small degree, to the dignity of the village to become the head of a circuit, with the prospect of a parsonage and resident minister’s family. It added a new element of social interest to the little community of Fairview. This general feeling found expression in the words of Carrie Mason, as she recounted to her mother the events of the reception, and answered her questions about the new minister’s wife.

“O, mother,” said the impulsive girl, “she is just perfectly splendid. She is as nice as ever she can be.

She kissed me, just like a sister, and promised that her very first visit would be to come and see you. I'm sure I shall love her ever so much. And she's going to lend me some of her books. And though she's been to college, and knows ever so much, yet she isn't the least bit proud. And she is to teach in the Sunday School. She'll have all the grown girls in the village. It will be so nice to have a minister's wife of our own to come and see you when you are ill, and everything."

"Yes, dear," said the patient sufferer, "a minister's wife has a very important part to play, and can do a deal of good, when sometimes her husband, no matter how good or how clever, could not. A woman's tact and a woman's heart can comfort the suffering and the sorrowing as nothing else can." And she gave herself up to pleasing anticipations of the congenial society and sympathy of a lady of superior culture and refinement. For, though now in reduced circumstances, Mrs. Mason had once moved in a much higher social rank. The daughter of a British officer, and widow of an accomplished physician, she felt a yearning for intellectual conversation, and sympathy with books, and art, and science, that found slight opportunity for indulgence in the rural community in which, since her husband's death, her lot was cast.





## CHAPTER VI.

### GETTING SETTLED.

“Sweet are the joys of home,  
And pure as sweet; for they,  
Like dews of morn and evening, come  
To wake and close the day.” BOWRING.

WHEN Lawrence found himself alone with his wife, after the reception, he patted her cheek, as he would that of a good child, and said,—

“Well, and how did you like the initiation?”

“It was not quite such an ordeal as I feared,” she laughingly replied; “but, perhaps, the worst has to come yet. I’m sure they were kindness itself; and I love them very much. Do you think they liked me?”

“Of course they did. Didn’t I tell you they couldn’t help it?” And he emphasized the remark as he had done before, while she blushed very prettily at the compliment.

“I’m afraid they expect a great deal from me,” she said, after a pause. “Old Mrs. Marshall—the lady of the rueful countenance, who wore the black bombazine dress, and always sighed when she spoke—laid down my duties pretty thoroughly; I am afraid I shall hardly come up to her expectations.”

“Well, my dear,” said Lawrence, caressingly, “it is I who have married you, and not she; and you will come up to my expectations, I am sure. You will try

to do your duty, I know. It will be a pleasure for us both to labour among such kind-hearted people. I already feel my soul knit to them. Our welcome to this hospitable home could not have been warmer. But we must not wear it out. We must get a home of our own as soon as we can."

"O yes," exclaimed Edith, and she gaily carolled,

" 'Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home :'

I would rather live in the poorest cottage of our own than in a palace belonging to others. Home is woman's kingdom, you know, and I am eager to assume my sceptre and rule you with a rod of iron."

Lawrence laughed as if he were not very much afraid, and then, putting on as much of a look of resignation as he could, he said: "Well, I have put the yoke of bondage on my own neck, and I suppose I must bear it with all the fortitude I can summon. About this home business, however, I fear there may be a little difficulty. It seems there is not a house to be had in the village, except a large dilapidated one on the bluff above the lake. It was built for a mill-owner, and after the mill had sawn up all the timber within reach both mill and house were abandoned, and they have both gone a good deal to rack. I am afraid we should be lost in a large house; and then we have very little to put in it. But if it is at all habitable, we can take up our quarters in the best rooms and use the rest as the outworks of our ruined castle. It will be quite romantic, won't it?"

The next day they set out to have a look at "The Castle," as they called it. Their kind host and hostess strongly remonstrated, and with true warm-hearted Irish hospitality insisted on Lawrence and his wife remaining their guests till a suitable house could be provided.

"We will want to come and see you often," said Edith, "and we don't want you to get tired of us at first."

"Never a fear of that," interrupted the hostess.

"And besides, Mrs. Lowry," Edith went on, "how would you like to be without a home yourself—a real home that you could call your own?"

"True for you, dear," said that motherly soul; "I don't wonder that you want to be mistress of your own home, and I'll be willing to let you go as soon as ever a fit house can be found."

To "The Castle," therefore, Edith and Lawrence went. Though ruinous enough, it was certainly not very romantic. Indeed, so utterly prosaic was it that Edith burst into a laugh, and exclaimed,—

"Another of my *châteaux en Espagne* demolished! No, it certainly is not the least like a castle."

It had been rather a fine house in its time. It stood on a high bluff, commanding a magnificent view for miles of the lake and islands. It was a rambling structure, with a great hall running through the middle, and there were several large apartments on either side, and in the rear. But through disuse and neglect it wore an indescribably dilapidated appearance, and the broken windows looked like the eyeless sockets of a skull. A broad piazza ran around three sides. Just beneath the bluff were the remains of the old dismantled saw-mill, adding still more to the forlornness of the scene.

"Well, my fair chatelaine, what do you think of it?" asked Lawrence, as they explored the tumble-down barracks.

"It is not quite my ideal of 'love in a cottage,' " she laughed, "but it is a place of splendid possibilities. The magnificent view from the piazza might make amends for considerable discomfort indoors. If one half of the house were repaired and put in order, I think it could be made quite habitable."

So Lawrence went to see the agent of the estate, who was somewhat surprised at the request.

"O," he said, "it is not worth much, but I suppose we must ask something, just to retain our title, you know. Suppose we call it a dollar a month?"



Lawrence asked if anything would be done to improve the premises so as to make them worth more rent; but the agent "guessed it wouldn't be worth while, for nobody would be likely to stay there longer than he could help."

At the official meeting of the Church, which was soon held, the project met with slight favour; but no other alternative presented itself, except that proposed by good Uncle Jabez, that the preacher should "board round," like the schoolmaster and "pi'neer preachers" of the olden time. But though some of the board favoured this plan for reasons of economy, yet Lawrence strenuously objected.

"No, brethren," he said, "I've been boarding round for the last six years, and I've nothing to say against it for a single man; but I must have a home, a home of my own, now, I care not how homely."

"Our minister is right," said good Father Lowry; "my house is at his service as long as he likes, and I know yours are, too; but he has a right to one of his own. Till we can build a parsonage, we must make him as comfortable as possible at the Old Mill," by which designation "The Castle" was best known.

So it was arranged that the village carpenter was to repair at least half of the house, and that immediately after "haying" a "bee" was to be made to put the grounds in order. Some furniture—rather plain and not too much of it—was purchased. Some rooms were papered by Lawrence himself. His books were unpacked and put in a book-case, making the best and noblest adornment any room can possess; introducing, even into a cabin, the mighty kings of thought and laurelled priests of poetry. Edith set out some beds of flowers, and draped the windows with tasteful though inexpensive curtains. Some cool summer matting covered the bare floors. Her prize books and parlour bric-a-brac were displayed upon the table. A tinted photograph of the Dresden Madonna—the loveliest of Raphael's works—a chromo of the Pfalzburg on the

Rhine, two water-colour sketches, by her own hand, of the rock scenery of Lake Muskoka, a steel portrait of Wesley, and another of the poet Dante, gave the needed touch of colour to the walls and an air of refinement to the little parlour not surpassed by any in the village. Beauty and elegance depend not so much on the purse as on good taste. A cabinet organ, her father's wedding-gift, with some familiar music, bestowed on the room a still more home-like effect.

"It's just perfectly lovely," said Carrie Mason, who had herself contributed largely to the transformation, to her mother. "It is the prettiest little parlour in all Fairview."

"Why, here you be, as snug as a bug in a rug," said Father Lowry, in his cheery way, to Edith, when he came to see how she was getting settled.

"It's perfectly wonderful the change you have made," said Mrs. Manning, who, with her friend, Mrs. Marshall, had dropped in to give her advice on the matter. "I guess I must ask your advice about brightening up my own parlour, instead of giving any about your own." And certainly the bright sunny room was a great contrast to the gloomy apartment, from which, except on high festival occasions, every ray of light was excluded, with its heavy hair-cloth sofa and chairs arranged in solemn order, like mutes at a funeral, around the walls.

"For my part," said Mrs. Marshall, with her customary sigh, as they walked home together, "I wouldn't want a lot of kickshaws like these a-litterin' up my room; and that Papish pictur' of the Virgin Mary on the wall I think perfectly scandalous in a Protestant's house, and he a minister, too. Besides, as the hymn says,

" 'This world is all a fleetin' show,  
For man's delusion given.'"

And it's clean flying in the face of Providence this adornin' our houses as if we was to live in them for ever."



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE FIRST SUNDAY AT FAIRVIEW.

“O day of rest! How beautiful and fair,  
Day of the Lord, and truce to earthly care!  
Day of the Lord, as all our days should be.”

LONGFELLOW, *Christus*, Part iii.

IT was something of an ordeal for Edith Temple to attend the public service on the first Sunday after her arrival at Fairview. Although remarkably free from self-consciousness, she could not but feel that she was an object of curious interest to the whole community—the observed of all observers, the cynosure of every eye. As she walked, with her husband, down the broad, elm-shaded village street, she became aware that she was the target for many curious glances from spectators half concealed behind window-blinds or curtains. But the Sabbath calm that brooded over the scene seemed to tranquillize and reassure her soul.

The street, which the day before had been filled with farmers' waggons, and the stores, which had been crowded with farmers' wives and daughters, were strangely quiet. Not a team was to be seen but that of Squire Whitehead, and those of some others of the congregation who lived in the country. The drowsy hum of the bees filled the air, and the distant bark of a dog jarred on the ear as an incongruous sound.

On the broad “stoop” of the village inn was a knot

of idle boys and young men, and some old ones, who kept up on Sunday their week-day habit of "loafing" about that centre of pernicious attraction. These gazed, some with a loutish expression, some with brazen stare, at Lawrence and his wife as they passed; and one of them, the village blacksmith, who was more often found at the tavern than at his shop, and who was not yet quite sobered from his Saturday night's dissipation, said, with an admiring glance, as he shifted the quid of tobacco from one bulging cheek to the other, "She's a daisy; an' I'll fight any man as says she ain't."

"Come, Saunders, behave yourself," said Jim Larkins, the burly tavern-keeper, coming out of the open door. "You had better go home and get sobered off."

"I meant no offence," said the half-tipsy fellow, "an' it's willing enough you were to have me here last night, as long as my money lasted."

"You fellows had better go to church," continued Larkins. "It don't look well to see you hanging round here of a Sunday, as if it were a fair-day. I'm going to hear the new preacher myself;" and, accompanied by two or three of the group, he sauntered along.

"How dreadful it is," said Edith to her husband, "to see such a man-trap baited for its victims in this lovely spot! I feel already that our Eden has its tree of knowledge of good and evil, and many, I fear, taste its bitter fruit."

"Yes," said Lawrence, with a sigh, "I fear that that devil's pulpit will do more to demoralize the people than I can to do them good. Go where you will in this fair Canada of ours, in every village and hamlet, for every church or school you will find two or three or more of these ante-chambers of hell."

As they approached the modest church, painted white, with the little "God's acre" in the rear,

"Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,"

a group of the farmer lads and village youths about the

door subsided into silence, and even the women in the vestibule drew back with what Milton calls "a noble shamefacedness" in the unwonted presence of the new preacher and his wife. Good Mrs. Lowry, however, came forward with her warm-hearted shake-hands and kindly smile, saying,—

"I'm waiting for you; I thought you'd feel strange like. But you'll soon find that we're all your friends;" and she introduced some of the matrons that were standing near.

"I feel that already," said Edith, with a bright smile, shaking hands frankly. "We shall soon know each other better."

Here Brother Manning, the circuit steward, took Lawrence and his wife and conducted them to the "preacher's pew," one of conspicuous honour in the front row, at the right hand of the pulpit, and in full view of every soul in the church. The young wife would much have preferred a less prominent position, but she would not object to what was meant for a kindness. The little church had not arrived at the dignity of a separate vestry; so Lawrence left his hat in the pew and entered the pulpit.

Edith soon became intensely conscious that she was the focus to which was directed every eye in the house. She felt her cheeks painfully flush; she saw row behind row of curious faces, but in her nervous agitation she could not recognize one. At last, just opposite her, she caught the loving glance of sweet Carrie Mason, and the broad, matronly smile of Mother Lowry, but also the sharp ferret look and keen, cold criticism of the austere Mrs. Marshall. But, glancing out of the window beside her, she beheld beyond the stately elm that shaded the graveyard, the noble vista of the lake and islands, and then close at hand the quiet graves, with bee and butterfly haunting the clover bloom, and the summer breeze fluttered the hymn-book on the open window. And as her husband's voice gave out the hymn, and she joined with the congregation in its

holy harmony, she felt her soul attuned for worship by these sweet ministries of nature and of grace.

After the service, as Mrs. Manning and her friend, Mrs. Marshall, walked down the street together, the latter lady with a dolorous sigh remarked,—

“Did you see her bonnet, them satin ribbons and that flower—and she the minister’s wife? Well, I never! Not a girl in the village but will be aping her fine lady airs.”

“Well, you know, it’s her wedding bonnet, and I’m sure it was tasteful—the neatest and most elegant in the house. An’ as for her manners, I think they was just beautiful. As she sat looking up into her husband’s face all through the sermon, she looked just like that pictur’ of the Virgin on her parlour wall.”

“That Papish thing! Well, I wouldn’t want to look like it, I’m sure;” and she put on an even more than usual vinegar aspect.

“What a beautiful sermon that was!” said Mrs. Lowry, coming up. “It just did one’s soul good to hear him.”

“Yes,” said the circuit steward, with a critical air, “I guess he’ll do. And wasn’t the church full! I hope it’ll keep on so. I see the Crowle boys there, as I hav’n’t seen to church since last winter, when they put pepper on the stove. And they put sixpence each in the collection, too, a thing I never know’d ’em to do afore.”





## CHAPTER VIII.

### AN AWKWARD ENCOUNTER AND A NEW FRIEND.

“You behold in me  
Only a travelling physician.”

LONGFELLOW, *The Golden Legend*.

IN the afternoon Edith rode with Lawrence to his appointment at the village of Morven, six miles distant, at the head of the lake. Lawrence gladly assented to her wish to accompany him. “But,” he said, “I give you warning that if you follow me around like this, you will often hear an old sermon.”

“O, I have to hear a sermon two or three times,” she said, “before I can fully understand it.”

“That must be because I am so profound,” said he.

“Or because I am so shallow,” she replied.

“Nay, not that,” he said. “It must be that I am obscure; but if I am very taciturn you must excuse me, as I must think over my sermon.”

So they drove over the rolling hills, gaining glorious views from time to time of the far-extended lake, with its islands and headlands and indented bays and upland slopes, green and golden with waving forest and ripening grain.

At last they descended into a hollow, and the road lay for a time through a dense forest of the tall, straight trees known as Norway pines, each fit “to be

the mast of some great admiral." The horse's tread was scarcely heard upon the thick matting of pine needles, and the wheels of the carriage rolled noiselessly over them. Through the openings to the sky broad, bright glints of sunlight streamed and made a glory all around.

"Truly," said Edith, in a reverent tone,

"The groves were God's first temples. Ere man learned  
To hew the shaft and lay the architrave,  
And spread the roof above them,—ere he framed  
The lofty vault to gather and roll back  
The sound of anthems, in the darkling wood,  
Amid the sweet, cool silence, he knelt down,  
And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks  
And supplication . . . . .

Let me  
Here, in the shadow of the aged wood,  
Offer one hymn—thrice happy if it find  
Acceptance in His ear."

And she sweetly carolled the noble hymn, beginning,

"God is in this and every place."

They soon passed through this dense forest into a more open region, where the road ran for a mile or more over a rough causeway of logs across a swamp. The elderberry bushes were in their richest foliage of an intensely vivid green. The pure white lilies rose from the black and muddy ooze of the swamp, and breathed forth their fragrance on the air, like the Christian graces blooming in beauty amid a foul environment. The crimson cardinal flowers blushed a deeper scarlet by contrast with their snowy whiteness, like vice abashed in the presence of saintly purity. The noisy blue-jay, the flashing humming-birds, the lithe lizards on the ground, gleamed like living jewels amid the emerald setting of the forest.

"How lovely!" exclaimed Edith. "What splendid ferns! What magnificent orchids! You must bring me here to botanize some day."

Here her exclamations of delight were interrupted by a loud shouting ahead of them.



"Hi! Hallo there! Turn out, or there'll be trouble ahead."

The shouts proceeded from a large, burly individual, perched aloft in the single narrow seat of a high, two-wheeled vehicle, which is known in Canada as a "sulky;" we presume because one person only can ride in it. This vehicle came bouncing and bumping forward over the rough logs.

"Didn't you see the turning-out place back there?" said the florid-faced driver, as he halted his horse, and pointed to the road a few rods behind them, where a double width of logs had been laid down so as to give room for waggons to pass.

"No," said Lawrence, "I did not, I'm sorry to say. This is the first time I ever travelled this road."

"Well, young man," said the first speaker, "the next time you drive this way, don't pass that spot till you see the road is clear ahead of you. Beg your pardon, Ma'am," he went on, with a polite bow to Edith, "don't be alarmed, I'll manage to turn around, and give you the right of way. *Place aux dames*, you know!"

For the vehicles to pass one another was impossible, so narrow was the causeway, and on either side was a deep ditch, filled with black swamp water and mud. But with much skill the driver of the sulky turned his vehicle and pony about on the narrow causeway almost as if they were on a pivot, although it was a feat somewhat like that of an elephant balancing on an upturned tub.

"I am greatly obliged for your kindness," said Lawrence, as he drove up. "May I have the pleasure of knowing the name of so courteous a gentleman?"

"My name's Norton—Dr. Norton—if you mean me," said with a merry laugh the burly doctor, who was splashed with mud from head to foot. "We are not much used to such compliments out here in the bush, Ma'am," he went on, with another polite bow to Edith. "It's hard to feel one is a gentleman beneath so much mud," and he looked ruefully at his bespattered clothes.

"And you?" he added, with an interrogative inflection, turning to Lawrence.

"Temple is my name. I'm the new Methodist preacher at Fairview, and this is my wife."

"Happy to make your acquaintance, and Mrs. Temple's," said the Doctor, again bowing to that lady.

"We are likely to meet often, Sir. There is one thing our callings have in common: we are both much in request with the sick and poor, and we must get our reward in the other world if we get it at all."

"I trust we shall not miss that," said Lawrence, gravely, "whatever else we gain or lose."

"Amen to that," said the Doctor, with a slight tremor of the voice. "I'm not a religious man, Mr. Temple," he added, "but I've seen enough of sickness and death to feel that there are ills too deep for drugs to cure, and that amid the gathering shadows of the grave man needs more potent healing than any the doctor's wallet contains. Often men ask us Macbeth's question:—

"Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased;  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain;  
And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff  
Which weighs upon the heart?"

I have learned, too, Sir, in many a sick room, to respect the character and appreciate the generous services of men of your cloth. I hope we shall be friends;" and with a frank bow to Lawrence, and politely raising his hat to Edith, he resumed his journey.





## CHAPTER IX.

### A BACKWOODS SERVICE.

“He who ordained the Sabbath loves the poor.”

HOLMES, *Urania*.

THE afternoon service was at a little hamlet, where the only public buildings were a log school-house and that ubiquitous curse of Canada, the village tavern. Around the former a few horses were tied to the trees, and a couple of rough farm waggons were drawn up beside the fence. One could not but wonder where all the people came from in that lonely place. The little village had only half-a-dozen houses, and scarce another was in sight ; yet the school-house was packed—we were going to say, if it were not perpetrating a bull, both within and without, for there were more persons about the doors and windows than there were inside.

The “meeting” fulfils an important place in the social economy of the backwoods of Canada. Amid the isolation of their solitary farm life, the people—the female portion of the household especially—see little of each other except at these weekly or fortnightly gatherings. In consequence of the divergence or inaccuracy of their clocks and watches—many of which take their time from the sun by a rude astronomical observation of noontide by their owners, or by a comparison of “sun-up” or “sun-down” with the time in-

dicated in the almanack procured at the village drug store—the people go to meeting early, so as to be sure to be in time. Sometimes the preacher is delayed by the bad roads or by mishap, and the congregation often employ the time in social converse. The good wives discuss the various ailments and infantile characteristics of their domestic brood, or the sickness or convalescence of some neighbour; and in a new country any one within five miles is a neighbour. The girls are apt to compare ribbons and gowns. The men and boys out of doors are prone to drift into rather secular talk—the crops, the weather, the good points or otherwise of the horses hitched to the trees and fence, and of other horses elsewhere. If the delay of the preacher in coming is long, some one more spiritual-minded, perhaps the class-leader, gives out a hymn, and then another and another, and a grand service of song is held, the heavenly truths gliding into the soul with the sweet harmonies, and attuning and preparing the mind for the worship of God. The music may be pitched too high, and have more shakes and quavers than the composer designed; but it fulfils its mission to the human soul no less than if it rolled from golden organ pipes beneath cathedral's vaulted aisles.

As Mr. Temple and his wife drove up, a silence fell upon the group without and the singers within. Lawrence shook hands frankly with the men standing near, as if he had known them all his life, and asked for the class-leader. He was in the school-house leading the singing; but, seeing the preacher drive up, he came out. He was a man unheroic in stature and unbeautiful to look upon. His Sunday suit of clothes was the same for summer and winter, he could not afford the luxury of two suits; and as the day was warm, he looked, after his violent exercise in singing—and he believed in doing whatever he did, singing, praying, working, with all his might—he looked, we say, as if threatened with apoplexy. His hair, it must be confessed, was a staring red, and so was the fringe

of beard around his florid face. Indeed, the wags at the village tavern asserted that the picture of the "Rising Sun" on its creaking sign was a portrait of the honest miller, John Crumley. A broad white collar framed his face, and a black neckerchief was wound almost to the point of strangulation about his neck. Yet this was the man, though poor, unlettered, and uncouth, who was chosen by his neighbours to be their spiritual leader and guide, the under shepherd and lay colleague of their minister and chief pastor. His older and comparatively wealthy neighbours accepted his godly counsels and admonitions, as to them the voice of the Church and of God. Such a fact, multiplied ten thousand times in as many rural communities, illustrates the grand democracy of Methodism; or, rather, it illustrates the grandest aristocracy on earth; passing by the claims of wealth and learning and social rank, for the nobler criterion of moral worth.

"An' you be the noo preacher," said honest John, grasping Lawrence's hand. "Oi be right glad to see ye. An' so be us all. We'me a-been a-prayin' for the Lord to send us a mon after 'Is oan heart, an' us accepts you as comin' in the name o' the Lord."

Lawrence made a way for himself and his wife through the crowded congregation to the school-mistress's stand at the end of the room. The pulpit was a simple table on a small platform, raised about a foot above the floor. It was a capital place to learn to speak without notes. Woe to the unfortunate man who depended upon such adventitious helps, or who was easily disconcerted by trifles. There was a row of children perched along the front of the platform, so crowded was the house; and more than once one of these fell asleep and tumbled off during the sermon. Others trotted across the back of the teacher's stand. Several of the men got up and went out to look after restive horses, and two or three women carried out crying children. A dog, of an imaginative turn of mind, asleep beneath a bench, was apparently pursuing his prey in a dream, or, perhaps,

was troubled with nightmare, and expressed his excitement in strange noises, and had to be ignominiously expelled. But the people hung upon the preacher's lips with intensest interest. Ever and anon a hearty "Amen!" or "Hallelujah!" attested their deep emotion, and around the windows crowded eager listeners. The preacher felt that he was not beating the air. No moral miasma of scepticism poisoned the souls of his hearers and rendered them insensible to the appeals of the Gospel. To each of them, though perchance they were living careless or even reckless lives, its every word was the voice of God; its threatenings were dread realities; its hell was an everlasting fire; its heaven a city of eternal joy. The preacher could grapple with their consciences, which were not benumbed and paralysed by doubt.

Edith was greatly interested in this simple service, to which she was not unaccustomed, for she had witnessed many such scenes in the wilds of Muskoka. She joined heartily in the singing, her rich and pure soprano voice giving a noble quality to the rather uncultured service of song. After the sermon the matrons thronged about her with hearty invitations to come soon and pay them a visit.

"We likes to know the preacher's wife," said one. "We never but oncet before had one come to the meetin'. We hopes you'll come oftens."

"We mayn't be very fine," said a stout Yorkshire dame, "but you're just as welcome to we're whoams as welcome can be."

John Crumley, who was also from the "north country" of old England, and used some of the old-fashioned forms of speech, asked the preacher to "stop and bait" at his house, which request his good wife warmly seconded.

"Us will be proud," she said, "to have you stop. We're hoose hev allus been the preacher's tavern, an' ye musn't make strange, ye know."

The house was a tiny one of logs beside the tiny

mill. The great wheel of the latter stood still, but the waste water from the sluice made a musical tinkle, as it splashed over the mossy timbers and flashed rainbow colours in the afternoon light. The good wife bustled about her tiny kitchen, and set forth a meal that would have beguiled the appetite of the sternest ascetic—home-made bread, golden butter, amber-coloured honey, redolent of clover bloom and thyme, and red, ripe strawberries, buried in rich, yellow cream.

“Bless the Lord,” said honest John, “we’me gotten a preacher of we’re oan. Us will look for a graat work of graace. Peggy an’ Oi’s been a-prayin’ for a graat revival, an’ Oi believe we’me a-goin’ to have it;” and the good man, in the gladness of his heart, burst forth into sacred song in the midst of the meal.

It is true that he was unpolished in manners, and it must be confessed that he ate with his knife, but Edith felt that he was one of God’s noblemen, and revered with all her soul his simple, earnest piety. As she rode home with Lawrence in the golden sunset, and then in the purple gloaming, she felt how great and blessed was the privilege of working with him for the spiritual welfare of these simple-minded, generous-hearted people. And any gifts of culture or talents that she possessed, she felt to be only a sacred trust to be used in their behalf.

After an evening service at “early candle-light” at Fairview, as, weary in body, yet enjoying sweetest rest of soul, she sat on the piazza of their humble home, watching the moonlight sparkle on the waves, she said to her husband, “This has been one of the happiest days of my life. I have felt, as I never did before, a breadth of meaning in those words of the Creed, ‘I believe in the communion of saints.’ I have realized that amid the diversities of rank, condition, and culture of Christ’s disciples, is the same indwelling Spirit. My soul is knit to these people. I shall be glad to do all in my power for their good.”

“Let us learn, dear wife,” said Lawrence, “more and

more the universal brotherhood of man, the universal fatherhood of God, and we shall feel that—

“ ‘There’s a wideness in God’s mercy  
Like the wideness of the sea ;  
There’s a kindness in His justice  
Which is more than liberty.

“ ‘For the love of God is broader  
Than the measure of man’s mind ;  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind.

“ ‘If our love were but more simple,  
We should take Him at His word,  
And our lives would be all sunshine  
In the favour of our Lord.’ ”







## CHAPTER X.

### PREPARING THE CAMP.

“ Ah, why  
Should we in this world's riper years neglect  
God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore  
Only among the crowd, and under roofs  
That our frail hands have made ? ”

BRYANT, *A Forest Hymn.*

THE great event of the season on the Burg-Royal District, of which Fairview, at the time of which we write, formed a part, was the District Camp-meeting. This had been in the early days of Methodism a most potent institution in those parts. In those times meeting-houses, or even school-houses, were few and far apart, and the camp-meeting was made a grand rallying-place for all the settlers far and near. Two famous camp-meeting preachers were Elder Case and Elder Metcalfe in their early prime, and marvellous were the scenes of religious revival and spiritual power which they witnessed, and in which they took part.

With the multiplication of religious agencies and increase in the number of churches, the pressing need for these special services became less. They no longer attracted persons from so great a distance, neither were they the scenes of such extraordinary manifestation. But they were still occasions of great interest, and

were attended by several hundred, and on Sunday by two or three thousand, persons.

The Methodist families throughout the District looked forward to this season of dwelling in tents with somewhat kindred feelings, we suppose, to those of the ancient Israelites in anticipation of their annual Feast of Tabernacles. By the more devout it was regarded as a high religious festival and as a spiritual harvest-time. It was the subject of much prayer and pious desire for weeks beforehand in the class and prayer-meetings. The heads of families made arrangements<sup>c</sup> as far as possible, to allow the attendance of their whole households—their children and servants, and “the strangers within their gates,” as the hired men were described in their prayers. Pious parents longed and prayed for the conversion of their children; and even those who were not over pious themselves, knew that a converted farm-servant was more trustworthy and efficient, that is, possessed a higher money value, than any other; and therefore freely allowed their hired help to attend the camp-meeting, at least on the Sunday, if not longer.

To the young folk the occasion offered very special attractions—the charm of a change from the regular routine of life; the charm of kindred youthful companionship, and the excitement of picnicking for a week or more in the woods. All this was tempered, however, with some shade of austerity, from the necessity of attending so many religious services, and in some cases by the haunting fear that they might be converted in spite of themselves, and so be cut off from the enjoyment of all the social junketings and dances and worldly dissipations of the neighbourhood. Sometimes the attractions of a travelling circus, with its attendant side-shows, which were felt to be incompatible with a religious profession, were allowed to deaden the religious susceptibilities and stifle the convictions of a quickened conscience.

The principal burden of preparation for the camp-

meeting fell upon the good matrons of the congregations. For many days beforehand the great farm kitchens were scenes of unwonted bustle and activity. The good wives, "on hospitable thoughts intent," were making liberal provision, not only for their own households, but also for the entertainment of troops of friends, yes, and even of utter strangers. The open-hearted hospitality of the camp-ground was almost like a revival of the religious communism of the primitive believers, when "neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common."

The great out-of-door ovens were filled to repletion with generous batches of bread, which came forth brown and fragrant; and manifold was the baking of pies and cakes, the roasting of turkeys and pullets and young porkers, and the boiling of hams for the generous and substantial sandwiches which were so much in request for the sustenance of the outer, while the preachers laboured for the refreshment of the inner, man. Some of the attendants at the meeting, however, we are sorry to say, seemed to have confused notions as to which *was* the outer and which the inner man; and were much more sedulous in their attention to the well-filled tables than to the religious services.

The favourite time for holding the camp-meeting was either during the brief respite in farm labour after "haying" and before harvest, or in the more ample leisure, and the golden September weather, after harvest and before "seeding." The latter was the season selected for holding the Burg-Royal District Camp-meeting.

The chosen spot was a famous camp-ground on the shores of Lac de Baume, which had been from time immemorial a favourite camping-place of the Indians. It had, therefore, been adopted by Elder Case, the father of Methodist missions to the Indian tribes of Canada, on account of its convenience of access either by water or by the forest trails. It also presented in

itself admirable advantages for the purpose. An ample area of forest land sloped down to a beautiful little bay. The noble elms and maples lifted their leafy arms high in air, and completely shaded the open space below.

As this spot lay within the bounds of the Fairview Circuit, it fell to the lot of Father Lowry, Mr. Manning, Father Thomas, John Crumley, and a few others of the neighbouring farmers, to prepare the campground. But little required to be done, except to repair the dilapidations caused by the winter storms. Around an area of about half an acre were a row of rough board buildings or "tents," as by a rather bold metaphor they were called. These consisted, for the most part, of only one room, the principal use of which was as an eating-room by day and a sleeping-room by night. Between the religious services relays of hungry people would fill every corner, and at night the board tables were removed, and quilts and curtains divided it into two sleeping apartments. The same articles furnished the doors and windows, so that, if not tents exactly, these "lodges in the wilderness" still possessed to the imagination of their occupants quite an oriental character, as was becoming to a "feast of tabernacles."

The kitchen arrangements were in the rear of each tent, beneath the shadow of the trees, or perhaps of a booth of boughs. They consisted chiefly of open fires with a crotch-stick at each side and a cross-piece at the top, from which hung the kettles for boiling water for the tea and coffee, the making of which was the chief culinary operation of the camp.

The preacher's tent differed little in character from the others, except that before it was a platform elevated about a yard from the ground. Along the front of this ran a flat board by way of desk; at the back was a long bench; the whole making a pulpit large enough to accommodate a dozen men. The room in the rear was occupied by one enormous bed, greater than the Great Bed of Ware or than the iron bedstead of Og, King of Bashan. But it was generally pretty well filled with

clerical occupants, on such occasions, and, with the aid of plenty of straw and buffalo robes, was by no means uncomfortable.

In front of the preacher's stand were rows of plank benches resting on sections of saw-logs set on end, and the ground was plentifully strewn with straw. At the four corners of this area were four elevated platforms about six feet high, covered with earth, on which at night were kindled fires of pine knots for lighting up the camp, which they did very efficiently.





## CHAPTER XI.

### THE CAMP-MEETING.

“To its inmost glade  
The living forest to thy whisper thrills,  
And there is holiness in every shade.”

MRS. HEMANS.

THE camp-meeting began on Friday evening of the first week in September. All day long teams continued to arrive, laden with bedding, household stuff, and provisions. With much innocent hilarity the farmers' boys unloaded the waggons, and the girls and matrons unpacked the boxes and set their houses in order for their ten days' encampment in the woods. Lawrence Temple had a tent of his own, and Edith exhibited in its dainty curtains and in the pictures on the walls the same refined taste that characterized her little parlour at home. Mother Lowry had invited the minister's wife to share her larger tent, and to let Lawrence “share and fare” with the visiting preachers; but the young matron replied: “No, I want the opportunity to exercise hospitality as well as you. As we are on our own circuit, my tent must be a sort of headquarters for the preachers' wives.”

“What a cosy nest of a place you have here!” said Mrs. Manning, as, with her friend Mrs. Marshall, she made a brief call; “I declare it's as pretty as a picture.”

“What does she want with all them gimcracks out here in the woods?” said her ascetic companion, as they walked away. “A prayer-meeting won’t be any better for all them pictures on the wall.”

“I don’t know but it will,” replied Mrs. Manning, “if they help to put people in a pleasant frame of mind.” She was evidently unobservant of the contrary effect which they seemed to have had upon her friend.

Upon the borders of the lake were two Indian missions, and the Indians turned out in full force to the camp-meeting. It was a sort of reminiscence of the great councils and pow-wows of their nation. Along the shore on each side of the camp they pitched their wigwams and drew up their bark canoes. The main body arrived in quite a flotilla of canoes, which rode lightly over the waves, some of them spreading a blanket sail to catch the breeze. A band of sturdy rowers urged on the other canoes, chanting, as they kept time with their oars, the words of an Indian hymn.

Fragile as the canoes seemed, their sides not much thicker than stout paper, and weighing in all but a few pounds, it was extraordinary what loads they would carry—squaws, papooses, pots, blankets, hatchets, guns, fishing-tackle, and fish. These loads were soon disembarked, and in a very short time the squaws had fires made and water boiling for tea—of which they are very fond—and freshly-caught fish broiling on the coals. The men had almost as speedily cut poles for their wigwams, and stripped the bark from the great birch trees growing near the water’s edge to cover the poles. In a very short time nearly a hundred lodges were pitched, and their camp had the look of long occupancy; the Indians smoking stolidly in groups, the women cooking at the fires, at which they seemed to be engaged most of the time, and the boys shaping arrows, or fishing from a rocky headland.

As evening drew on, the row of fires around the shores of the little bay, each mirrored in the rippling

waves, the groups of wigwams, and the dark forest behind, were exceedingly impressive. But a few years before, such a gathering of red-skins would have carried terror to the entire neighbourhood, and would have excited apprehensions of midnight massacre by the tomahawk and scalping-knife. But through the apostolic labours of Elder Case these once savage tribes had become civilized and Christianized, and now instead of pagan orgies—the hideous medicine-dance, the sacrifice of the white dog, and beating of the conjurer's drum—was heard in every lodge the sound of Christian prayer and praise.

As the darkness fell, the pealing strains of a huge tin trumpet—like an Alpine horn, some six feet long—blown by stentorian lungs, rolled and re-echoed through the woods. Soon, from every tent and lodge, the occupants were streaming towards the auditorium—only that was not what they called it—it was “the evenin’ preachin’.” The fires were kindled on the elevated stands, which soon blazed like great altars, sending aloft their ruddy tongues of flame, brightly lighting up everything around, changing the foliage of the trees above them apparently into fretted silver, and leaving in deep Rembrandt-like shadow the outskirts of the encampment and the surrounding forest.

The first sermon was by the Chairman of the District. It was of rather an official character; indeed, Mrs. Marshall pronounced it rather a tame affair; “milk-and-watery” was the phrase she used. She liked to see the sinners catch it red-hot; and this was a calmly argued discourse, urging upon the members of the Church the duty of personal consecration to God, and of waiting upon Him, that they might be endued with power from on high and prepared to work for Him; which topic was not so much to her taste.

At the morning and afternoon service, the next day, the attendance was not so large; a good many being engaged in completing the arrangements of the camp. A great many new arrivals came on the ground, some



to remain only over the Sunday, and others to remain till the close.

In the evening a very large congregation was assembled, and seemed full of expectancy. The preacher for the occasion was the Rev. Henry Wilkinson, a fiery little, black-eyed, black-haired man, a perfect Vesuvius of energy and eloquence, pouring forth a lava-tide of impassioned exhortation and appeal. When warmed up with his theme, he reminded one, says Dr. Carroll, of nothing so much as "a man shovelling red-hot coals." The effect of the sermon was electrical. Shouts of "Amen!" and "Hallelujah!" were heard on every side, and also sounds of weeping and mourning. The Indians who sat in a group on the ground near the preacher were aroused from their characteristic stolid indifference by the magnetic energy of the speaker, even though they did not understand his words; and when his discourse was afterwards interpreted to them by one of their number, chosen for that purpose, they were deeply moved. At the singing of the hymn, "All hail the power of Jesu's name," to the grand old tune of "Coronation," they joined in heartily in their own language, and it seemed an earnest and foretaste of the fulfilment of the closing prayer of the hymn—

"Let every tribe and every tongue  
Before Him prostrate fall,  
And shout in universal song  
The crowned Lord of all."

After this another preacher gave a fervent exhortation, and invited penitents to the "mourners' bench," as the foremost row of seats was called. This was soon filled with earnest seekers of salvation, and a fervent prayer-meeting followed. It must be confessed that, to a person not in sympathy with the services and observing them from the outside, they would have seemed confusing, if not disorderly. Cries, tears, groans, ejaculations, and at times two or three persons praying at once, appeared unseemly, if not irreverent. But the power of the Most High rested upon the

assembly, notorious sinners were deeply convinced, and some soundly converted. When the tide of excitement rose immoderately high, the presiding minister, who held the meeting well in hand, would give out a hymn, whose holy strains would have a tranquillizing effect on the minds of all present.

It is seldom in our modern fashionable watering-place camp-meetings that such scenes of Divine power are witnessed, and to many minds they would be rather disconcerting if they were to occur. But these old-fashioned preachers came together for this very purpose—to see souls converted; and they were not disturbed by a little noise, if only the desired result were accomplished. We doubt not that on the day of Pentecost, when the great multitude were pricked in their heart and cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” and when three thousand souls were converted in one day, a good deal of excitement was manifested. Strange that men who would shout themselves hoarse at a political meeting, or at a stock exchange, or at a boat race or lacrosse match, and expect others to share their enthusiasm, should be so shocked when men aroused to a sense of sin and its guilt and danger cry out in their anguish, and seek to flee from the wrath to come. The wonder rather is, that, with the tremendous issues of eternity and the soul’s salvation at stake, men are so apathetic, so torpid, and so dumb.





## CHAPTER XII.

“AS A BIRD OUT OF THE SNARE OF THE FOWLERS.”

“Touch the goblet no more!  
It will make thy heart sore  
To its very core!”

LONGFELLOW, *Golden Legend.*

THE general impression made on the community by the camp meeting may be inferred from the remarks of Bob Crowle, a notorious scapegrace, famous for all manner of wicked and reckless exploits in disturbing previous camp-meetings and other religious services. He was conversing with Jim Larkins, the keeper of the “Dog and Gun” tavern in the village, who stood by, a sinister observer of the proceedings.

“Why, bless my eyes,” exclaimed that individual, “if that ain’t Bill Saunders a-roarin’ like a bull o’ Bashan, there at the mourners’ bench. Well, wonders will never cease. I’d as soon expect to see you there as Bill Saunders.”

“You’ve often seen me in a worse place,” said Crowle, “and where I had better reason to be ashamed of myself than Bill Saunders has. I guess he won’t spend so much of his earnings at your bar; and that’ll be a good thing for his wife and kids.”

“Why, you ain’t j’ined the temperance, has you, Bob?” asked Jim, in real or affected dismay. “You’ll be goin’ for’ad to the mourners’ bench yourself,

I reckon." This was said with an intensely contemptuous sneer.

"Well, if I did, it would be nuthin' to be ashamed of," replied Crowle. "If a man's got a soul, I don't see why he shouldn't try to save it. I've served the devil long enough, and what have I ever gained by it? I've spread away a good farm and dranked up a small fortune—most of which has gone into your till, Jim Larkins. I'm thinking it was about time I was turning over a new leaf."

At this moment the vast assemblage were singing a hymn of invitation, the refrain of which rang sweetly through the forest aisles :

"Will you go? Will you go?  
O say, will you go to the Eden above?"

Edith Temple had been a not uninterested observer of the colloquy between Crowle and Larkins. She knew who they were from having seen them at the Fairview church. Yielding to an impulse for which she could not account, she walked toward Crowle, and stopped before him, still singing,

"O say, will you go to the Eden above?"

There was an irresistible spell in the thrilling tones of her voice and in her appealing look.

"By the help of God, I will," said Crowle, with a look of solemn resolution in his eyes, and, taking her proffered hand, he followed her to the altar for prayer.

Mrs. Marshall was rather shocked to see the preacher's wife going forward with the dissipated-looking creature, who was chiefly noted for hanging around the village tavern; and even Mrs. Manning thought it a very bold proceeding; but Edith was sustained by the consciousness that she was doing a right and Christian act. One of the advantages of these free forest assemblies is that they break down the conventionalities of the more formal indoor service, and one feels more at liberty to follow the promptings of conscience and the guidings of the good Spirit of God.

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It was certainly very noisy in that prayer circle. Strong crying and sobs and groans were heard, and tears fell freely from eyes unused to weep. One dapper little gentleman—a theological student from the Burg-Royal College—retired in protest to the preachers tent, saying as he did so: “This ranting and raving is terrible. God is not the author of confusion. Does not St. Paul expressly say, ‘Let all things be done decently and in order’?” This gentleman afterwards found that Methodism was too raw and rough a religion for his delicate sensibilities. He therefore joined a highly ritualistic church, wore a very long clerical coat, a high-buttoned vest, and a very stiff, straight-band collar, and intoned the prayers most æsthetically for a fashionable congregation. We observed, however, that the learned and cultured president of the college did not seem at all disconcerted by the noise and the non-observance of the conventionalities of public worship, and laboured earnestly with his colleagues in the good work in progress.

Poor Saunders, the village blacksmith, who was also, as we have seen, a zealous patron of the “Dog and Gun,” had indeed a terrible time of it. He was a large and powerful man, and as he wrestled in an agony of prayer, the beaded sweat-drops fell from his brow, and the veins stood out like whipcords on his forehead. His weeping wife—a godly woman and loving consort, but bearing on her cheek the marks of a cruel blow received from her husband in a drunken bout, though kinder man ne’er breathed when he was sober—knelt by his side, trying to comfort him and to point him to the Saviour, Who had been her own support and solace during long years of trouble and sorrow. At length, with a shout of deliverance, he sprang to his feet and exclaimed,—

“I’ve done it! I’ve done it! I’ve done it! I’ve given up the grog for ever! I thought I never could; the horrid thirst seemed raging like the fire of hell within me. But I vowed to God I’d never touch it

more, and that very moment it seemed as if the devil lost his grip upon my soul, the evil spirit was cast out, and God spoke peace, through His Son, to my troubled heart.

"O! Mary," he went on, "I've been a bad husband and a bad father, but by God's grace we'll be happy yet."

A great shout of praise and thanksgiving went up from the people, and few eyes in the assembly were unwet with tears. Yet it was certainly a most disorderly assembly. But there was joy in heaven and joy on earth over the repentant sinner, and we think we could pardon even a greater confusion from which such hallowed results should flow.

Amid the general joy poor Crowle seemed forgotten. He remained with head bowed down, but his mind, he said, was all dark, not a ray of light gleamed amid the gloom. Even after the meeting was dismissed, he still knelt upon the ground. Presently he felt a soft hand laid upon his shoulder, and a soft voice spoke gently in his ear: "I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry."

"I'll wait," he replied. "He waited many a year for me; I'll wait His good time." And, with a gentle pressure of his hand, Edith glided away.

And wait he did till after midnight, with two or three who remained to pray with and counsel him; and after that, all night long he waited in the silent forest, wrestling with God as Jacob wrestled with the angel, saying, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." But still the blessing came not. Still the burden was unremoved.





## CHAPTER XIII.

### AS A BRAND FROM THE BURNING.

“And can it be that I should gain  
An interest in the Saviour’s blood?  
Died He for me, who caused His pain?  
For me, who Him to death pursued?  
Amazing love! how can it be  
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?”

CHARLES WESLEY.

**T**HE Sabbath morning dawned bright and beautiful. The dew-drops hung like sparkling jewels on every leaf and shrub and blade of grass. The lake and islands and the surrounding forest lay fair as Eden on the first Sabbath which dawned upon the world. And not unlike “the voice that breathed o’er Eden” was the sound of prayer and praise from many an Indian wigwam, from many a rustic tent. It was a day of high religious festival, and from near and far multitudes early began to gather for the public services. Shortly before the preaching was to commence, Lawrence Temple came to a tent where a prayer-meeting was being held, and beckoned to his wife to come out.

“Bob Crowle wants to see you,” he said; “come and see if you can help him. He is in deep distress.”

“Poor fellow!” Edith replied; “he is like the man in the Gospel, out of whom the evil spirit would not depart.”

“‘This kind,’” said Lawrence, “‘goeth not out but

by prayer and fasting,' and yet I am sure he has tried both."

On a little knoll overlooking the lake sat Crowle, looking haggard in the morning light. He gazed with fixed stare into space, as though he saw nought. He heaved a deep and heavy sigh, as Edith took his hand and asked him in sympathetic tones how he was.

"It's good o' you to come and see a poor wretch like me," he said, "but I'm afeard it's too late. I'm afeard I've sinned away my day of grace. I'm afeard I've committed the sin for which there's no forgiveness either in this world or in the world to come. I know what the Scriptur' says about it; for, though I've been a drunken vagabond for years, I was brought up in the Sunday School. But I hardened my heart like Pharaoh, and resisted the Spirit of God, and made a mock of religion. Perhaps you've heard how at the revival last winter I did the devil's work, tryin' to break up the meetin' by puttin' pepper on the stove. Since then, I took to drink worse than ever, and got kinder past feelin', I 'low," and he gazed with stony stare on the dimpling waters of the lake, but evidently saw them not.

"But you're not past feeling, my brother," said Edith. "You feel deeply concerned about your soul. The very fear that you have committed this sin is a proof that you are not; for if God's Spirit had indeed left you, you would be perfectly indifferent about it."

"No, thank God," he said, "I'm not indifferent, I'm in dead earnest; and if I perish, I will perish at the foot of the cross;" and a look of fixed resolve lighted up his face.

"None ever perished there," said Edith. And she began to sing softly the sweet refrain:

"There is life for a look at the Crucified One,  
 There is life at this moment for thee,  
 Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,  
 Unto Him who was nailed to the tree."



"I see it! I see it!" exclaimed the penitent soul, after some further counsel from Lawrence and his wife. "I've been doubting and mistrusting the blessed Lord, though He died on the cross to save me; and bless the Lord, He saves me now! I do trust Him! I'll never doubt Him more! Let me go and tell my brother Phin. We wuz companions in sin. We ought to be companions in salvation as well."

"Go," said Edith, "like Andrew of old, and bring your brother to Jesus;" and she placed her soft hand in his brown and horny palm, with a gentle pressure of sympathy and congratulation.

Bob Crowle soon found his brother Phineas loitering on the outskirts of the camp-ground with a number of boon companions, among whom was Jim Larkins, the landlord of the "Dog and Gun."

"Come with me, Phin," said Bob, "I want you."

"What's the matter, Bob?" asked his brother, as they walked through the forest aisles. "Larkins was telling the boys the preacher's wife carried you off by the ear last night just as a colley dog would a sheep."

"She's been my good angel, Phin, and she'll be yours if you'll let her. I've led you into wickedness many a time. I want now to lead you away from it."

"Well, I don't want no women running after me, I'm feart o' them. I know I'm as awkward as an ox, an' if such a fine lady as the preacher's wife was to tackle me, I'd be sure to act like a fool. I know I should."

"She's just an angel, Phin. Why, she laid her hand on my arm and called me 'Brother'—me! a poor drunken wretch—just as if I were her own brother for certain. An' I thought, if this woman that knows nothin' about me but what's bad is so much concerned about my soul, the good Lord That bought me will not cast me off."

Happy the one whose human love and sympathy is the first revelation to a fallen sinner of the infinite goodness of the merciful All-Father, and of the loving Elder Brother of our souls!

"Why, Phin, the very world seems changed," exclaimed the new convert after a pause. "The sky seems higher, the sunlight brighter, the forest a fresher green, and the lake a deeper blue. It seems as if I had just come out of a dungeon into a bright and beautiful garden. My heart is as light as a bird's, and I can't help but sing." And he burst forth into a glad carol of joy.

"O, Phin," he went on, "won't you come to the blessed Lord yourself?"

"I wish to goodness I could," said Phin, with a great sigh. "I feel that mean and ashamed of myself, and mad at myself, after coming off a spree, that I have often wished I wuz a dog that had no soul to lose."

"But you've one to save, Phin, and the blessed Lord that saved mine will save yours too. Let it be this very day."

"I've often thought I'd try, Bob; but then the devil 'ud get his hooks into me, and temptation 'ud get the better o' me; and when the liquor's in, the sense is out, and I care for neither God nor man."

"Dear Phin," said Bob, "stay away from Larkins and the rest, and come with me to the meeting. O! Phin, the text o' that preacher last night just makes me shudder: 'One shall be taken, and t'other left.' God forbid it should be one of us!"

"Amen to that, Bob. I'll try, dear old fellow;" and for a time the brothers parted.





## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE TRANCE.

"Speak low to me, my Saviour, low and sweet,  
From out the hallelujahs, sweet and low."

MRS. BROWNING.

THE afternoon service was attended by an immense assemblage of persons. A powerful sermon was preached by Elder Metcalf, and after that a fervent exhortation was given by another of the ministers. The presence of so vast a multitude seemed to cause a tide of magnetic sympathy to roll over the congregation, and, on the invitation being given for penitents to approach the "mourners' bench," a large number went forward spontaneously. The exhorter was a man of intensely emotional temperament, and communicated his own emotions to many of his hearers, especially to those of more sympathetic sensibilities. Tears fell freely, sobs and cries were heard, and impassioned prayers and shouts of praise to God. At length one of the kneelers at the bench, a young girl who appeared deeply affected, fell prostrate on the ground, as if stricken dead. The old camp-meeting generals seemed not at all alarmed by the occurrence. One of them burst into a hymn, the refrain of which was :

"Send the power, send the power,  
Just now !"

in which the whole assembly joined with thrilling effect.

Two others conveyed the apparently lifeless form of the young girl to the tent occupied by Lawrence Temple and his wife. Edith had hastened at once to prepare a couch, and, having never before witnessed anything of the sort, was much alarmed at the condition of her young friend, Carrie Mason, for she it was.

"Go and get Dr. Norton," she said, hurriedly, to Lawrence; "I saw him on the grounds."

"She needs no doctor, sister," said good Elder Metcalf. "I've seen a many just as she is. It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. She'll come out all right."

Dr. Norton was at hand in a moment. He found Edith fanning the face of her friend, who seemed to be in a sweet and placid sleep. Her hands were pressed together as in prayer, like the hands of the marble effigies on the tombs of an old cathedral: indeed, she looked herself like a marble effigy. A sweet smile rested on her face. Her breathing was so gentle and low as to be almost imperceptible; and when the Doctor felt her pulse, it was soft and gentle, and very slow. He tried to part her hands, but they remained rigid and fixed.

"This beats me," he candidly avowed; "I never saw a similar case. It is like what the books describe as catalepsy, or trance—an obscure psychical condition which makes us feel the limitations of science. I can do nothing for her, nor needs there that I should. She is in no danger."

Edith sat in a sort of strange spell by the side of her fair friend, whose face seemed transfigured and glorified by a light from heaven, as if she were in converse with the spirit world—like an alabaster vase, through whose translucency shone the light of a lamp within. Hour after hour passed by without change or motion. The evening congregation assembled; the singing of the great multitude, like the sound of many waters, awoke her not from her peaceful trance. A deep mysterious awe fell upon the congregation under

the influence of this strange manifestation of Divine power. The preacher for the evening deepened the impression by his sermon on the nearness and the mysteries of the spirit-world, and the terrors of the Judgment Day. The preachers at the camp-meeting did not hesitate to declare the whole counsel of God concerning the perdition of ungodly men, and their hearers had no sceptical creed to serve as a lightning-rod to convey away from them the thunderbolts of God's wrath. Deep convictions seized upon strong men. Scoffers were silenced, and desperate and hardened sinners were smitten down before the power of God. One old reprobate fairly roared for mercy, as he realized the terrors of an angry Judge. Many souls struggled into the liberty of the children of God; but some, among them Phin Crowle, resisted the strivings of the Spirit, and plunged the more madly into sin, to stifle and drown the upbraidings of conscience.

"Let us get out of this," said Jim Larkins, to a group of his cronies and patrons of his bar. "Let us get out of this. These people are all going crazed; and if you don't look out, they will make you as crazy as themselves. Come along! There's free drinks at the 'Dog and Gun' for all hands. Let's make a night of it;" and a band of them broke away, as if under the guidance of an evil spirit, from that place of sacred influence. As they reeled through the shadowy forest—for some of them had brought liquor, and were already under its influence—they tried to keep their courage up by roaring drinking and hunting songs. At length, when they had got away from the camp, certain strange forest voices—the snarl of a wild cat, the yelp of a fox, and the melancholy cry of a loon on the lake, smote upon their ears, mingled with a strange hooting more unearthly still.

"The saints preserve us! what is that?" exclaimed Phin Crowle, as almost directly above his head a strange cry, as of a soul in mortal fear, burst forth. Then he caught sight of a pair of large and fiery eyes glaring

at him, and a great horned and snowy owl, perched on a mossy branch, uttered again its weird "to-whit, to-who," and sailed on muffled and silent pinion directly across his path.

"Mercy on us!" he cried, "I thought it was a ghost."

His companions burst forth in scurrile mockery at Phin, for being afraid of an owl; and their ribald laughter and wicked oaths rose on the still air of night, and fell back from the patient skies, like the laughter of evil spirits.

From the tent where she sat, keeping her solitary vigil beside her entranced and unconscious friend, for every one else had gone to the service, Edith Temple could hear on the one side the unhallowed sounds of the blasphemies, and on the other the singing and praying of the camp-meeting. One solemn refrain, which was sung over and over in a sad minor key, mingled weirdly with the sighing of the night-wind among the trees—a refrain like the awful *Dies Irae* :

"O! there'll be mourning, mourning, mourning, mourning ;

O! there'll be mourning at the judgment-seat of Christ."

The thought of the tremendous issues of life and time, and of death and eternity and the Judgment Day, almost overwhelmed her, and she sought refuge and strength in prayer to God—prayer for the prayerless and the careless who spurned His proffered grace, and continued to madly lay up wrath against the day of wrath.

While thus engaged, she heard a soft whisper, and, looking at the alabaster form before her, she saw the lips move. Bending over the trance-like sleeper, she caught the gently whispered words, "Glory! glory! glory!" softly and slowly repeated over and over again. At length the eyes slowly opened, but gazed with fixed vision as if on the, to us unseen, realities of the eternal world. The pupils were dilated, but beaming with a holy light, as if, like Paul, the fair sleeper had been caught up to the third heaven, and had seen things which it is not lawful for man to utter.

Edith sat awed and breathless, but presently her

friend observed her. A sweet smile broke over the long-impassive features, and the awakening girl reached forth her hand in loving greeting. The rigidity passed away from her limbs. She sat quietly up, but with a somewhat dazed expression, as if aroused from a strange dream. She scarce, for a time, knew where she was, and did not at first remember the surroundings of her last moments of consciousness before her prostration. On resuming the connected thread of her every-day experience, that of her hours of trance seemed to fade out of her mind, for she spoke not of it, and, when questioned about it, wore an abstracted and distraught air, as of one who half recollects and half forgets some strange vision of the night. She seemed, however, more saintly in character, more angelic in speech, than ever, as if her eyes had indeed seen the King in His beauty, and beheld the land that is very far off.

Shortly after her awaking, Lawrence and Dr. Norton had come into the "tent," or room. The latter carefully noted with scientific observation the condition of his patient, as he professionally called her. Beckoning to Lawrence, he walked forth beneath the trees. The services were now all over, the worshippers had departed, and the auditorium lay deserted in the moonlight.

"This is beyond my depth," said the Doctor. "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy. I've been sometimes half inclined to be a sceptic. Our profession has a tendency to make men materialists. But this staggers me. Call it ecstasy, catalepsy, trance, what you please; that does not explain the strange phenomenon. I am inclined to accept the theory of your old camp-meeting general, that it is a manifestation of the almighty power of God."

"We live on the border-land," said Lawrence, "between time and eternity. What marvel that the penumbra of the latter should sometimes be projected across our life-pathway?"\*

\* In the above account the author but describes—*nomine mutato*—what he has witnessed with his own eyes.



## CHAPTER XV.

### THE CLOSE OF THE CAMP-MEETING.

“Blest be the dear uniting love,  
That will not let us part.”

CHARLES WESLEY.

**T**HE last day of the camp-meeting had come. It had been a time of great spiritual power. Many souls had been converted; but, as always happens through the rejection of religious opportunities, some, alas! had become the more confirmed and hardened in their wickedness.

This last day was devoted to the strengthening and encouragement and counselling of **believers**, especially of the **recent converts**. First, a lovefeast or fellowship meeting was held. It was an occasion of intensest interest. Many testimonies were given, from that of the old camp-meeting veteran, the hero of a score of such triumphs, exulting like an ancient warrior—a Gideon or Barak—over the victories of Israel, to that of the timid girl who had just given her heart to the Saviour. Joyous were the bursts of song, and thrilling were the words of glad thanksgiving, as parents rejoiced over children, and wives over husbands brought to God.

“Our home’s been just like heaven below,” said Mary Saunders, with streaming tears, “since my William gave up the drink and gave his heart to God. I’d been a-prayin’ for him for years, and hopin’ against



hope ; and now the Lord has answered all my prayers. My cup runneth over."

"God bless the little woman for it!" said Saunders, the blacksmith, as he rose to his feet. "I've know'd she was a-prayin' for me this many a year. An' sometimes it made me mad enough to kill her. I believe the Lord stayed my hand many a time, or I'd 'a' done it. But, bless the Lord, He've answered her prayers ; and God help me to make up in the futur' for my wicked, wasted past !"

A thrill of sympathy ran through the entire assembly, and a chorus of hearty "Amens" went up to God.

In broken words Bob Crowle told what the Lord had done for him, and tears streamed down his face as he besought the prayers of the people for his still prodigal and impenitent brother.

Then after a sermon of wise counsels, and admonitions, and encouragement, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered. Rude were the surroundings. No canopy but the blue sky was overhead. No stately altar with gold or silver chalice or paten bore the sacred emblems. No surpliced priest broke the bread and poured the wine. On a rude board table, covered with a fair white cloth, were placed the consecrated elements in earthen platters and plain glass vessels. The participants of the sacred feast knelt in the straw before a wooden railing, and received in horny palms, worn with toil, the emblems of the broken body and shed blood of their crucified Redeemer. Coarse frequently was the garb, and uncouth the form it covered, but they were the sons and daughters of the Almighty, and the heirs of an immortal destiny ; and as the Master revealed Himself to His disciples in the breaking of bread at Emmaus, so He again manifested Himself to His humble followers in the wilderness, no less than if beneath cathedral fretted vaults they knelt upon mosaic marble floor. The simplicity of the rite passed into the sublime. It brought to mind the sacramental celebration of the

saints of God amid the mountain "muirlands" of Scotland, of the persecuted Huguenots in the Desert of the Cevennes, and of the primitive believers in the dim crypts of the Catacombs.

At the close of the solemn service, the interesting ceremony of leave-taking and "breaking up the camp" followed. Every person on the grounds, except the few who were detained in the tents by domestic duties, joined in a procession, and walked, two and two, headed by the preachers, round and round the inside of the encampment, singing such hymns and marching songs as,

"Come, ye that love the Lord,  
And let your joys be known,"

with its grand refrain, in which every voice pealed forth in ringing chorus:

"Then let your songs abound  
And every tear be dry;  
We're marching through Immanuel's ground,  
To fairer worlds on high."

Another favourite hymn on these occasions was the following:

"We part in body, not in mind,  
Our minds continue one;  
And each to each in Jesus joined,  
We hand in hand go on.  
We'll march around Jerusalem!  
We'll march around Jerusalem!  
When we arrive at home."

But though they might sing heartily, "Let every tear be dry," there were few that succeeded in fulfilling the pledge. Their hearts, filled and thrilled with deep emotion, were like a beaker brimming with water, which the slightest jar causes to overflow. Often the most joyous songs were sung with tears in the voice, and frequently with tears flowing from the eyes. Beyond the parting here, they looked to the great gathering in the Father's house on high, and sang with deepest feeling:

“ And if our fellowship below  
 In Jesus be so sweet,  
 What heights of rapture shall we know  
 When round His throne we meet ! ”

Another hymn of kindred spirit ran thus :

“ Here we suffer grief and pain,  
 Here we meet to part again,  
 In heaven we part no more.  
 What ! never part again ?  
 No, never part again !  
 For there we shall with Jesus reign,  
 And never, never part again !  
 O ! that will be joyful, joyful, joyful,  
 To meet to part no more. ”

Yes, Methodism is an emotional religion, and thank God for such hallowed emotions as stir the soul to its deepest depths, as break up the life-long habit of sin, as lead to intense conviction and sound conversion, and as fill the heart with joy unspeakable and full of glory. It may well bear the reproach of being “ emotional,” if these emotions lead to such blessed and enduring results.

Some of these hymns were of a quaint, admonitory sort, more valuable for their religious teaching than for their poetic form. One of these ran thus :

“ O ! don't turn back, brothers, don't turn back ;  
 There's a starry crown in heaven for you, if you don't  
 turn back.

“ O ! don't turn back, sisters, don't turn back ;  
 There's a golden harp in heaven for you, if you don't  
 turn back ; ”

and so with indefinite repetition.

At length the preachers all took their place in front of the pulpit or preacher's stand, and shook hands with every member of the procession as they passed by. After this the procession continued to melt away, as it were, those walking at the head falling out of rank and forming in single line around the encampment, still shaking hands in succession with those marching, till every person on the ground had shaken hands with

everybody else—an evolution difficult to describe intelligibly to one who has never witnessed it; yet one that is very easily and rapidly performed. The greeting was a mutual pledge of brotherhood and Christian fellowship. Warm and fervent were the hand-clasps, and touching and tender the farewells. Then the doxology was sung, the benediction pronounced, and the Burg-Royal District Camp-meeting of 18— was over.

All this had taken place by noon, or shortly after. Soon a great change passed over the scene. It was like coming down from a Mount of Transfiguration to the every-day duties of life. The last meal in camp was hastily prepared and eaten; somewhat as, we may imagine, was the last meal of the Israelites before the Exodus. The afternoon was full of bustle and activity, breaking up the encampment, loading up teams, and the driving away to their respective homes of the people who, for over a week, had held this Feast of Tabernacles to the Lord.

Several of the preachers, the light cavalry of Methodism, were early on the march, astride their sturdy nags, with their little leathern portmanteaus, containing a few changes of linen, their Bible, and hymn-books. Before night they were far on their way to their several circuits, carrying the holy fire of revival all over the land—like the bearers of Scotland's cross of fire, but summoning the people, not to violence and blood, but to holiness and life.

The Indians struck camp with the utmost celerity. Their wigwams were soon dismantled. Their canoes were soon loaded, and, gliding over the water, vanished in the distance. Soon only the blackened embers of their camp-fires told of their occupancy of the shore.

At length the last waggon had gone, the last loiterer had departed, and the silent camp, but late the scene of so much life, was left to the blue birds and the squirrels. But in many a distant home, and in many a human heart, the germs of a new life had been planted, to bring forth fruit unto life eternal.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### AUTUMN RECREATIONS.

"I love to wander through the woodlands hoary,  
In the soft light of an autumnal day,  
When Summer gathers up her robes of glory,  
And, like a dream of beauty, glides away."

MRS. WHITMAN.

THE mellow days of October soon swiftly passed. The great sweep of woodland on either side of the valley in which the village of Fairview nestled was ablaze with crimson, and scarlet, and purple, and gold. The fields stood reaped and bare. The great round pumpkins gleamed amid the yet ungathered corn that, plumed and tasselled like an Indian chief, rustled in the autumn wind. What a glorious beauty Nature wears "when autumn to its golden grandeur grows!"

"How the forest glows and glares and flickers," said Lawrence, one sunny afternoon, "like Moses' bush, for ever burning, ever unconsumed!"

"Nay," said Edith, "it seems to me rather like Joseph's coat of many colours, which his brethren dipped in blood and brought to the patriarch Jacob."

"Is not that tall ash tree," asked Lawrence, "like a martyr dying amid ensanguined flames?"

"It seems to me," replied Edith, "like the haughty Sardanapalus self-immolated on his funeral pyre; and

see," she added, "how the tall poplars flare like great blazing torches in the wind."

"The world is very beautiful," said Lawrence, and, going into the garden, he sat down on a rustic seat, and in full view of the lovely lake, placid as a mirror, so clear and unruffled that the gorgeous islands seemed to float swan-like on the wave, each tint and shade reflected so perfectly in the water that it was difficult to discriminate between the substance and the shadow. After writing for a time in his note-book, he came back and read to Edith the following sonnets suggested by the scene :

Still stand the trees in the soft hazy light,  
 Bathing their branches in the ambient air ;  
 The hush of beauty breatheth everywhere :  
 In crimson robes the forests all are dight,  
 Autumn flings forth his banner in the field,  
 Blazoned with heraldry of gules and gold ;  
 In dyes of blood his garments all are rolled,  
 The gory stains of war are on his shield.  
 Like some frail, fading girl, her death anear,  
 On whose fair cheek blooms bright the hectic rose,  
 So burns the wan cheek of the dying year,  
 With beauty brighter than the summer knows ;  
 And, like a martyr, 'mid ensanguined fires,  
 Enwrapped in robes of flame he now expires.

Like gallant courtiers, see, the forest trees  
 Flaunt in their crimson robes with 'broidered gold ;  
 And like a king in royal purple's fold,  
 The oak flings largess to the beggar breeze.  
 For ever burning, ever unconsumed,  
 Like the strange portent of the prophet's bush,  
 The autumn flames amid a sacred hush ;  
 The forest glory never brighter bloomed.  
 Upon the lulled and drowsy atmosphere  
 Falls faint and low the far-off muffled stroke  
 Of woodman's axe, the schoolboy's ringing cheer,  
 The watch-dog's bay, and crash of falling oak ;  
 And gleam the apples through the orchard trees,  
 Like golden fruit of the Hesperides.

"Why, you are quite a poet," said Edith ; "I did not know that that was one of your accomplishments. I must crown you as the ladies crowned Petrarch at the capitol

at Rome ;” and she placed on his head a wreath of the ivy green which clambered over the verandah.

“I am afraid I look more like an ox garlanded for the altar, than like a crowned poet,” laughed Lawrence ; “but it is now your turn to weave the tuneful verse. I am sure you can produce something far better than my humble lines.”

“I am sure I could not,” said Edith, “I never tried in my life. But for the fun of the thing I don’t mind trying the first chance I get. What shall I write about ?”

“What better subject can you have than this golden autumn weather, and the varied aspects and suggestions of nature ?”

“All right,” said Edith with a laugh. “Now give me a new pencil, one that has never been profaned by any other task, and I’ll begin first thing in the morning.”

Alas that she let the golden opportunity slip ! Towards evening the clouds began to gather heavily round the setting sun, which went down lurid and red. With the night a cold and dreary rain-storm set in, and the wind howled drearily through the trees, and the waves made melancholy moan upon the shore. When Edith looked forth in the morning, what a change had taken place ! The ground was strewn with the dank and sodden leaves, but yesterday so gorgeous and gay. The autumn flowers, half-wrenched from their stalks, looked forlorn and desolate. The leaden clouds hung low and drifted wildly over the lake upon whose leaden waters the “white caps” wildly careered. As Edith came to the breakfast-room, she quoted forlornly Tennyson’s lines :

“My very heart faints and my whole soul grieves  
At the moist rich smell of the rotting leaves ;  
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
Over its grave in the earth so chilly ;  
Heavily hangs the hollyhock ;  
Heavily hangs the tiger lily.”

“O, you’ve missed your chance!” said Lawrence, over his coffee and toast. “The inspiration of yesterday has gone for ever.”

After breakfast Edith retired to her little *boudoir*, and after a couple of hours came forth with the marks of tears on her face, and silently handed Lawrence some sheets of paper, on which was written the following—

## LAMENT FOR SUMMER.

O! how I loathe this sad autumn weather!

Clouds that lower and winds that wail;  
The rain and the leaves come down together,  
And tell to each other a sorrowful tale.

The beauty of Summer, alas! has perished,  
The ghosts of the flowers stand out in the rain—  
The fairy flowers that we fondly cherished,  
But cherished, alas! in vain, in vain!

The wind it wails, it wails for ever,  
Like a soul in pain and in dread remorse;  
Like a murderer vile, whose pain can never  
Cease, as he thinks of his victim’s corse.

For the Summer now on her bier is lying,  
Lying silent and cold and dead;  
And the sad rains weep and bewail her dying,  
Over her drear and lowly bed.

Pallid and wan she grew; yet fairer  
Than in richest wreaths of leafy green;  
The hectic flush on her cheek was rarer  
Than ever seen in health, I ween.

Thus all things fair, as they fade, grow dearer,  
Dearer and fairer till hope has fled;  
We closer clasp, as the hour draws nearer,  
That bears them for ever away to the dead.

Through the grand old woods, a cathedral hoary,  
The organ chant of the winds doth roll,  
As bearing aloft to the realms of glory  
On its billows of sound her weary soul.

The clouds like funereal curtains lower  
Darkly and heavily round her grave,  
And the trailing vines of the summer bower  
Like the plumes of a gloomy catafalque wave.



The lofty pines toss their plumes so sadly,  
And chant aloud their dirge of woe ;  
Now high and wild rise the notes, and madly  
They wail—and now they are moaning low.

All nature grieves and weeps, bemoaning  
The fair, fond Summer, for ever fled ;  
And bends, in her sorrow inly groaning,  
Over the bier of the early dead !

“Why,” said Lawrence, “this is splendid. It reflects the gloom far better than mine did the glory of autumn. It is saturated through and through with its spirit of sadness. There are tears in every verse.”

“I know I cried while I wrote them,” said Edith, “and felt exquisitely miserable till I got them off my mind.”





## CHAPTER XVII.

### LITERARY AMBITIONS AND HOME JOYS.

"We cultivate literature on a little oatmeal."—SYDNEY SMITH.

"To stay at home is best."—LONGFELLOW.

**B**UT the gloomy autumn weather brought its compensations. The roads were so bad that Lawrence could not be much abroad, so he brought up his arrears of reading and study. He began to find, too, new joys in writing. About this time there fell in his way—and he devoured them with eagerness—Lecky's *History of European Morals*, and Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe*. His meagre salary did not permit him to buy many books, except the commentaries, and other critical apparatus needful for his Biblical studies. But his old friend, the accomplished and scholarly Dr. Fellows, President of the Burgh Royal University, kindly placed at his disposal the above-mentioned volumes and others from his well-filled library. Lecky and Buckle, Draper and Spencer, were valuable to Lawrence, not for the information which they imparted, but for the antagonism that they aroused. They taught him to think for himself—to call no man master, in the servile sense, in the philosophy of history, and of mental and moral science. He, therefore, began to construct his own theories of intellectual development. He got down his books of history, his Grote

and Gibbon, and Milman and Neander, littering up all the chairs and tables in the room, and began to read critically, to compare, and to write, till, before he was aware, he had a big pile of manuscript for which he had no name. Parts of it he read to Edith, and the whole of it he submitted to the examination of his early "guide, philosopher, and friend," Dr. Fellows. That much-enduring man, as if he had not enough of that sort of thing to do for the students of the university, waded patiently through the heavy folios, carefully annotating, criticising, and making suggestions.

"Well, Temple," he said, when Lawrence, bashful and blushing, presented himself in the old college halls for the learned Doctor's opinion, "you are on the right track. Think for yourself. Fight it out with these fellows—no pun intended this time. Your essay reads quite like a review article. Furbish it up a bit and it will look first-rate in print. I've seen many a worse thing published."

"That's not saying much," said Lawrence, "I've seen dreadful rubbish in print myself. But I never thought of that; I only wrote because I felt that I must."

"Well, keep it by you a year or two, read it over a dozen times, and write it out twice or thrice, and then, if you think you've said anything new and true, send it to the editor of the *Transcendental Quarterly*, on its merits. On its merits, mind. Never ask any one to stand godfather to your writings. If they are worth having, the editor will be glad to have them; if they are not, he is not the man for his place if he would print them at any price."

We may here remark proleptically, that a couple of years afterwards Lawrence, having obeyed to the letter Dr. Fellows' half-jocular advice, did actually muster courage to send his manuscript to the famous editor of the *Transcendental Quarterly Review*. After waiting about six months he received a brief note to the effect that his essay was accepted, and put on file for publication. After eighteen months more, he received

a copy of the *Review* containing his article. It was the proudest moment of his life. He opened the volume, cut the leaves, glanced at the beginning, looked at the end, threw it down on the table that he might have the pleasure of taking it up casually as it were, and that he might experience the gentle surprise of coming upon his article as if by accident. Then, we are sorry to say, he counted the pages and began to compute what would be the probable cash value of his article. But he soon felt that this was a sordid thought, which he must banish from his mind. Then he went to the kitchen, where Edith was preparing dinner.

"You said you were sure they would print it, you remember," he exclaimed, in a tone of exultation. "Well, you see they have," and he held the *Review* triumphantly towards her.

"Let me see it," she said, while she stopped peeling the potatoes, as if only ocular demonstration could satisfy her mind as to the fact.

"O Lawrence, it looks very nice," she exclaimed. "How beautifully it is printed! How much do you think they will give you for it, dear?"

"You mercenary creature!" Lawrence rather hypocritically exclaimed, for the same thought was in his own mind, and he had already ordered in imagination the new Cyclopædia he had been wanting so long.

"You shall read it to me after dinner, dear," she said, and went on with her work; for dinner must be prepared, though the sky should fall.

But Lawrence could not wait so long; so, going back to his study, he settled himself comfortably in his arm-chair to read his own review article, which to him had just then greater attractions than the genius of both Shakespeare and Bacon together. Pardon him friends! It is only once in a lifetime that a man can read his first review article. As he counted the pages once more, it struck him that it did not make nearly so much as he had estimated that it would. Then, as

he began to read, he missed some of his most striking phrases and strongest epithets. Then a long passage of eloquence which he had especially elaborated was altogether gone. He glanced over the rest of the article to see if it had got transposed. But no, it was gone, and paragraphs on each side were changed so as to make the omission less marked. Poor fellow! he had not quite so much pleasure in reading his essay to his wife as he had anticipated; and when at her suggestion he wrote, after an interval of three weeks, to inquire if he might draw on the publisher for the modest sum to which he thought himself entitled, he was somewhat chagrined to receive an answer to the effect that they never paid new contributors, only those who were on the regular staff.

Yet such was his infatuation with his pen that he did not quit his writing, but often spent at his desk many an hour when he ought to be in bed. Sometimes he received a polite *printed* note from the editor to whom he sent his lucubrations, regretting that "his manuscript was unavailable for use" in the *Pacific Monthly*, or *Transcendental Quarterly*, as the case might be. But we believe that eventually he did succeed, after years of discipline, study, and practice, in getting his articles published in both these periodicals, and got paid for them too, at a rate a little less than he used to receive for chopping down trees in the lumber camp on the Mattawa. This infatuation is something like the bite of the tarantula: whoso is bitten never gets over the effects, but must keep on the perpetual motion of his pen—the wasting of much good ink and spoiling of much good paper.

It is true Lawrence used to say that he found a real pleasure in bending over his desk half the day or night; that he never could think so well as when he had a pen in his hand; that his labour, like virtue, was its own exceeding great reward; that he felt himself amply repaid, though he did not receive a cent, in the self-education he obtained; and that he hoped he might

do a little good where his voice could not be heard, and after it should be silent for ever. But what sort of a world should we have if every one shared that infatuation? The world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

But all this is by way of anticipation. During the long dark November nights, when the roads were impassable, and the rain fell drearily without, Edith made her little parlour bright and beautiful; and Lawrence, after a hard day's work in his study, felt that he might indulge in a few hours' relaxation in lighter reading. Edith had resumed her studies in French and German, and had even begun to spell her way through the adventures of Silvio Pellico, in Italian, and hoped soon to be able to read the great Tuscan bard of the Underworld and of Paradise. So, when shut in from the outer world by "the tumultuous privacy of storm," she would read her afternoon's work to Lawrence, and he would rehearse his writing; and then, while she deftly plied woman's potent weapon, the flying needle, he beguiled the swift hours by the sweetest songs of Longfellow and Tennyson, the Brownings and Whittier, and the other household poets whose dainty blue and gold volumes were a richer adorning of their little parlour, because of their noble suggestiveness, than the costliest ornaments that money could buy. Lawrence had always lived too busy a life, and had been too much engrossed in grave studies, to indulge in the reading of fiction. Yet during those happy nights he often sat reading to an eager listener the fascinating pages of the Great Wizard of the North, and of the great satirist and great moralist, Thackeray and Dickens, although the melodramatic exaggeration of the latter pleased them less than the admirable historic pageants of Scott, or the keen mental analysis and social dissections of Thackeray. Then an old-time ballad or a favourite hymn would close an evening of richer enjoyment than any gilded rout or brilliant ball that the tired devotees of fashion ever knew.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### A DAUGHTER OF EVE.

“ Beautiful in form and feature,  
Lovely as the day,  
Can there be so fair a creature  
Formed of common clay ? ”

LONGFELLOW, *Masque of Pandora.*

SOME time before Christmas, Edith had written to invite her friend Nellie Burton, the American girl from Oil-Dorado, at the Wentworth Ladies' College, to pay her a visit in the holidays. She soon received the following very characteristic acceptance of the invitation.

“ I was just dying for some of the girls to ask me to their homes at Christmas, as mine was so far away,” she wrote. “ I never supposed that you would want an outsider to intrude on your honeymoon, which was to last a whole year, you said. But when I got your kind invitation, I threw overboard several others that the girls gave me, and just jumped at yours. So if you are sure that I won't be *de trop*—in the way, you know—I will gladly come.”

Lawrence accordingly met Miss Burton at the nearest railway station, and drove her out to Fairview, leaving her big Saratoga trunk to follow by stage. She was in wonderful spirits and chattered like a magpie, as if she had known Lawrence all her life, whereas she had only

seen him once. As he was constitutionally somewhat grave, and was rather reserved in the presence of such fashionable ladies as Miss Burton, she had the talk almost entirely to herself. But, so far from being embarrassed by that fact, it seemed to be the very thing she wanted; at least she made incessant use of her opportunity. She told Lawrence during their ten miles' ride all about the college, and about her father's business, and about Oil-Dorado—what a "horrid" place it was, how everything smelt of oil, how even her sugar tasted of it, and she fancied she could see it floating on her tea. She was soon going to quit school for ever, she informed him, and was going to Paris, and Rome, and Switzerland, "and all that, you know." But she was especially ecstatic over "dear, delightful Paris."

"I am to be presented at the Tuileries," she exclaimed. "O, our minister to France has got to fix it. That is what we keep him there for. I'll make father buy me lots of diamonds. And I will bring home six trunks of Worth's dresses, and I'll make father take a house on Madison Avenue, in New York, and Edith must come and make me a good long visit."

Lawrence smiled gravely at this rhapsody, and wondered how all these ideas got into the frivolous little head of his light-hearted companion. As he drew up to the door of the modest parsonage, she sprang from the "cutter" before he had time to assist her; and as Edith came out of the house, she flung her arms about her, and hugged and kissed and danced around her, as if completely overjoyed.

And so she was. She had to be so awfully proper at the college, she said, that she wanted to make good use of her liberty while it lasted. She founced into the little parlour, whirling round like a dancing dervish, and overturning with the train of her dress, which was unnecessarily long for travelling, a small easel in the corner.

"What a love of a place!" she exclaimed. "How cosy you are here, and how happy you look!" and she



gave Edith another hug and kiss. Soon the old school companions—and no companionship is so strong and tender as that of school or college—were deep in confidences and reminiscences of their happy college days, with inquiries about school friends and teachers, and the world of college gossip which is comprehensible only to the school-girl mind.

“How awfully grave that husband of yours is!” said Nellie Burton, very frankly. “He never paid me a single compliment, and I had to do all the talking myself.”

“Did you find that very difficult?” asked Edith with a smile. “And are you very much afraid of him?”

“No, indeed, I never saw the man yet that I was afraid of—although I came nearer being afraid of Dr. Dwight at the college than of anybody else. But I soon found that his bark was worse than his bite, and I guess he rather liked me after all, though I never could get a smile out of him at any of my pranks.”

When the big Saratoga trunk arrived, Miss Burton soon had it emptied on the bed, chairs, and floor of her room, and overwhelmed Edith with a number of presents from herself, with thoughtful remembrances from her old college friends; among them—and they were very characteristic of the giver—were a number of elegant *bonbonnières* filled with choice French candies; and after these were opened, she, child-like, was one of the best patrons of them herself. Her most appropriate presents were some handsome Christmas books for Edith, and a bronze inkstand—a figure of Thalia with a scroll—for Lawrence.

“Well, isn’t she charming?” said Edith to her husband, the first time that they were together.

“She is very clever,” replied Lawrence a little dubiously, “but she is a feather-headed, rattle-brained creature.”

“She hints that you were not very gallant,” said Edith with a laugh, “that you never complimented her once, and that she had to do all the talking herself.”

"She didn't give me a chance," replied he; "but I don't mind telling you that I think her very pretty. I wouldn't tell her. She knows it too well already."

"She has plenty of heart beneath all her frolic," continued Edith.

"What a perfect cyclone she is! She sweeps every one into the vortex of her personal influence," added her husband.

"I know some one she won't sweep into it," said Edith, with a look somewhat of dismay, "and that is Mrs. Marshall;" and they both laughed, as they thought of the impression that this glittering bubble would make on that glittering icicle.

The advent of such a beautiful exotic did, of course, make an extraordinary sensation in the village of Fairview. Edith, indeed, suggested that it might be as well to leave her bracelets and chatelaine behind when she went to church. But the diamond eardrops, flashing with every movement of her pretty head, and the scarlet feather in her hat, were sufficiently noticeable.

"Did you ever!" said Mrs. Marshall, as she walked home with Mrs. Manning; "I wonder now if them wuz real dimuns; I never seed any afore as I know."

"A girl," said Mrs. Manning, "that could wear a real seal jacket like hern wouldn't wear no sham dimuns, you may be sure."

The fair Nellie felt herself the cynosure of every eye, and did not feel a bit discomposed by it either. She evidently was accustomed to the sensation. She did not even quail when Jim Larkins, at the door of the "Dog and Gun," gave Phin Crowle a nudge in the ribs as she passed, and said,—

"Ain't she a stunner, though?"

The "Yankee girl," as the village folks called her, fairly captured all hearts at the Christmas festival, which was held in the Sunday School room on Christmas Eve. Learning that there was to be a Christmas tree, with a distribution of presents among the little

folks, she threw herself heart and soul into the enterprise. She bought up all the toys and candies in the village store. She set to work—aided by Edith Temple, Carrie Mason, and some more of the Sunday School teachers—to make, of gaily coloured paper, cornucopias and rosettes, and painted elegant ornamental designs. She sent for some of the village boys, and directed them to procure a waggon-load of spruce boughs and smilax—a task which they undertook as if for a queen. Then she pressed into the service Lawrence, Dr. Norton, Bob Crowle—who had become an active worker in the Church—Frank Morris, the clerk of the village store, and others. She ordered them around with an imperious air which there was no resisting, and before Christmas Eve the school-room was decorated with admirable taste.

As the eventful evening arrived, Nellie Burton said gaily to Edith, "I'm going to wear all my war-paint and feathers to-night, in honour of the occasion. I've been longing for a chance."

And certainly she did look charming as she issued from her room, her jewels flashing in the light, but her bright eyes flashing brighter still, her cheeks blooming with health and happiness. She gave one the impression of a rare exotic flower, or of a rich and delicate perfume, or of a fine strain of music.

"Well, you are certainly armed for conquest," said Lawrence—which was the nearest approach to a compliment he ever made. "You must have some mercy on the hearts of our poor country beaux."

"Not a bit," she said, with a merry laugh; "I must drag them as victims at my chariot wheels;" and certainly willing victims she seemed to have, as the boys and girls and young men sought excuses to speak to her by asking if their respective shares in the decoration met with her approval.

The delight of the little folks at the Christmas tree—ablaze with light—was unbounded. When Dr. Norton came in, dressed in his buffalo-skin coat,

powdered with salt, to represent Santa Claus, they fairly screamed with joy. At Lawrence's request he and Miss Burton distributed the presents, and the latter played her part with the grace and dignity of a queen. Then there was tea, and talk, and music; Miss Burton winning new laurels by her brilliant singing, between the Christmas carols of the children.

"Well, she's real grit, if she *is* a Yankee gal," said Mrs. Manning.

"Seems to improve on acquaintance," said Mrs. Marshall, even her austerity melting under the spell of her fascination; and everybody declared that such a Christmas festival in Fairview had never been known.

Chief Big Bear, from the Indian village of Minnehaha, across the lake, was present, and invited Lawrence and his wife to drive over to share a Christmas dinner, the ice being in fine condition. "And bring the Yankee gal and the great medicine man along," he said; "we'll give you the best bear steaks and beaver tail you ever ate in your life."

Miss Burton jumped at the invitation, which promised such a novel pleasure.

"Are you not afraid," asked Dr. Norton, "that this great chief will capture you and make you his squaw?"

"I always was ambitious," replied Miss Burton; "perhaps I may make a conquest and come back with his scalp at my belt—metaphorically, that is."

"You have made a conquest already, if you only knew it," said the young man to himself, and he gazed with admiration at the imperious beauty.

"What a splendid woman she would make," said Lawrence to his wife, that night, "if she were only soundly converted!"

"Yes," said Edith, "there are in her vast possibilities of good. She has a noble nature. I hope she may be guided aright."

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE INDIAN MISSION.

“ Then the Black-Robe chief, the prophet,  
Told his message to the people,  
Told them of the Virgin Mary,  
And her blessed Son the Saviour,  
How in distant lands and ages  
He had lived on earth as we do,  
How He fasted, prayed, and laboured ;  
How the Jews, the tribe accursed,  
Mocked Him, scourged Him, crucified Him ;  
How He rose from where they laid Him,  
Walked again with His disciples,  
And ascended into heaven. . . .  
‘ Peace be with you, Hiawatha,  
Peace be with you and your people,  
Peace of prayer, and peace of pardon.’ ”

LONGFELLOW, *Song of Hiawatha*.

ON Christmas morning Lawrence and his wife, and Dr. Norton and Miss Burton, set out in two “cutters” to cross the lake on the ice to the Indian village of Minnehaha, to attend the Indian Christmas feast. The day was bright and beautiful. The snow, pale pearl-colour in the shade, was dazzling white in full sunlight. The road was marked out by spruce boughs, stuck in the ice, so that in snowstorms or at night travellers might not lose the way. Where in places the snow was blown from the path, the ice was so clear that Jessie, the lively little mare, started to one side as if in fear of plunging into open water.

The bright sunlight, the frosty air, the swift motion, the tinkling of the sleigh-bells, the ringing of the steel upon the ice, the happy hearts within—all made the blood tingle in the veins; and the merry laugh of Nellie Burton rang out upon the air as musical as silver chimes. Dr. Norton had purchased an elegant wolf-skin robe in honour of the occasion, and some of Lawrence's friends had presented him with a handsome crimson-trimmed buffalo robe: so, keen as was the wind sweeping over the ice, no one suffered from cold.

The four or five miles of ice were soon passed, and the Indian village reached. It was a straggling but thrifty-looking hamlet; the small wooden houses, for the most part, ranged along the shore, for the convenience of the half amphibious summer life of their occupants, who at that season spent most of their time on the water, fishing, fowling, and the like. There were only two houses of more than one story; one of these was that of the resident missionary, the other that of Chief Big Bear. In front of the latter was a tall flag-staff, from which gaily fluttered, in honour of the day, a Union Jack. Big Bear felt that he in some sort represented the Great Mother across the sea, and so must maintain the dignity of the empire on this important occasion. He had watched the progress of the sleighs across the ice, and was at the landing with a number of his satellites to welcome his guests. He wore a new blanket-coat, with huge horn buttons, and with a piece of blue flannel, looking like a rudimentary epaulet, on each shoulder. A crimson scarf around his waist was the receptacle for his tobacco pouch and pipe. He wore leather leggings and moccasins, both trimmed with bright-coloured bead-work. On his breast, suspended by a blue ribbon, was a large silver medal, bearing the effigy of King George III., a family heirloom, which his father had received for valour at the battle of Queenston Heights. The most incongruous feature of his attire was his black beaver hat, not of the latest Paris style, adorned with a crest of red

herons' feathers. A broad and well-starched shirt collar, which seemed to imperil the safety of his ears, was the finishing touch of civilization.

"Welcome to Minnehaha," said the Chief, with a certain stately courtesy, as he politely assisted the ladies out of the cutters. At the wave of his hand a motley group of Indians, who formed a sort of guard of honour, fired off a *feu de joie* in honour of the guests.

"I hope you are hungry," he said, "so that you can do justice to our feast."

"I'm fairly starving," said Miss Burton, struggling out of her wrappings. "I could almost eat a big bear myself."

"You had better take care that Big Bear don't eat you," said the Chief; "I'm sure that you look good enough to eat;" and he laughed heartily at his little joke.

The Doctor was a familiar visitor to the village, and took occasion, as they proceeded to the church, where the feast was given, to ask how old Bald Eagle, and Widow Muskrat, sick patients of his, were getting on.

The church was a good-sized wooden building, with a tin-covered spire which glistened brightly in the sun. It was a scene of unwonted activity; Indians, squaws, and young folk were swarming in and out "like bees about their straw-built citadel." The good missionary and his wife were busy directing and assisting. The room was nicely festooned with evergreens, long tables were laid lengthways, and a shorter one on a raised platform, or dais, at the end for the white guests. The tables fairly groaned beneath the weight of good things. The air was laden with the savoury odour of coffee, and of roast goose, roast bear, beaver tails, and other toothsome viands. Now ensued a curious scene: generous portions of everything that was good were set apart and sent to Bald Eagle, Widow Muskrat, and other sick, aged, or infirm people, who were not able to be present. Not until this was done did the Indians sing the grace and devote themselves to the main business of the day. And almost a day's business they made of

it. One would think that they were laying in supplies for a week. After the white guests had partaken of the various dainties, including beaver tails, roast bear, and squirrel pie, and pronounced them very good, they found much amusement in observing the enjoyment of their copper-coloured hosts.

The gathering was a wonderful example of the influence of Christian civilization. Many of those present had been born pagans, and, instead of celebrating with comely observance this Christian festival, had been wont to sacrifice the white dog, and dance, to the hideous beating of the conjurer's drum, the frenzied medicine-dance; and well was it if their orgies did not end in bloodshed or murder, inspired by the white man's accursed "fire-water." But Elder Case sought out these wandering children of the forest, and preached in their lodges the Gospel of love, and gathered them into settlements, and sent missionaries among them; among whom were some who became the foremost men of Canadian Methodism, as Egerton, William, and John Ryerson, James Richardson, Sylvester, Thomas, and Erastus Hurlburt, Samuel Rose, James Evans, George Macdougall, and others; and from among the red men themselves have risen up preachers of the Gospel like Peter Jones, John Sunday, Allan Salt, and Henry Steinhauer, to become missionaries to their red brethren.

Chief Big Bear, the translation of whose Indian name we have given as more picturesque than his English name, Silas Jones, was himself a striking instance of the elevating influence of Christian civilization. His father was a famous pagan chief, whose breast was scarred with wounds received at Queenston Heights and Lundy's Lane, in fighting for King George, whom he considered his ally, superior to himself only in possessing the suzerainty of many tribes. The son in youth followed the wanderings of his tribe, but by Elder Case's perseverance was placed in the Mount Elgin Industrial School, a missionary institution for training in religion and industry Indian youth. Here he learned



to read, and write, and cipher, and to farm and build. His shrewd intellect was awakened and cultivated. He went back to his people, and was in course of time chosen chief of the tribe. He received Her Majesty's commission as a Justice of the Peace, and did no disgrace to his office. He became a man of influence in the councils of his people. He secured for them a grant of land as a permanent home on the shores of the lovely *Lac de Baume*, where as a lad he had hunted the red deer, and sometimes his fellow red men. He taught them the arts of agriculture and building. His own house and farm were models of neatness and thrift. He also built an elegant yacht, in which he skimmed the lake. He became a class-leader and a local preacher. We have seen side by side in his house Wesley's *Sermons*, and the *Consolidated Statutes of Canada*. He dispensed both law and Gospel to his people, and sometimes medicine as well.

He sent his daughter, who bore the pretty Indian name of "Wind Flower," which well described her graceful beauty, to the Wentworth Ladies' College, where she became one of its brightest pupils. She brought back, not merely what seemed to her kinsfolk an amazing amount of knowledge, but, what they appreciated more highly, an acquaintance with the refinements of civilization. She taught the Indian girls how to trim their hats and wear their dresses somewhat in the style of city belles; and we are afraid she was responsible for the introduction of the occasional crinoline and chignon which found their way among this unsophisticated community. But, better still, she taught the children the Word of God in the Sunday School, and played the organ in the village choir, and aided the missionary's wife in cultivating thrift and neatness and household economy among the Indian women of the village.

On the present occasion, when dinner was over, she played the organ, while the choir sang very sweetly some Christmas hymns and anthems. Then the mis-

sionary gave a short religious address, suitable to the occasion, and Lawrence and Dr. Norton both made short speeches. Then, by special request of Chief Big Bear, Miss Burton sang in her brilliant style some of her best pieces, and the Chief ended the feast with a speech of congratulation and good counsel, and wise and witty remarks, which were vociferously applauded. All the Indians, except a few of the oldest squaws, understood and spoke English, and gave an appreciative hearing to the addresses. Indeed, their intelligent attention might be a lesson to many a white-skinned audience.

As their guests departed, almost the entire population went down to the landing and ranged themselves in single file along the shore.

"Must we run the gauntlet of all these people?" asked Miss Burton, with a laugh; "I hope they will not beat us as their ancestors did the early French missionaries." (It was an old custom of the Iroquois savages to make their prisoners "run the gauntlet," as it was called, between two rows of Indians, who beat them with sticks, sometimes till they died.)

"It is a gauntlet of a very different sort," replied Dr. Norton. "I'm not a Methodist, Miss Burton, but I admit that the Methodist Missions have wrought moral miracles in these people."

As the departing guests approached the shore, Chief Big Bear remarked that the Indians would like to bid them good-bye. Accordingly, as they walked down the line, they exchanged a hearty shake-hands with each of their kind entertainers. Edith and Miss Burton were made the recipients of pretty little presents. The latter received from "Wind Flower," the Chief's pretty daughter, an elegant bead-embroidered bag, with many messages of love to the teachers of the Wentworth Ladies' College. Tears came into the eyes of the generous-hearted girl at this kindness from her red sister, and the pampered daughter of fashion, throwing her arms around the child of the forest, gave her an affectionate kiss.

Just as the party were getting into their sleighs, an old man who had been delayed by his lameness hobbled down the bank, and the ceremony of handshaking had to be gone through again with him.

"This is quite like holding a *levée*," said Miss Burton. "I will know how to do it when I open my *salon* in Paris."

As they drove away, waving kind farewells, the Indians fired another *feu de joie*, and gave a hearty cheer, and stood watching the sleighs till they disappeared in the golden haze of the setting sun.

The ride home was delightful. The snow had a delicate pinkish tinge, which deepened to a tender roseate hue. Some cubes of ice that were cut out for storage, flashed like diamonds or crystals of living topaz. The leafless trees upon the islands rose like branches of coral in the red sea of the ruddy twilight. (Longfellow has somewhere made a similar comparison.) The exquisite gradations of tint in the western sky grew deeper and deeper, then paled to ashen grey, and the rising moon cast over lake and shore a pearly gleam, and the stars came out like sentinels in silver mail on heaven's crystal wall. Later still, a rose-coloured aurora in the north flashed and gleamed, its mysterious streamers sweeping from horizon to zenith, and shifting like the evolutions of some stately dance. It was an hour of deep delight; and amid many later happy Christmas days the memory of this day upon the ice, and with the simple-minded Indians of Minnehaha, kept a cherished place.

Early in the following week Miss Burton sent over crimson-coloured handkerchiefs, enough for all the old women in the village, as well as a locket containing a miniature portrait of herself to "Wind Flower." Dr. Norton, who was her messenger, pleaded hard for the miniature for himself, but Miss Burton was inexorable.

"We must not forget the sterner sex," said the Doctor, and he supplemented the gift with a liberal allowance of tobacco for the men.



## CHAPTER XX.

### THE WORK-DAY WORLD.

"All true Work is sacred ; in all true Work, were it but true hand-labour, there is something of divineness."—CARLYLE, *Work*.

THE holidays soon passed, and Miss Burton returned to College, having greatly enjoyed her visit.

"As I see your earnest useful life here," she said to Edith, "I feel that mine has been very shallow and empty. I feel greatly dissatisfied with my past, and I hope that my future may be more worthy of a rational and immortal being."

"Be assured, Nellie dear," replied Edith, "we shall find more real happiness in trying to help others than in seeking only our own pleasure. So shall we be followers, in a humble degree, of Him Who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

After the festivities of the holiday season, the village and rural community settled down to steady winter work. Trees were felled in the pine woods, and, with much "hawing" and "geeing" of oxen, the logs were dragged to the lake-shore and rolled down the steep banks upon the ice. Railway ties, stave-bolts, cordwood, and the varied wealth of the forest were prepared for the market.

One day in January, a few of the neighbours

gathered, in a sort of informal "bee," to replenish the wood pile in the parsonage yard. Early in the winter, as soon as the ice on the lake would bear, Lawrence had procured a few loads of the drift-wood that lay strewn along the shore, including some of the timbers of a vessel that had been wrecked and gone to pieces on one of the islands. But it proved wet and "soggy" wood, sputtering and smouldering in a very melancholy way on the hearth. Edith said it reminded her of Longfellow's pathetic poem :

" O flames that flowed ! O hearts that yearned !  
Ye were indeed too much akin,  
The drift-wood fire without that burned,  
The thoughts that glowed and burned within."

Father Lowry, therefore, made Lawrence a present of several standing trees of hard maple, and early one morning several axemen and teamsters assembled to convert these noble and stately trees into the plain prose of firewood. Lawrence shouldered his axe with the rest, and soon gave proof that he had not forgotten the skill acquired in the lumber camp on the Mattawa. As his sharp axe, wielded by his long and vigorous arms, bit into the boles of a mighty maple and soon made it totter to its fall, he gained the admiring respect of several athletic young men, as he never had by the most eloquent passages of his sermons.

" He's no fool with his axe, ain't the preacher," said Phin Crowle to his brother ; " I guess he's handled one before, or I'm mistaken."

" Perhaps he understands some other things, too, better than you give him credit for," replied Bob ; and certain it is that these young stalwarts of the logging bee listened with more respectful attention to Lawrence's sermons thereafter.

Before night a small mountain of logs was piled up in the parsonage yard. Edith, with the help of Mother Lowry and Carrie Mason, had prepared a sumptuous dinner and supper, to which the sturdy axemen did ample justice. Thus the generous helpfulness of these

friendly neighbours conferred a substantial benefit upon their pastor, and also established him more firmly in their kind regards.

It was a favourite exercise of Lawrence's, after a few hours in the study, to grasp the axe, and, mounting a mighty log, to reduce it to a manageable size for use in the stove or broad, old-fashioned fireplace. He was a great enthusiast in praise of the axe. "It exercises every muscle," he said, "it expands and develops the lungs, and it oxygenates the blood, and sends it tingling through every artery."

If some of the dyspeptic, nerveless preachers, who find the least exercise a weariness, would buy an axe and keep a stout hickory log in the back yard, by way of a *pièce de résistance*, they would find that their sermons would be better, and life much more enjoyable.





## CHAPTER XXI.

### TEMPTATION AND FALL.

“ Tell me I hate the bowl !  
‘ Hate ’ is a feeble word ;  
I loathe, abhor, my very soul  
With deep disgust is stirred,  
Whene’er I see, or hear, or tell  
Of the dark beverage of hell ! ”

**E**VER since the beginning of the winter Lawrence had been preaching a series of expository sermons on the Gospel of St. John, especially on the words of our Lord as therein recorded. He became more and more absorbed in the study, as week after week he pored over those sublime, those Divine words. The interest of the congregation also was strongly manifested, and the Sunday evening meetings were crowded. He found, as every earnest-hearted man will find, that there was no need of *bizarre* and sensational performances, which degrade the pulpit to the level of a mountebank’s platform, to secure the attention and enlist the sympathies of his hearers. He found that the words of Christ are still true as when they were first uttered: “ And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me ” (John xii. 32). A feeling of deep seriousness pervaded the congregations, and several conversions, especially among the young people, drawn by the perennial attraction of an uplifted Saviour, took place.

Lawrence threw himself also vigorously into temperance work. Indeed, he found the village tavern, the "Dog and Gun," the centre and source of such malign influence, that he organized a lodge of Good Templars as a counter-influence to rescue the drunkard, and to save the young from falling into the toils of the tempter. Personally he had little liking for the regalia and paraphernalia of the lodge-room, for its signs, passwords, and ceremonies; but he recognized their value as a counter-attraction to the temptations of the bar-room, and as giving a social interest to the temperance movement.

What more than anything else led him to establish the lodge, and to devote much of his time to its meetings, was a painful and almost tragical event which occurred not long after the camp-meeting. We have mentioned the conversion to sobriety and godliness, after a desperate struggle with his besetting sin, of Saunders, the village smith. At that time, Jim Larkins, the tavern-keeper, said that the smith would not long keep his vows of amendment, and deliberately set himself with fiend-like persistency to bring about the fulfilment of his prediction. At first he tried taunting and ridicule.

"How is it that we don't see you any more at the 'Dog and Gun'?" he asked Saunders one day. "Got to be too good for your old neighbours, have you? Trying to come the pious dodge, eh?"

"God knows I've spent only too much time in your tavern," replied Saunders, "and by His help I'll never cross its threshold again."

"You think so, do you, my pious friend?" said Larkins. "Before a month you'll be glad to."

"God forbid! I'll die first!" ejaculated Saunders, as he hurried away as from a place of baleful enchantment.

Larkins now tried a more infamous scheme to ensnare in the toils of evil habit the victim who had escaped "as a bird out of the snare of the fowler."



A few weeks later the autumn "fall" or fair was held in the village. It was a very busy time for Saunders, who was kept at work early and late, shoeing horses, setting tires, and the like, and was making good wages. One day, amid the crowd of loafers at the tavern, Larkins suggested the idea, "What fun it would be to get Saunders drunk once more! He's on the pious lay, and thinks himself too good for any of us, you know."

"It would be rare fun if you could manage it," said Jake Jenkins, a rough-looking teamster; "but you can't, he's on the other tack, lectures me like a preacher every time I drop into his smithy. I 'most hate to go there now, but I've got to get my off horse shod to-day."

"Well, look here," said Larkins, a wretched plot coming into his mind. "You've got some cider in that jug. Saunders won't refuse to take a drink of that, it's regular temperance stuff, you know. Just let me doctor it a bit, an' ef that won't fetch him, well, I'm mistaken;" and taking the cider jug, he poured part of its contents out, and replenished it with strong brandy.

Jake Jenkins had taken enough liquor himself to make him the reckless and facile tool of the tavern-keeper, and agreed, with a perfidy akin to that of Judas, to attempt the betrayal of his friend. A few minutes later he was in the village smithy, waiting while his horse was being shod.

"Hot work, Saunders," he said, when the job was completed, as the smith wiped the beaded sweat from his brow and brawny breast. "Makes you thirsty, don't it?"

"Yes, that it do. I've drank about a gallon of water this morning," said the smith.

"Bad for your constitution, so much water. Take a drink of new cider—nice and cooling, you know;" and Jake handed him the jug.

"Don't mind if I do," said Saunders, and, lifting the jug to his lips, he drank a long and copious draught.

"Tastes queer for cider," he said, as he set down the jug and went on with his work.

"May be some of last year's wuz in the bottom of the barrel," said Jake; and taking another drink himself, he offered it again to Saunders.

Scarce knowing what he did, the smith drank again and again, till between them the jug was emptied. By this time Saunders was visibly under the influence of the brandy. The slumbering appetite was aroused within him, and, like a tiger that has tasted blood, was clamouring for more.

It required slight persuasion to induce the half-demented man to accompany Jake Jenkins to the tavern to appease the insatiable craving which was rekindled in his breast.

"Come at last, have ye?" sneered Larkins; "I knowed ye couldn't stay away long. I'll set up drinks for the crowd, just to welcome ye back to your old friends. Come, boys!" and he gave each what he asked, except that when Saunders hiccoughed out a request for cider, he filled his glass with brandy.

The unhappy man madly drank, and drank, and drank again, till delirium built its fires in his brain, and the scoundrel tempter sent him raving like a maniac to his home. As he reeled through the door of his cottage, his wife, who had been singing gaily at her work, stopped suddenly, her face blanched white as that of a corpse, and she burst into a flood of tears. Her small home-palace, but now so happy, seemed shattered in ruins to the ground. The husband of her love, the father of her babes, had become like a raging fiend. Those lips which that very morning had prayed for strength against temptation and deliverance from sin were now blistered with cursing and blasphemies.

"O God," she cried in the bitterness of her anguish, "would he had died before he had left the house! Rather would I see him in his shroud than snared again in the toils of hell."

With a love and tenderness that—like the Divine

compassion of Him Who came to save the lost—wearieth not for ever, the heart-broken wife, unheeding the maundering and curses of the wretched man, endeavoured to soothe and calm his frenzied mind and get him to bed. One of the boys she sent for the minister, the unfailing source of sympathy and succour for the suffering and sorrowing in many a village community. When Lawrence arrived, he was shocked beyond measure to find his friend, over whose rescue he had rejoiced, lying on the floor, for he would not go to bed, and calling for brandy, to satisfy the raging thirst that consumed him. He sent instantly for Dr. Norton, and as he knelt beside the unhappy man he registered a vow in heaven, God helping him, to fight against the accursed monster Drink while life should last.

The doctor soon arrived, and with a quiet, firm authority, which even the half-crazed man felt, took charge of his patient. He treated him for acute mania, gave him sedatives and soporifics, but could not ward off an attack of *delirium tremens* which soon supervened. It was dreadful to witness the sufferings of the wretched creature. The most frightful delusions haunted his mind. At times he would roar with terror, as he fancied himself pursued by hideous, mocking, mouthing, gibbering fiends. Then he implored the bystanders, O how eagerly! to save him from the horrid things, and, cowering with horror, he would cover his head with the bedclothes. Then starting up, he would stare with dilated eyes, as if frozen with fear, at vacancy, and make a sudden leap from the bed to escape the dreadful sight.

But worst of all was the blood-curdling, mocking laugh which rang through the room, when, like a raving maniac, the victim fancied for the time that he had eluded or overcome his ghostly foes. It was a scene which, once witnessed, one would wish never to see again.

After a long illness, in which he was brought almost to death's door, he began slowly to recover. As he

crept out into the sunlight, the very shadow of his former self, a nameless fear filled the soul of his wife, lest he should fall again a victim to the tempter.

"I would rather die in this chair, God knows," said the remorseful man, "but I cannot be sure of myself. I dare not say that I shall not fall again. There is a traitor within, which conspires with the tempter without, to beguile me to my undoing. The very sight, or smell, or thought of liquor comes over me at times with almost overmastering power."

The devoted wife went one day to implore the tavern-keeper, the haunting terror of her life, the tempter who had crushed her happy home, not to sell her husband any more liquor. He heard her impatiently, and then in cold-blooded words, which froze her very heart, he said,—

"See here, my good woman, do you see that licence there?" pointing to a framed document on the wall. "I paid fifty dollars for that. Mine's a legitimate business, I'd have you know. I've got to get my money back. A fellow must live. So long as Bill Saunders can pay for liquor, he shall have it. If he takes too much, that's his look out, not mine." So petrifying, so soul-benumbing is the influence of this debasing traffic upon an originally not unkindly nature.

"The curse of God rest on you and your guilty traffic!" exclaimed the unhappy wife, in a sudden access of anguish and terror for him whom she loved most on earth.

"See here, Missis," said Larkins, cowering under her angry glance and fiery words, "I won't have none of your abuse. My business is under the protection of the law. So you jest get out, or I'll put you out;" and he bustled out from behind the bar with a threatening gesture.

"God forgive you, for you need it!" exclaimed the grief-stricken woman, with something of an angel's pity, nobly inconsistent with her previous passionate outburst; and she moved away in tears.



## CHAPTER XXII.

### A MIDNIGHT ADVENTURE.

“Moving accidents by flood and field.”

SHAKESPEARE, *Othello*.

THE winter passed rapidly away. Lawrence was much from home, attending missionary meetings, and conducting, for six weeks, a revival service of great power at one of his distant appointments. The revival was a great success. The whole neighbourhood was profoundly stirred. Night after night the school-house was crowded. Many promising converts were added to the Church, including more than one young man of much force of character, who had been as conspicuous for boldness in sin as they afterwards became for boldness in confessing Christ. Lawrence frequently drove home at night on the ice, which offered a shorter, smoother, and easier route than that by land. He met, however, one night with an adventure that made him content to take the longer and more difficult route.

It was in the early spring, the roads were very muddy, and it was raining heavily. He declined all invitations to remain all night, and determined to take the track on the ice, as for domestic reasons he was very anxious to return home. Instead of following the direct road he kept pretty close to the shore, fearing

that if he got out of sight of land he should get lost on the ice. The hills loomed vaguely through the darkness, and not a friendly light was to be seen in any of the farmhouses along the shore. Suddenly his lively little mare, Jessie, stopped stock-still and refused to proceed. Lawrence peered eagerly into the darkness, but could see no cause for alarm; so he chirruped encouragingly to the faithful creature and urged her on. Re-assured by the sound of his voice, she took a step forward, and instantly disappeared completely out of sight. The ice had been weakened by the rain, and by the effects of a swollen stream which flowed over its surface, and as soon as the weight came upon it, it crashed through like glass. The cutter had followed into the hole in the ice; and when Lawrence had scrambled out of it upon the ice, its buoyancy brought the little mare to the surface, and her own efforts prevented her from again sinking.

Lawrence was in a perilous predicament. There was no help near, not a single light was visible, and there was no use calling for aid, for all the farm folk in the scattered houses along the shore would be fast asleep. There was also no time to spare if he would save the faithful animal, struggling in the water, before she should become benumbed and exhausted. So, lifting up his heart to God, he crawled on his hands and knees to the edge of the broken ice, patted Jessie on the nose, and cheered and encouraged her by repeating her pet name. Meanwhile he had loosed the mare from the cutter, and then fastened the reins around her neck. Placing her fore feet on the edge of the firmer ice, and taking the reins over his shoulder, he turned and strained, it seemed to him, with super-human energy. At length, with a desperate effort of his own and the mare's, she managed to scramble out upon the ice. She whinnied with joy and rubbed her nose against Lawrence's cheek, and then stood stock-still, though shivering with cold, till he dragged the cutter upon the ice and harnessed her again thereto.

Lawrence then set off on a trot across the ice, both to restore warmth to his benumbed frame, and to sound the ice; and Jessie followed closely after. Fortunately they were near land. Lawrence made his way to the shore where a point of land jutted out into the lake. With difficulty he got the mare up the steep bank, leaving the cutter on the ice. Whereabouts he was he did not know; but, looming through the darkness, he saw the shadowy outline of a farmhouse. Towards it he made his way, and knocked with his whip-handle loudly at the door. The muffled bark of a dog was heard, but nothing more, when Lawrence again loudly knocked and called out:

“Halloa! who lives here? Help is wanted.”

A window rattled in its frame, and was cautiously raised, and a shock-headed figure appeared thereat.

“Who’s out at this time of night, and such a night as this?” asked a husky voice, with a strong Tipperary brogue.

“My name is Temple, I am the Methodist preacher,” said Lawrence. “My mare broke through the ice, and I don’t know where I am.”

“The Methody praicher! The saints defend us! The praist towld us ye wor a bad man, deceavin’ the payple, and warned us never to hark till a worrud ye said. But Dennis McGuire’s not the man to turn even a dog from his dure sich a noight as this;” and he hurried to open the door.

A heap of logs lay smouldering on the ample hearth, half smothered with ashes. At a kick of his foot the logs fell apart and burst into a blaze, revealing every corner of the room, and revealing also the dripping clothes and bedraggled form of the half-drowned preacher. Honest Dennis McGuire hastened out into the rain to help Lawrence with his horse and cutter, but instantly came back to tell his wife to “brew the parson a good stiff bowl of hot punch.”

When Lawrence inquired the road to Fairview, and how far it was,

"It's five miles, ef it's a fut," said Mr. McGuire ; "but not a step ye'll take afore the morn."

"O, but I must!" said Lawrence ; "my wife will be greatly alarmed if I do not come home as I promised."

"Ef it's to kape ye're wurrud to that swate lady that visited the Widdy Mulligan when her childer wuz down with the mayzles, there's no more to be said. But ye'll have some dhry duds on ye afore you go." And when he returned to the house, Dennis brought out his Sunday coat of blue cloth, with brass buttons and stiff collar.

"It's not fit for the likes o' ye," said Dennis, "but it's the best I have, and it may kape ye from catching the cowl'd—more belike if ye have a good hot whiskey-punch under ye're vest. Is it ready, Biddy ?

"Shure is it," said that cheerful, black-eyed matron, as she bustled about in a mob cap and linsey-wolsey petticoat, and poured into an old-fashioned punch-bowl the contents of a black bottle, and hot water from the tea-kettle.

"That's the rale craythur," said Dennis, as he sniffed its pungent odour. "That niver paid no excise, nor custom's duty. It's genooine potheen from the ould sod ; ye can smell the reek of the turf in it still."

"Many thanks," said Lawrence, "you are very kind ; but I cannot touch it. It's against my principles, and, believe me, Mr. McGuire, you would be a great deal better without it yourself."

"Hear till him !" said Dennis to his wife in a tone of amazed incredulity. "Heard any man ever the likes of that ? Shure, an' Father McManus has no such schruples. He dhinks it as he would milk, and says it's a good craythur of God ; and no more schruples have I ;" and he tossed off the bowl, smacked his lips, and drew the back of his hand over them with a sort of lingering gusto.

Lawrence was too much of a gentleman to decline the kindness of his host in lending his Sunday coat,



So, putting it on, and over it a big Irish frieze cloak, with two or three capes, and Mr. McGuire's Sunday hat, a venerable beaver, rather limp in the rim—his own was lost on the ice—he again set out for home.

It was after midnight when he arrived. The light was still shining in the parsonage window—for Edith, when she expected her husband home, always sat up for him, however late he might be—and a more welcome sight Lawrence had seldom seen. When, after stabling and grooming his mare, he came to the house, his clothes saturated with water, bare-headed and his hair matted with the rain—he had left Dennis's old beaver in the kitchen—Edith sprang up with dilated eyes of terror, and, flinging her arms around him, eagerly asked what had happened.

“Well, I have got wet, my dear,” said Lawrence, trying to smile, his teeth chattering meanwhile with cold, “wet enough for both of us; so it is superfluous for you to make yourself as wet as I am;” and he gently disengaged her arms, and briefly recounted his adventure.

“Thank God, you are safe!” she exclaimed. “You must promise me not to go on the ice again. I have been haunted with terror lest something would happen. But wherever did you get that cloak?” she asked; and then, as he removed it and she beheld the sky-blue coat with the brass buttons, she burst into uncontrollable laughter.

“Well, I suppose I am a ridiculous-looking guy,” said Lawrence, somewhat ruefully; “but the owner of this old coat has as kind a heart as ever beat beneath broadcloth or velvet, and I would not hurt his feelings for the world.”

“Forgive me,” said Edith, a little remorsefully; and she bustled about to get dry clothes, make hot coffee, and give Lawrence a warm supper, to ward off, if possible, any bad result from his exposure.

Next day neither he nor Jessie seemed any the worse for their adventure, except that both appeared to be a little stiff in their movements.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE TRAMP WITH THE BAG.

“O! what a goodly outside falsehood hath!”

SHAKESPEARE, *Merchant of Venice*.

OUR readers will have discovered before this that there is no “plot” to our little story; that it consists simply of truthful pictures of itinerant life. Human life, for the most part, neither in a parsonage nor out of it, is evolved on the “plot” principle; but is largely the result of the action and reaction on each other of the environment without, and moral forces within. And while facts are often stranger than fiction, they seldom hold to each other the relations of cause or consequence developed in the plots of the sensational story-writer.

We proceed now to exhibit another picture in our magic lantern, which, while an authentic episode, has no special relation to anything that has preceded or that shall follow.

In Canada we are comparatively free from the predations of “pious tramps,” and fraudulent *soi-disant* agents of philanthropic or religious organizations. The general intelligence of our people, and the comparative completeness of the organization of the several Churches, render our country an unpropitious field for such “bogus” missionary enterprises as that to Borioolagha satirized by Dickens.

Occasionally, however, we are afflicted with the visit of some plausible sneak-thief, who preys upon the generosity of the religious community, especially of ministers of religion. One such found his way to the village of Fairview. It was towards the close of a hot summer day that he arrived by stage. He was a tall, dark-complexioned man, with great cavernous eyes, shaggy eyebrows, and straggling whiskers. A long linen "duster" partially concealed his rusty black suit. He carried a black glazed bag and faded alpaca umbrella, and wore a limp and not over-clean shirt-collar, and a beaver hat that had once been black, but now exhibited a decided tinge of brown, especially at the rim and crown. He inquired at the post-office the name of the Methodist minister in the place, and the way to his house. Taking his glazed bag in his hand, he soon presented himself at the parsonage door. His knock was answered by Edith herself, when he asked if Mr. Temple was within. Edith supposed from his appearance that he was a book-pedlar, and knowing that Lawrence was busy at his Sunday's sermon—it was Saturday afternoon—she replied that he was engaged.

"Just take him this, sister," said the stranger, in a slightly foreign accent, taking from a pocket wallet, that smelt strongly of tobacco, a somewhat crumpled card; "and tell him that a brother minister wishes to confer with him on the Lord's work."

Edith rather resented the familiarity with which he addressed her, but she nevertheless invited him into the parlour, and carried his card to Lawrence. On the card were printed the words, "Rev. Karl Hoffmanns Van Buskirk, Agent of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews."

"I do not know this gentleman," said Lawrence; "I never heard of him before."

"He seems to know you, though," said Edith, "and wants to confer with you on the Lord's work;" and she imitated the stranger's sanctimonious whine. "I

believe," she went on, "that he is a canting humbug. I don't like the look of him."

"Well, I must see him, I suppose," said Lawrence, and he proceeded to the parlour. He found the Rev. Karl Van Buskirk reclining at full length upon the sofa, with his dust-soiled feet resting on one of Edith's crocheted "antimacassars," as, with a suggestive literalness, they were called.

"Ah, I knew I might take the liberty, in a brother minister's house, of resting this weary frame," said the stranger; "I'm exceedingly wearied in the service of the Lord, but not weary of it, thank God!"

Lawrence bowed, accepted the proffered hand, and said—somewhat conventionally, we are afraid—that he was glad to see the stranger.

"I knew you would be," said the Reverend Karl, again taking his seat, and Lawrence, out of politeness, also sat down. "I knew you would be. We are both servants of the same Master, though labouring in different parts of the same vineyard."

"Where has your field of labour been?" asked Lawrence.

"Mine has been a most interesting field—the most interesting, I think, in the world—in the Lord's Land itself, the very land where His feet have trod, and where His kinsmen according to the flesh are to be gathered together before His coming again."

Lawrence was by no means convinced of the correctness of the theory of the pre-millennial restoration of the Jews, but he did not choose to make it then a point of controversy; so he merely bowed in silence.

"Allow me to show you some of my testimonials," continued the stranger; "I have the best of testimonials;" and he took from his wallet a number of well-thumbed documents. "There is one," he went on, "from Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Beirut, in Syria; and this is from the American Consul at Jaffa—the ancient Joppa, you will remember; we have a very flourishing school there. And this is one I prize very

highly from Dr. Gobat, the Prussian Bishop of Jerusalem, you know ; and here are some from my old theological tutors, Drs. Delitzsch, of Leipzig, and Tholuck, of Halle ;” and he exhibited some much worn papers, which, however, as they were written in German, Lawrence could not read, although he regarded with reverence the writing of such world-famous men.

“ These are very interesting,” said Lawrence, “ very interesting indeed ; but I have, of course, no personal acquaintance with these gentlemen. Have you testimonials from any of our public men in Canada ? ”

“ O, one can have no better testimonials than these,” said Mr. Van Buskirk ; “ but I have others. Perhaps you know this gentleman, the President of the Wentworth Ladies’ College ;” and he presented a paper bearing what looked like the bold signature of Dr. Dwight.

“ O yes, I know him,” said Lawrence, “ and anything that he endorses commands my perfect confidence.”

“ Dr. Dwight, you perceive, commends both myself and my mission to the sympathies of the Churches,” continued Van Buskirk. “ I should like very much to bring the cause I represent before your people to-morrow. I shall be happy to preach for you if you will give me an opportunity.”

Lawrence readily fell into the trap so skilfully baited. He would have thought it discourteous to refuse the use of his pulpit to any duly authorized minister ; and having accepted the offer of the stranger’s pulpit services, he felt that he could do no less than invite him to share the hospitalities of the parsonage.

These the Rev. Karl Van Buskirk accepted with an easy *nonchalance* which seemed to indicate that he was an adept in the *rôle* he was playing. He coolly took off his boots, asked for a pillow, and said that as he was tired he would like a nap till supper was ready ; “ and,” he continued with a familiar air, “ I should like something substantial, you know, as I have had a long journey to-day.”

Lawrence felt inclined to resent this familiarity, but he attributed it, as well as some slips in his guest's English, to his foreign extraction. As he communicated to his wife the manner of the stranger's acceptance of his invitation, he remarked,—

“I have heard of foreign brusqueness, but, if this is a specimen, I don't altogether like it.”

“If he is recommended by Dr. Dwight, that is enough for me,” said Edith, and she proceeded to make ready the guest chamber and to prepare the evening meal. The latter was appetizing enough to suit an epicure—sliced cold beef, the best of bread, golden butter, rich ripe strawberries and cream, and fragrant tea—all elegantly served with snowy napery and dainty china and glassware.

The guest, when summoned to the repast, cast a hungry eye over the table, as if taking an inventory of the materials of the supper, and then with brief ceremony addressed himself to the task of making away with as much of them as possible. After he had made almost a clean sweep of everything on the well-spread board, he said with a sigh,—

“Your supper is very nice, Sister Temple, very nice, though a little light for a travel-worn man. Your cold meat is very good indeed, but don't you think you could have something warm for breakfast—a nice steak now? I am going to preach for Brother Temple, and I always like a substantial meal before I preach, you know.”

“We never cook meat on Sundays,” said Edith, colouring. “We abstain as far as possible from all needless work.”

“Quite right, sister, quite right,” remarked the Reverend Karl. “But this, you perceive, is a work of necessity—to support nature in the service of the Lord. You would not want me to break down in my sermon, I'm sure; and after preaching I always like a hot roast dinner.”

After supper, therefore, while Lawrence entertained

his guest, who sat on the verandah, smoking a vile-smelling pipe, Edith went to the village butcher's for a fresh supply of provisions. "Had Dr. Dwight known the habits of the man," she thought, "he would not have so highly commended him."

The steak for breakfast and the roast for dinner made a serious inroad upon the sum set apart from their modest income for provisions for the following week; and as she did all her own work, the prospect of fussing over a hot stove to cook it was not an agreeable one.

The stranger's evening prayer was a very effusive one, embracing not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles of every name and race, and ending with the "hospitable hosts of the servant of the Lord." Before he retired, the free and easy guest took off his shoes in the parlour, asked for a pair of slippers, and requested that the maid might clean the shoes for him. Edith was about furtively to carry them off, when Lawrence took them out of her hand and cleaned them himself. Even when polished, they had, like their owner, a vulgar, ill-bred look—run down at the heels, and cracked at the sides.

The Reverend Karl was in no hurry to appear in the morning, but spent the best hours of the glorious summer day in bed. When he did appear, he sniffed the appetising odours of the broiled steak with much satisfaction, and did ample justice to the meal.

"I always take up a collection for my mission, wherever I preach, Brother Temple," he said after breakfast. "The labourer is worthy of his hire, you know. 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.'"

"Ox enough you are," said Edith to herself, and she longed to muzzle him in good earnest.

Lawrence made no dissent, although the collections were set apart by the trustees for a parsonage-furnishing fund. Edith remained at home to prepare dinner—a thing she had never done in her married life before; but she consoled herself with the thought that

she would get no good from the preaching of such a sordid creature, if she did go to church.

The sermon was chiefly an appeal for money "to carry on the Lord's work among His own peculiar people;" and the appeal was remarkably successful, as the preacher paraded his testimonials from foreign consuls, ecclesiastics, and especially from the great Methodist authority, the Rev. Dr. Dwight. He also announced after the collection, without consulting the pastor, that as some of the congregation might wish to contribute something more, he would call on them next day.

Edith spent the morning broiling over the hot stove on a very hot day, and looked red and uncomfortable at dinner and out of temper; for we are sorry to say that even this paragon of perfection was capable on provocation, such as our readers will probably admit that she had now received, of exhibiting some signs of—let us call it—moral indignation. The Reverend Karl seemed, however, in thoroughly good humour with himself—quite jovial indeed—probably from the inspiring effects of the large collection which he stowed away in his glazed bag. He devoted himself to the duties of the table with energy, and did ample justice to the bountiful repast. After dinner he declined an invitation to attend the afternoon appointment—probably because he learned that it was at a school-house in the country, and that no collection would be expected. Under the plea of fatigue, he stretched himself upon the parlour sofa, whence his melodious snores could soon be heard.

Edith always attended the Sunday School, but on this occasion was too tired to go, and besides did not wish, partly from courtesy, and partly from distrust—a strangely blended feeling—to leave the stranger in the house. She, therefore, asked her friend, Carrie Mason, to stay with her, chiefly from a vague feeling of revulsion at being left alone in the house with her strange guest.

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In the evening he again declined to attend the service, under the plea that he felt unwell—which, however, did not prevent his making away with what was left of the dinner's roast beef. He then smoked on the verandah his vile tobacco, and in the twilight dusk returned to the little parlour; while Edith and her friend completed the household work in the kitchen. When this was done, Edith proceeded with a lamp to the parlour, when to her surprise she beheld her Reverend—or rather *unreverend*—guest stooping over her cabinet, a sort of combined work-box and writing-desk, which she had received as a wedding present. It contained her gold pen and penholder, her gold thimble, fine scissor case, one or two locket, and some other trinkets, which she highly valued as presents from dear friends. He had opened the cabinet, and was furtively trying to open its several drawers. When detected, he exhibited some degree of nervous embarrassment, but soon recovered his usual assurance, and remarked,—

“I have been admiring your beautiful cabinet, Sister Temple. I have never seen one so elegantly fitted up.”

Edith was so unresponsive in her manner that Mr. Van Buskirk, after repeated dislocating yawns, asked for a lamp and went to his room.

“That man's a thief,” said Carrie Mason, after he had gone, “or would be if he could. I wouldn't trust him in a churchyard, for fear he would steal the tombstones.”

“I don't know what to think,” replied Edith. “If it were not for his letter from Dr. Dwight, I would distrust him too.”

“If he has one, he stole it,” said Carrie impulsively. “Have you seen it?”

“No; but I will to-morrow, before he leaves this house,” replied Edith, fast losing faith in her reverend guest.

She communicated her suspicions to Lawrence on

his return, and they both decided that he must not be allowed to solicit money from the people of the village. It was, however, an embarrassing thing to broach their suspicions; but when, after breakfast next day, the *soi-disant* philanthropist asked Lawrence to accompany him on his round of begging—"Your introduction will be of great service to me," he said—they both felt that the time had come for an explanation.

"I regret that I cannot accompany you," said Lawrence; "I do not know enough of your work to so fully endorse it."

"What! after seeing all these documents and testimonials!" said the philanthropist, with real or well-feigned astonishment. "What does Sister Temple say to this?"

"I have not seen your testimonials," replied Edith, with an involuntary recoil from the familiarity of his address.

"Allow me to show them to you; I am sure you will recognize the importance of my mission;" and he effusively unfolded his wallet and displayed its contents.

She paid little heed to the foreign documents and consuls' certificates, but rapidly opened and critically examined the so-called testimonial from Dr. Dwight.

"This is not Dr. Dwight's handwriting," she said presently; "I know it well. Besides, Dr. Dwight does not spell his name D-w-i-g-t. This," and she looked the discomfited tramp in the eye, "is a forgery, as I suppose the others are, too."

"Madam!" said the detected rogue, snarling and showing his teeth like a weasel caught in a trap; "I will not argue with women. I have been grossly insulted. I leave your house this instant!" and he looked as if he would strike her if he dared.

"That is the best thing you can do," said Lawrence incisively, and involuntarily clenching his fist. "You have imposed on my credulity, betrayed my confidence, abused my hospitality, and lied before God and man. As I have to some degree given you countenance, I

give you warning that I shall do my best to counteract your fraud."

Vengeful fires blazed in the dark scowling eyes of the disconcerted cheat, as he snatched his glazed bag and umbrella and strode down the garden walk with an air of insulted dignity.

Edith first of all burst into a fit of laughter at his ludicrous appearance, and then tears of vexation came into her eyes as she exclaimed,—

"The hateful creature! I'd as soon have a toad touch me as have him call me 'Sister Temple,' in that whine of his—the canting hypocrite!"

An hour later Lawrence went to his wife's desk to write to the *Toronto Globe* a letter exposing the arrant impostor. He found, however, that her gold pen and penholder and all her trinkets had been abstracted, and that the mercenary wretch had added ingratitude and petty theft to his foul mendacity. He was, however, now beyond their reach. They learned afterwards from the public prints, that while playing the rôle of a converted priest, and lecturing on the secrets of the confessional, he had been tarred and feathered by an outraged community, disgusted with his vulgar scandals; and that he was afterwards arrested and tried for burglary and sentenced to seven years in a penitentiary.





## CHAPTER XXIV.

### ABOUT BOOKS.

“God be thanked for books! They are the voices of the distant and the dead, and make us heirs of the spiritual life of past ages.”—CHANNING, *On Self-Culture*.

“A good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond. . . . As good almost kill a man as kill a good book. Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them, to be as active as that soul whose progeny they are.”—MILTON, *Areopagitica*.

WE turn now to a pleasanter episode in the life and experience of the inmates of the Fairview parsonage. Under the inspiration of the sympathy and efforts of the pastor, and especially of his wife, who threw her whole soul into this labour of love, the Sunday School became a very successful institution. It was a factor of great importance in the educational, religious, and social life of the community. The great want of a country neighbourhood is frequently the lack of books and other mental stimuli. In most houses the supply of books is limited to a few old heirlooms, a few school-books, and some cheap and showily bound subscription books, which lie conspicuously on the parlour table, but are never read. The secular newspaper is the chief intellectual food of the adult population; and it is often filled with little less than bitter partisan politics.

The late Superintendent of Public Instruction in Ontario, the great and good Dr. Ryerson—one of the

truest, noblest, and most intelligent of patriots that ever blessed with his life and labours any land—endeavoured to supply this lack of good reading by establishing, in connection with the public schools of the country, libraries of standard authors. And this plan was in many cases a great success, and the masterpieces of English literature—the grandest legacy of the past to the present—thus found their way into many homes where they would otherwise have been unknown. And doubtless many an active, eager school-boy has had awakened, by contact with these immortal minds, an insatiable thirst for knowledge, which has led him to drink deep at the Pierian spring. But in many cases, through apathy on the part of the people, or through lack of judgment in the selection of the books, or of adaptation in the means employed in their circulation, they remained an ineffective force, confined, like spirits in prison, in seldom opened cases.

The Sunday Schools of the country have hitherto largely supplied this lack of books. There is no other agency which puts in circulation such a number. And, notwithstanding the sneer sometimes heard at the average Sunday School book, there is, in the aggregate, no other collection of such magnitude containing so much that is good and so little that is bad. It is, however, of necessity limited in its range, and rather too juvenile in character to meet the wants of an entire community.

Lawrence endeavoured to partially meet this felt want by organizing a reading club in connection with the Good Templars' lodge which he had established. A committee had been formed, which, at his suggestion, ordered a number of the leading magazines and periodicals of the day, both of Canada, Great Britain, and the United States; and representing the several political parties, as well as agricultural and manufacturing interests. It was astonishing what interest the expenditure of a few dollars in this way added to life in that village community. The membership of the lodge increased, and farmers' and mechanics' boys, instead of

discussing horse-trots or prize-fights, took an intelligent interest in the experiments of agricultural chemistry, and the new applications of electricity described in the *Scientific American*; and all classes followed eagerly the progress of the Ashantee war and American Secession in the *Illustrated London News* and *Harper's Weekly*.

Lawrence felt, however, that this organization was constructed on too narrow a basis—that it confined to a limited membership what he desired should benefit the entire community. He endeavoured, therefore, to establish in connection with the Church a lending library of books of a higher grade than those in the Sunday School library. In this he was only partially successful. Some of the old-fashioned members objected to these new-fangled notions. To provide books of history and travel and science was not the work of the Church, they said, and was a departure from the usages of early Methodism. In this they were egregiously mistaken. For this is the very work to which John Wesley, with his broad comprehensiveness of view, devoted much labour and care, compiling with his own hand grammars, histories, and books of science, and employing an efficient organization for their distribution among the people.

Lawrence, indeed, formed in connection with the Church a Society for Mutual Improvement, by the reading of essays and criticisms on the books in the lending library. But, while it was very beneficial to those who took part in it, it was limited in its range, and struggled against the discouragements and apathy of many who ought to have given it both sympathy and support.

“I don't see where the money's to come from for all this,” said Brother Manning, the careful circuit steward. “People hev only so much to give; and if they give it all for this gimcrackery, they won't hev none left to pay the preacher.”

“We allers got along well enough without sich things,” said Mrs. Marshall; “an' if boys larns how to plough and harrer, and gals how to make good butter

and cheese, I don't see what they want with so much book larnin'."

At length Lawrence hit upon the happy idea of appealing to the co-operation of the entire community—embracing all the Churches, and even those who belonged to no Church—to organize a Mechanics' Institute, with library, reading-room, and winter night classes. He first broached his idea to Messrs. Malcolm and McIntyre, the proprietors of the large foundry in the village. They were intelligent Scotch Presbyterians, and knew the value of trained intellects in mechanical employment. They fell in with the plan at once, and offered a hundred dollars to carry out the scheme, on condition that their apprentices should have the benefit of the classes and library free.

"I have no doubt it will be a good investment," the senior partner shrewdly remarked, "and we shall get our money back in improved labour."

Lawrence then went to the large agricultural implement works of Messrs. Spokes and Felloes, who were staunch Church of England men; and they were not to be outdone by their Presbyterian rivals, so they also subscribed a hundred dollars under similar conditions. Seeing what these had done, two Methodist store-keepers came down handsomely, and even a Roman Catholic employer of labour contributed liberally. Thus one of the very first results of the effort was to enlist men of different religious views and feelings in a common object, for the general benefit of the community. The reeve and council of the village placed at the service of the new organization a room in the town hall, and at a meeting of the friends and supporters of the scheme Lawrence was unanimously elected President of the Fairview Mechanics' Institute.

This office he did not covet, but he did not feel at liberty to decline it, and devoted himself with energy to the discharge of its duties. A library committee was organized, book catalogues were studied, and a selection was made of the most important standard

authors in history, travel, and science, not excluding a certain amount of select fiction and poetry—the works of the great masters of this department of literature. In consideration of the large order, the wholesale dealer at Toronto gave a large discount, and Father Lowry brought out the heavy boxes from the railway station without charge. Their arrival made a great sensation in the village. They were the topic of universal conversation. When the books were placed upon the shelves, a public meeting was held to inaugurate the institution. The reeve, a plain man of few words, occupied the chair.

“I can’t make a speech,” he said, “but I believe in this thing, and here’s ten dollars toward its support. When I was young, books were scarce; but I am glad that my boys will have a better chance than I had.”

On the platform were the Church of England, Presbyterian, and Methodist ministers; a thing that had never happened before in the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

After the speeches, the audience adjourned to the library to see the books. Most of them had never beheld so many before, and not a few mentally exclaimed with Dominie Sampson, “Prodeegious!”

“Law sakes!” said Mrs. Marshall, “I didn’t think there wuz so many books in the world afore. Who writ ’em all, I wonder?”

“Well, our preacher kinder sot his heart on a-gettin’ of ’em,” said Brother Manning, the thrifty circuit steward; “though how it’s a-goin’ to benefit him, I don’t see. But it won’t take nothin’ off his salary, as t’other plan would.”

After the novelty of the thing wore off, however, it required considerable effort to keep up the interest, and especially to provide funds for the necessary expenses. So Lawrence arranged a course of lectures on popular science and literature, giving the first himself, and inviting the local clergy and ministers from abroad to take part in the course. These awakened so much



interest, and were so largely attended, that, as the crowning event of the series, he decided to invite the greatest living orator of the English-speaking race—William Morley Punshon—alas that we can no longer speak of him as a *living* orator!—to give his lecture on “Daniel in Babylon.” This great man, who had an ardent sympathy for every intellectual and moral movement, kindly accepted the invitation. The Town Hall was crowded, outside as well as within—if we may use a Hibernian privilege of speech. He employed his matchless powers, and put forth his best efforts, to please and edify that village audience, as much as if he were addressing the cultured thousands of Exeter Hall. The distinguished lecturer made his home at the parsonage, and exhibited his high-bred courtesy amid its humble accommodations no less than when entertained in the palatial homes which were everywhere open to him.

As Lawrence handed him his lecture fee, which was much less than the usual amount, he generously handed back half of it.

“I must charge some fee,” he said, “or I should be overrun with engagements to help those who will do nothing to help themselves. Besides, I like the luxury of honestly earning money, and spending it as my conscience and judgment suggest.”

Opinion in the village was somewhat divided as to the greatness and character of the man.

Mrs. Marshall, when she saw him playing croquet on the lawn with Lawrence and his wife and Carrie Mason, rolled up her eyes in holy horror, and vowed that she wouldn't hear such a man as that preach or lecture on any account. (Lawrence found it expedient to lock up his croquet set, which he got for the benefit of his wife's health—not that he thought there was anything wrong in its use, but to prevent the cavils of foolish and unreasonable men and women.)

“Do you really think he is a good man?” she asked Mrs. Manning the next day.

“Do I think so? I know so,” was the emphatic

reply. "I never heard a sermon that so took hold o' me as that lecture. As he described Dan'l a-prayin' toward Jerusalem, with all the windows open, and then throw'd into the lions' den, 'pears like I could just see the hull thing; and when he recited that poetry, well, I never heard nothin' like it."

"I don't know," said Uncle Jabez; "'pears to me that old Ezra Adams, and William Ryerson, and Henry Wilkinson, wuz as good preachers as he is. He didn't make me shout 'Hallelujah!' onc't, and I've often been shoutin' happy when Elder Case or Ezra Adams preached."

Said sweet Carrie Mason, all her soul beaming in her eyes, as she described the lecture to her invalid mother: "As he recited—

‘Cleon hath a thousand acres,  
Ne'er a one have I,’

I saw a before undreamt-of meaning in the lines. Why, words are living things as he uses them; they thrill and throb with feeling till it is almost pain to hear."

"He ain't no slouch of a preacher," said Jim Larkins to an admiring throng in the bar-room of the "Dog and Gun." "He can e'en a'most make your hair stand on end. He beats a stage-playin' feller I see onc't at the theayter up to Toronto all to bits. But hang him and the Methody parson and their Institoot! they're gettin' all the boys up there to their readin'-room o' nights. But my last trick ain't played yet. I'm a-goin' to get a brand new billiard table, and I'll give free drinks to all the boys as play. That'll fetch 'em, I guess, better than their old books and papers."

We are happy, however, to say that Jim Larkins was only partially successful in luring back to his lair those who had tasted the attraction of higher intellectual enjoyments. The billiard table came and the free drinks were given; but, as the result of the intellectual stimulus of the library, a news-stand was established in part of the post-office, and more books and papers were sold in Fairview in a month than there had before been in a year.



## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE EXCURSION.

“The Lake of the Isles !  
How it sleeps with the islands embracing it round  
In its beautiful silvery silence profound !  
The sweet charm of content is upon it, unbroken  
By sound of unrest, or the presence or token  
Of man.

And all nature has donned the adornings  
Of beauty, and wears them with grace like a queen.  
Every islet seems glad in its garments of green ;  
And far-away hills of the mainland are beaming  
With brightness against the blue sky.”

*Geraldine : a Souvenir of the St. Lawrence.*

ONE of the most marked effects on the village community of the establishment of the Mechanics' Institute was its influence in uniting all classes, irrespective of denominational lines, in promoting one common object. In the amateur concerts and other entertainments which were gotten up, the adherents of the different Churches met on a common ground. Lawrence invited Father Mahan, the parish priest, and the rector of the Anglican Church, together with the Presbyterian minister, to act on the committee of management ; and was greatly gratified to find that they recognized the importance of the movement, and cordially agreed to bear their share of responsibility in promoting it. One Roman Catholic family of culture rendered such valuable musical aid at these concerts

that Lawrence called personally to thank them, and became an occasional and welcome visitor at their hospitable home. Here he sometimes met Father Mahan, and found him to be a genial Irish gentleman, whose prejudice against the Methodists evidently melted as he became better acquainted with them.

The bane of small communities, when divided into sectarian parties, is a narrowness and rancour of feeling that warps the judgment and embitters the character. Anything that will remove this sentiment, and broaden the sympathies and mutual charity of those who should be good neighbours and friends, is to be desired; and nothing will so accomplish this result as united effort in any common moral or philanthropic movement.

About this time the Government of the Province, in order to encourage such an important educational influence as the growth of Mechanics' Institutes and classes, made legislative provision for the granting of aid from the public chest to these Institutes, in proportion to the work accomplished. To take advantage of this offer, it was necessary to raise and expend a considerable amount of money. In order to raise this amount, Lawrence and his co-labourers resolved to get up a grand excursion to a famous picnic-ground at the further end of the beautiful Lac de Baume. The whole country side was invited, a band of music was engaged, and a steamboat chartered for the occasion. The public responded warmly to the invitation. The village reeve proclaimed a public holiday in honour of the event. It was the first time Fairview had ever had the opportunity for such a pleasant excursion. A numerous company assembled from far and near: country boys, looking uncomfortably warm in their Sunday clothes—they soon overcame the difficulty, however, by taking off their coats, and going about in their shirt-sleeves—and country girls, looking delightfully cool in their muslin dresses and pretty ribbons. The hour had come for departure, and still the boat did not move. There was some unaccountable "hitch" in the proceedings.

At length the captain, a rough-tongued, red-faced fellow, recently promoted from "bossing" a lumber-*barge*, appeared from his office, roundly declaring that the boat should not move a fathom till the two hundred dollars' charterage was paid. Here was an embarrassing predicament. The committee were depending on the fares to be collected to pay this sum. Lawrence had not two hundred dollars in the world, and in the hurry and confusion knew not whom to ask to lend it. As he stood in embarrassed colloquy with the captain, up came Mr. Malcolm, of Malcolm and McIntyre, and inquired the cause of the delay.

"I wants my money afore I starts this boat," said the captain gruffly, "that's what's the matter."

"You do, eh!" replied Mr. Malcolm. "You might wait till you do your work first. But you had better pay him at once, and have done with it," he said to Lawrence.

"So I would, but I haven't the money," replied our hero, feeling the burdens of his presidency heavier than he anticipated.

"O, that's the trouble, is it?" said the wealthy manufacturer. "We must try to raise the wind somehow;" and, taking his cheque-book from his pocket, he wrote a cheque for the amount. "Will that do?" he asked, as he handed it to the captain.

"That will raise the steam, if not the wind," said the captain, as he put the cheque into his greasy wallet. "Hollo there, all aboard! cast off the head-line!" and taking his stand by the wheel-house, he rang the signal-bell, the wheels began to revolve, and the steamer moved on its watery way.

Except this somewhat disconcerting episode at starting, the excursion was a great success. The sun shone gloriously: a slight breeze cooled the air. The steamer, with its happy human freight, glided, swan-like, in and out among the archipelago of islands, each mirrored in all its Midsummer loveliness in the placid lake. Into a sequestered bay—as quiet, seemingly, as if in some

primeval world before the advent of man—the steamer glided, and the merry and hungry party disembarked for dinner. A return to the out-of-door life and primitive instincts of the race is, for a time at least, a treat that all enjoy. The gentlemen built camp-fires; the ladies, gipsy-wise, made tea or coffee; hampers were unpacked, and ample provision was made for eager appetites.

“There the trees

Made a murmurous music as stirred by the breeze;  
 The half-silence was sweet with the odours of flowers;  
 And pretty green islets, like shyly-hid bowers,  
 Slept there in the sun, with their green garments trailing  
 The water that kissed them, and seemed as if sailing  
 Adown a green river to seas undiscovered  
 By mortal. Some saint of the beautiful hovered  
 About the rare spot and enchanted it.

Verily,

Dinner out-doors should be eaten quite merrily  
 Ever; for half of the pleasure you take in it  
 Lies in the jovial mirth that you make in it.”

After dinner there were speeches, music, and games. Some went fishing in sequestered nooks; the golden sunfish flashing in the crystal wave, the ladies screaming with mingled sympathy and coquetry when one would swallow the bait and soon lie floundering and gasping out his life at their feet—only too true a picture, said the bachelor schoolmaster, of the way they treat the human victims, whom he accused them of angling for. Some, sitting in Watteau-like groups, crowned each other with iris and water-lilies and cardinal flowers. Others went wandering down the green forest aisles, as in the poet's pictures of Arcadian days, when the bright world was young. Thus, like a dream of beauty, the day glided swiftly by.

The lengthening shadows were creeping over wave and shore before the happy isle was left; and in the golden haze and rich after-glow of sunset the steamer glided on her way, over what appeared like a sea of glass mingled with fire. Lawrence had the pleasure

of repaying Mr. Malcolm the temporary loan which had been so opportunely tendered, and had still a handsome surplus left for the benefit of the Institute.

The shades of night were falling fast as the steamer approached the landing-place, and the happiness of the day came near being turned into sorrow by what might have been a dreadful tragedy. As the passengers were leaving the boat, somehow or other, no one knew how, a little girl got separated from her friends and fell into the water. A gallant sailor immediately plunged after her, but in the gathering darkness could not at first find her. Soon, however, he lifted her up on the landing-stage, amid the cheers of the crowd of passengers. As the half-distracted father folded the dripping child in his arms, she was heard to sob out: "O papa! I'm all *wet!*"

The ludicrous concern of the half-drowned child for her spoiled holiday dress and ribbons relieved the painful tension of feeling, and smiles ran round the company, but now in tears of sympathy.

But not yet was the chapter of accidents ended. The landing-stage was not a regular wharf, but a floating barge, from which a long gangway, forming part of the boom of the saw-mill, led to the shore. On one side of this were a number of floating saw-logs, slabs, and bark from the mill, so that the surface of the water was covered, and the edge of the gangway was not clearly defined. In the excitement consequent on the rescue of the child, Carrie Mason, who had been one of the blithest and merriest maidens of the happy company, stepped off the edge and instantly sank out of sight beneath the dark water. If she should come up under the logs, she might be drowned before help could be rendered. Lawrence took in the situation at a glance, and his old log-driving experience came to his help. He sprang upon one of the floating logs, and though it spun rapidly round under him, he maintained his footing till he caught sight of the white dress appearing through the dark water, when

he sprang in and supported the fainting girl in one strong arm, while with the other he swam ashore. A dozen stalwart fellows waded in to relieve him of his precious burden, impelled not only by common humanity, but by a stronger feeling; for sweet Carrie Mason was, for her beauty, her goodness, her orphan helplessness, the favourite of the village. She was borne tenderly to her widowed mother's house. The invalid started up with dilated eyes and pallid cheeks, as her daughter, the light of her eyes, the soul of her soul, was carried in, looking whiter than even her snow-white dress.

"I'm not hurt, mother dear," said the brave girl, turning her violet eyes, full of love, on her idolized parent. "I only fell into the water, and will be all right to-morrow."

"Thank God!" exclaimed the widow devoutly, throwing herself on her knees beside her child. "I thought that you were dead;" and with the strong reaction of feeling she burst into tears.

Out of respect for her emotion, all present retired except Edith Temple and the good neighbour who had borne the widow company. Carrie was not "all right" the next day, nor the next; and, as we shall see, very tragical results were yet to follow from this seemingly trifling event.

Aroused from their apathy by the double accident, the town council constructed a wharf to accommodate the occasional vessels that called; and so a public benefit arose out of a private disaster.

The Mechanics' Institute, through the wise expenditure of the money received from the excursion, was able to take advantage of the liberal offer of the Government, and obtain a grant of four hundred dollars, which, with what was raised locally, gave it a position of permanent strength, and made its library and reading-room an educative agency of great value, and a strong counter-attraction to the billiard room and free drinks for the players at the "Dog and Gun" tavern.





## CHAPTER XXVI.

“HEAVEN’S MORNING BREAKS.”

“Pale and wan she grew and weakly,  
Bearing all her pain so meekly,  
That to them she still grew dearer,  
As the trial hour drew nearer.”

AS we intimated in our last chapter, the accident whereby Carrie Mason was submerged in the water of the lake was attended with more serious consequences than were at first anticipated. Her fine-strung nervous system received a shock, from which it seemed to lack the force to rally. The day after the accident, on attempting to rise, she fainted away, to the great alarm of her anxious parent. Dr. Norton was promptly sent for, but he prescribed only rest and quiet.

“Dr. Quiet is my great ally in such cases,” he said in his cheery way; “get all the sleep you can—

‘Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care,  
Balm of hurt minds, great Nature’s second course,  
Chief nourisher in life’s feast. . . .  
The best of rest is sleep.’”

His patient smiled a weary smile and sought to woo the drowsy god; but the more she tried, the more sleep fled from her. Her eyes beamed more brightly and became more dilated, her breathing quickened, a hot flush mantled her cheek, and as the doctor on a second

visit laid his finger on her rapid pulse, a grave look came into his eyes, although he still strove to wear his accustomed smile upon his lips. His fair patient was evidently on the verge of a low fever, into which, in spite of every effort to prevent it, she gradually sank. Day after day the fondest affection ministered at her bedside; but much of the time she was unconscious of the brooding love that watched over her. Her mind, in wandering mazes lost, groped amid the strange experiences of the past, but chiefly dwelt upon the terrible drowning scene.

"Help! help me, mother," she would cry piteously. "I am sinking down, down: O help! The waves are roaring in my ears; I see strange lights before my eyes, I cannot breathe—more air! more air!" and she would struggle convulsively till her strength was completely exhausted. Then she would lie for hours in a state of seeming coma, utterly unconscious of the soft caresses of her mother's hand, or of the furtive tear that fell upon her brow. Still nothing seemed to soothe her quivering nerves like the touch of her mother's fingers, as she sat with unwearying love by her side, scarcely leaving the room for an hour, day or night. By a gentle constraint, Edith Temple at length insisted on the invalid mother seeking some needed rest, while she herself caressed the sick girl's fevered brow, and softly answered her wandering words.

In her most delirious moanings she seemed strangely calmed by the presence of Dr. Norton. Her hot little hand rested quietly in his broad palm as he felt her fluttering pulse. His deep rich voice asserted a control over her that no other could, and she took from him with an utter trustfulness the bitter potions from which she recoiled when given by others. Often, too, in her unconscious moanings his name would escape in low murmurings from her lips, and she seemed to feel his strong arm rescuing her from a watery grave, although it was not he, but Lawrence, who had saved her in the hour of peril. These aberrations, however, occurred

only in the Doctor's absence. When he was near her, the spell of his presence seemed to quiet her nerves and give her a self-control which she did not at other times possess.

At last, after many days, as the morning light shone on her face, the love-quicken'd discernment of her mother observed that her eyes had no longer the restless look, like that of a hunted animal. A quiet light of intelligence beamed forth, a wan smile flicker'd about her lips, as she whisper'd, "Kiss me, mother!"

As her fond parent bent over her, the sick girl faintly said, "Have I been long asleep, mother? I have had such a strange and troubled dream," and her thin hand caress'd her mother's face.

"Yes, darling, You have been very ill. But you are better now, and it will be only as a dream when one awaketh, now that we have you back with us again."

"Have I been long away, mother?" dreamily asked the maiden. "Yes, I know. I seem'd drifting, drifting away upon a shoreless sea. But a strange spell seem'd to follow me, a deep strong voice seem'd to call me back. At times, mother, it seem'd like Dr. Norton's, and at times I seem'd to see you on the shore beckoning me to return. But I was powerless to move, and lay idly drifting, drifting on the sea."

"Yes, darling," said the glad mother, returning caress for caress. "Under God it was the skill of Dr. Norton that brought you back to us. You seem'd, indeed, drifting away from us all. Thank God, thank God, we shall soon have you well again."

Yet, when Dr. Norton came to visit his patient again, to his surprise, he found that she exhibited a degree of shyness and reserve that he had never noticed before, and that seem'd to deepen with each successive visit. He thought little of it, however, attributing it to the unreasoning caprice of sickness.

During her convalescence she would lie and read and muse for hours in self-absorb'd thought, very gentle

and patient, but with an air of utter lassitude, as if a-weary of the world. Slowly, very slowly, the invalid seemed to drift back again, like flotsam borne upon a tide, to the shores of time. But she failed to recover strength. On warm and sunny days she was carried out to her favourite garden seat, commanding a view of the broad valley, the elm-shaded village, and the beautiful lake. Autumn was once more in the pride of its golden glory. A soft haze filled the air and veiled the outline of the distant hills. The Virginia creeper gleamed dark crimson in the sunlight, and the sugar-maple flung its scarlet blazonry to the autumn breeze.

"How exquisite!" said the sick girl to her friend, Edith Temple, who sat by her side. "I think I never saw the valley look so lovely before."

"That is because you have been a prisoner so long," said Edith. "We will soon have you out again; the village does not seem like itself since you have been sick."

"I shall never see another autumn, dear," answered Carrie, in a low soft voice, gazing with a far-off look in her eyes at the distant hills, as though she beheld the golden battlements of the City of God.

"You must not talk that way, child," said Edith, with a start. "That is only a sick girl's nervous fancy. With God's blessing, you will soon be well again."

"It is no fancy, dear," replied Carrie, with a wan smile flickering about her lips; "I know it; and indeed, were it not for mother, I would not wish to live."

"But life has many joys and many duties that more than counterbalance its sorrows and pains," responded Edith, seeking to argue down what she thought the sick fancy of her friend.

"O yes!" said the fair girl, a bright light kindling in her eyes; "God's world is very lovely, so lovely that often it has touched my soul to tears; and though I

have endured so much pain and weakness, yet, as Mrs. Browning says,

‘ With such large joys and sense and touch,  
Beyond what others count as such,  
I am content to suffer much.’

But God has provided even better things for those who love Him.”

“ Yes, dear, but we must wait His good time, till He calls us home,” said Edith, with her usual sense of duty dominant in her mind. “ While there is work to do in God’s world, we must not shrink from doing it.”

“ My little work is almost done,” said Carrie, with a sigh. “ Alas ! that is so small—

‘ Nothing but leaves,  
No garnered sheaves  
Of life’s fair ripened grain.’

But, poor as it is, He will accept it for the love’s sake seen therein. Nay, dear, to live on would be but to drag a lengthening chain. God is kindly taking me away from a burden I could not bear, from a sorrow I could not endure.”

“ You speak in riddles, child ; I do not understand,” responded Edith expectantly.

“ Perhaps it is better I should tell you,” replied the sick girl with hesitating speech. “ You are my other self. From you I can have no secrets. You may tell him, perhaps, when I am gone. I did not know,” she went on, “ till since I have been sick, what my real feelings toward Dr. Norton were ;” and a pink flush overspread her face as she mentioned his name. “ I always admired the nobleness of his nature, his kindness to the poor, his tenderness to the sick and suffering, his patience with the unthankful and unworthy ; but while I have communed with my own heart upon my bed, I have become aware of a deeper, a tenderer, a more sacred feeling, a feeling the nature of which he must never know, till I have passed away from time.

Of this he does not dream. His heart is another's. I pray God daily that his love may be rewarded, that his life may be happy."

"I never thought of this," said Edith, gazing wistfully at her friend.

"Nor would I have breathed it, even to you," said the fair, frail girl, "but that after I am gone you might tell him of my daily prayer that hereafter, in that world where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, our souls might meet before the throne of God."

After a pause she went on: "I used to be much troubled at one thing. He is not what the world calls a Christian. I know that he has his doubts and scruples about some things which most Christians accept. He has even been called by the censorious an infidel. But I know his fidelity to the convictions of conscience, his loyalty to all things noble and good and true; and such a nature God will not suffer to wander far away. Over such a soul the Saviour yearns and says, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven.'"

"He is more of a Christian in spirit and life," said Edith impetuously, "than many who call themselves by that sacred name. God will reward his noble treatment of poor Saunders; when others spurned him as an irreclaimable drunkard, he never lost faith or hope in him, but clung to him and helped him up from the ditch and from the grave to life and manhood again. I can never join the unchristly tirade against those who cannot see truth just as we see it."

"Bless you for these words!" exclaimed the sick girl. "I could not die content, I could not be happy, even in heaven, if I thought that he, with his noble aspirations, his impassioned search for truth, should grope blindly after God and never find Him."

"O, fear it not," replied her friend, "God will not hide Himself from any that entreat."

The long and absorbing conversation in the garden

seemed to have exhausted the strength of the invalid. It was her last day abroad. She returned to the house weary and worn. The next day came on a bleak autumnal storm :

“The wind like a broken lordling wailed,  
And the flying gold of the ruined woodlands  
drove through the air.”

The beautiful laburnum near the window, nipped by an autumnal frost, seemed an emblem of her own stricken life, and she visibly drooped and failed from day to day. Dr. Norton came often to see his gentle patient; and his large manly form, his bluff hearty manner, his exuberant life, brought colour to the cheek, and light to the eye, and, seemingly, life to the weary frame of the sick girl. But, to the quickened apprehension of Edith Temple, who now possessed the key to her strange distraught air, she evidently set a watch upon her words and looks, lest she should by sign or token betray the secret locked within her breast. The dreary weeks of November dragged on :

“The melancholy days had come, the saddest of the year,  
Of wailing winds and naked woods and meadows brown  
and sere.”

Then came the short days of December, with its wintry frosts and snows, which to the hale and strong but heighten the enjoyment of the season, but to the feeble and the sick bring depression and weariness. The cheery doctor strove to encourage his patient by holiday talk and anticipations of the approaching Christmas festivities.

“You remember what a jolly time we had last Christmas. What a success that Christmas tree was, and the Indian feast!”

“And dear Nellie Burton,” exclaimed Carrie, with generous praise, “how full of joyous life and merriment she was!” and as she noticed how eagerly the Doctor drank in her words of praise, she went on, though it cost her a pang : “Compared with her exu-

berant life and overflowing health, poor pale me seemed but a 'rath primrose of the spring' beside the full-blown rose."

Her mother, who hung wistfully on every word and look, kissed her wasted fingers, and gazed through dimming tears on the pale cheek, and said :

"But the primrose is very dear to hearts that love it, and would not exchange its pale beauty for the reddest rose."

But even the doctor's well-meant efforts at cheerfulness failed, and the smiles that came were oftentimes akin to tears.

Sweet Carrie Mason was really the most cheerful of the household group. To her mother, to whom the very thought of parting was an unutterable pang, she spoke tranquilly, nay, exultantly, of the joy of meeting

"In the home beyond the river."

And in her pure and flute-like voice she would softly sing :

"There is a land of pure delight,  
Where saints immortal reign,  
Infinite day excludes the night,  
And pleasures banish pain."

And she would often ask her mother to read the beautiful descriptions of heaven in the seventh and twenty-first and twenty-second chapters of the Revelation, and would talk of its joys and blessedness, and would sing of "Jerusalem the Golden," till

"Very near seemed the pearly gates,  
And sweetly the harpings fall,  
And her spirit seemed restless to soar away,  
And longed for the angel's call."

One day, when she felt a little stronger than usual, she said to her mother :

"When the doctor comes, leave us together, please ; I wish to speak to him alone."

"Don't fatigue yourself, dear," replied the mother, as she kissed her brow and left the room.



"Dr. Norton," said the sick girl when they were alone, "I want to say something to you while I have strength. I'm not afraid to die, Doctor. I know as well as you that my days are very few, that the time of my departure is at hand. But, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for my Saviour is with me, His rod and staff they comfort me. Dr. Norton, the religion of Jesus is no cunningly devised fable. It is a blessed reality. Can you believe it? Can you not accept my Saviour?" and all her soul went forth in the look of yearning wistfulness that beamed in her eyes.

The strong man quivered with emotion, and with a voice broken with sobs he exclaimed,—

"I do! I do! My unbelief is overcome. My doubts are banished. My faith lays hold on God. This is not the work of a day, but of months. You remember the camp-meeting. I went there a sceptic, but, thank God! never a mocker at religion. I saw you in that trance-like state. It baffled all my medical skill. I could not understand nor explain it. I witnessed your restoration to consciousness. I saw your face shine as it had been the face of an angel. I heard your whispered words of adoration, as if you talked with God face to face. I felt that there was something here beyond human philosophy, that it was the mighty power of God. I sought illumination by prayer. God has led me by a way that I knew not; the long-insulted Saviour did not spurn me for my doubts; but He showed me, as He did unbelieving Thomas, evident proofs of His divinity and His humanity; of His power and His love; and now, with Thomas, my heart cries out in truest and deepest adoration, "My Lord and my God!" and he knelt at the bedside.

"Thank God! Thank God!" softly whispered the dear girl, while the tears of gladness stole down her wan and wasted cheek; "now I can die content."

Strangely moved by her deep interest in his welfare, and her intense sympathy, he took her thin white hand

in his, and, as devoutly as he would worship a saint, he raised it to his lips; then rose, and silently left the room.

Lawrence Temple was most sedulous in his ministrations to the dying girl, but he confessed that he received more spiritual strength and instruction than he was able to impart.

At length came Christmas Day, bright and clear and cold without; but in every home in Fairview, what a change from the joyous festival of one little year before! There was sorrow at every hearth that sweet Carrie Mason lay upon her dying bed. Even the little children had no heart for their Christmas games, and the Christmas presents seemed to lose their power to please.

As the short day drew to its close, a little group of the more intimate friends of the stricken household—Lawrence and his wife, Dr. Norton, and two or three others—gathered in the room which so often had seemed

"Privileged beyond the common walks  
Of virtuous life, quite on the verge of heaven."

The object of their common love lay supported by pillows on her bed, whose snowy counterpane was scarce more white than she. Her cheeks were thin and pale, save for a hectic spot that burned in each; her thin hands were transparent, almost as alabaster. But a strange light beamed in her eyes, like the dawn of another world rising in her soul.

"How beautiful!" she exclaimed, as the light of the setting sun flooded the room with glory. "Draw aside the curtain, please, and let me see once more the village, the valley, the church, the school, and the garden;" and as she gazed on each remembered spot, endeared by a thousand tender recollections of childhood and youth, "I shall never forget it," she said; "even in heaven I shall remember it, as, next to heaven itself, the dearest spot in all God's universe."

Then, as the setting sun transfigured and glorified

the whole scene, and its rays were flashed back from the village windows, and the village spire,

“It is a parable,” she said; “I go to the unsetting sun. Sing, please, ‘Sun of my soul;’” and from lips that faltered as they sang, rose the sweet strains of Keble’s evening hymn :

“Sun of my soul ! Thou Saviour dear,  
It is not night if Thou be near ;  
O may no earth-born cloud arise,  
To hide Thee from Thy servant’s eyes !

“When the soft dews of kindly sleep  
My wearied eyelids gently steep,  
Be my last thought, How sweet to rest  
For ever on my Saviour’s breast !

“Abide with me from morn till eve,  
For without Thee I cannot live ;  
Abide with me when night is nigh,  
For without Thee I dare not die.”

As she lay with closed eyes, they thought she had fallen asleep and ceased to sing. But she opened her eyes and gazed long at the western sky, now ruddy with the after-glow of the winter’s sunset. Then she faintly whispered, as she held her mother’s hand,

“‘Beyond the skies where suns go down  
I shall be soon.’

‘I shall awake in Thy likeness and be satisfied—be satisfied.’” Then, as the light faded and the shadows fell, she whispered, “Sing again, ‘Abide with me.’”

With tear-choked voices one after another took up the strains of Lyte’s pathetic hymn :

“Abide with me ! fast falls the eventide ;  
The darkness deepens ; Lord, with me abide !  
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me !

“Swift to its close ebbs out life’s little day ;  
Earth’s joys grow dim, its glories pass away ;  
Change and decay in all around I see ;  
O Thou who changest not, abide with me !

" I need Thy presence every passing hour :  
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power ?  
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be ?  
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me ! "

Often they were compelled to stop, for sobs choked their utterance. But when their voices failed, hers faintly but sweetly took up the strain. The fourth stanza she sang through almost alone, as if its exultant strain enbreathed her soul with strength, her voice swelling to its triumphant close :

" I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless :  
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness :  
Where is death's sting ? where, grave, thy victory ?  
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me ! "

Then her voice faltered and the others sang through the last verse alone :

" Reveal Thyself before my closing eyes ;  
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies ;  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee ;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me ! "

As the song died into silence, she lay with closed eyes for a moment ; then, starting up, she exclaimed, gazing with transfigured face toward the waning light, "Mother ! 'heaven's morning breaks !' Angels ! Jesus ! God ! " and the rapt spirit was with Him she loved.





## CHAPTER XXVII.

### GAIN THROUGH LOSS.

‘From little spark may burst a mighty flame.’

DANTE, *Paradise*, canto i., l. 14.

“The wise ne’er sit and wail their loss,  
But cheerly seek how to redress their harms.”

SHAKESPEARE, *Henry IV.*

**E**ARLY in the New Year, Edith Temple received a letter from her friend, Nellie Burton, of Oil-Dorado, conveying most momentous intelligence. The briefest way to communicate the tidings is to reproduce the letter. It ran as follows:

“MY DEAREST EDITH,—I must write you all about it, or I shall lose what little wits I have left. My brain reels yet, and I start up in my sleep at night encompassed, as it seems, by flames. But I must begin at the beginning, and tell my story in order, or you will think I have taken leave of my senses.

“You must know the business season with us had been an excellent one. Father’s wells on Oil Creek had been pumping splendidly, and one or two ‘flowing wells’ that had gone dry began to flow again. Every oil-tank was full—they are huge iron things, you know, as big as a great gasometer—and father had sent millions of gallons by the pipe lines to Pittsburg. They have iron pipes laid for over a hundred miles down the Alleghany valley to the great oil refineries and storage tanks at that city. But every place was

full and overflowing with oil. At father's wells it filled the tanks, and soaked the ground, and poured into the creek, floating on the top of the water, and shining in the sunlight with a strange iridescence, all the colours of the rainbow. Everything was reeking with the smell of oil—

“ ‘ Oil, oil everywhere,  
On the earth and in the air ! ’

I used to smell oil, I believe, when I was asleep.

“ Father gave the strictest orders to observe the utmost precautions against fire, and absolutely prohibited smoking about the works. But there are men who *will* smoke, even though they were in a powder magazine, or in a mine filled with fire-damp. Well, we had one such, a stoker in the boiler-house. At the close of one of the dark days of December, just as the men were leaving work, he laid down his pipe, which he had been smoking, near some oil-soaked rags; and in a moment—almost before the men could get out of the building—the whole place was wrapped in flames. It was *sauve qui peut*, I assure you. The men had to fly for their lives, almost without attempting to save a thing.

“ We were just sitting down to tea when the alarm was given, and father jumped up, almost upsetting the table, and rushed out bare-headed to the works. I ran out on the verandah, and there the whole valley seemed ablaze. The oil derricks caught fire one after another, and flamed like great beacons against the dark pines on the hill side, lighting up everything as bright as day. Presently one of the great oil-tanks caught fire, no one knew how, and shot up to the sky a great column of flame and lurid smoke. Then the men began to dig trenches from the tanks to the creek, and I heard father shouting to bring the cannon, and they dragged the twelve-pounder from the fire hall up to the hill at the back of our house. Then they began firing round shot against the tank, so as to draw off the oil into the creek, to prevent it exploding and firing

the other tanks. Bang! bang! went the cannon. Sometimes the balls missed the tank, sometimes they glanced from the iron sides; but at last two balls, one after another, pierced the tank, and the black streams of oil poured out and flowed into the creek; thousands of dollars' worth going to waste—enough to buy that diamond set I wanted ten times over.

“How it was no one knew, but suddenly the oil in the creek caught fire, and, like a flash, the flames ran down the stream—a river of fire licking up everything that could burn. O, it was awful—the roar of the flames, the crash of the falling derricks, the rolling clouds of lurid smoke! Then the other tanks of oil, one after another, caught fire, and some of them exploded with a fearful noise, scattering the flames far and wide. In an hour everything we owned, except the house in which we lived, was destroyed, and from being a rich man father had become a very poor one. But he never lost heart or hope. He just said, ‘Well, Nell, that is the third fortune I have made and lost; I must try to make another.’ But at his time of life it is not so easily done as if he were ten years younger. I’m going to help him, Edith, all I can. Heretofore I have been nothing but a bill of expense. I never earned a dollar in my life. I had no idea how expensive I was till one day I was sorting the papers in father’s desk for him, and found a lot of receipted school and college bills, and music bills, and dress-makers’ and jewellers’ bills. I declare it made me feel ashamed of myself, as he came in, grey and haggard and worn, with toiling for me. He has given me everything I wanted, and I wanted everything I saw or could think of. But now I am going to earn money for him. My education has cost thousands of dollars, and I am determined to turn it to some account. But I find that I know scarcely anything well enough to teach it, unless perhaps music, and that only because I am so passionately fond of it. Father laughed when I said I was going to give lessons and earn money;

but I saw a tear come into his eyes, which he hastily brushed away, and, laying his hand upon my head, he said, in a husky voice, 'Bless you, my child; it is for your sake I feel the loss more than for myself.' And as I kissed his poor dear wrinkled hand, and said, 'Never fear for me, father; I can earn money enough to support myself, and help you too,' he seemed to roll off a load of care, and actually to become young again.

"But, Edith dear, I confess to a deep disappointment about that trip to Europe, which I must now give up, and, perhaps, never make at all. Give my love to dear Carrie Mason. What a merry time we had last year! I hope Dr. Norton has sense enough to appreciate her devotion. She was very fond of him, I could perceive, though she tried to conceal it. But those stupid male creatures often don't see what is right under their noses. I hope your solemn husband will think better of me now that I have ceased to be a silly butterfly of fashion, and become a sensible, honey-making bee—a perfect pattern of industry.

"As ever, your 'ownest own,'

"NELLIE BURTON."

Between smiles and tears, Edith Temple read this characteristic letter, with its mingled levity and depth and tenderness of feeling. She had deferred writing an account of Carrie Mason's death, till she should feel more capable of describing the closing scene; and now it seemed as if she had been guilty of culpable neglect.

When she mentioned to Dr. Norton the news of the change of fortune with the Burtons, although he was very profuse in his expressions of sympathy, he did not seem to be very sorry; indeed, she thought she observed a sort of exultation in his manner, as he said,—

"Well, I'm sorry for her father, of course; but I am not sure but it is the best thing that could have happened for Miss Burton. It will give her a chance to show her mettle; and there is in her the making of a noble woman, which, probably, only adversity would bring out."





## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### LIFE'S CHEQUERED PATHS.

"Thus hand in hand through life we'll go ;  
Its chequered paths of joy and woe  
With cautious steps we'll tread."

COTTON, *The Fireside.*

"Thank God for life ! life is not sweet always ;  
Still it is life, and life is cause for praise."

SUSAN COOLIDGE, *Benedicam Domino.*

A FEW weeks later Dr. Norton incidentally remarked, during a call at the parsonage, that he was about to take a little holiday trip.

"Isn't it a queer time of the year to take a holiday trip?" Lawrence blunderingly inquired.

"I don't know that the time of the year makes much difference," replied the Doctor; "a busy man must take his holiday when he can get it."

As he did not seem disposed to be very communicative, Lawrence forbore to ask whither his holiday-making would lead him; and Edith, who had a shrewd suspicion, dexterously turned the conversation into another channel.

Within a month he again made his appearance at the parsonage, his face radiant with joy.

"Congratulate me," he exclaimed, shaking his friends heartily by the hands, "I've won her, the noblest girl on earth, and all through that lucky fire."

"What is he talking about?" said Lawrence, who was rather slow-witted in reading riddles of this kind, appealing to his wife. "Has the man gone crazy? or what is the matter with him?"

"I do indeed congratulate you," said Edith, warmly; "you deserve it. You have won a prize. But I could have told you that before you left. You men are so stupid in reading our sex." And she laughed archly at both her husband and the Doctor.

"But what has the fire to do with it?" asked Lawrence, upon whom a glimmer of the facts of the case began to dawn.

"Well, you know, I'm as proud as Lucifer," replied the Doctor, "and so long as Miss Burton was a millionaire's daughter and I a poor physician, my lips were sealed. But when his riches took to themselves wings of flame and flew away, why, I mustered courage to plead my suit—and—and, well, I was not rejected."

"And would not have been before," said Edith. "Beneath her levity of manner, Nellie Burton had a noble soul, one of great depth and strength of feeling, and incapable of a sordid thought."

"Yes! yes! that is true, every word of it," said the Doctor with exultation, "but the stern parent guards her like a dragon. She is his only child, and he lavishes on her the wealth of affection his strong nature bestowed upon her mother, long since dead. He thinks there is no man on earth good enough for his daughter, in which he is not far astray. He is richer since the fire than before it. It has revealed to him what a treasure he has in his daughter. He is prouder of her than ever. She is the apple of his eye. 'Well, young man,' he said, as I asked her of him, 'I'm getting old, and can't long take care of my little girl, and I've very little to leave her. I don't know but I can die all the more content if I know that some honest fellow will love and cherish and protect her, and I think you will. I like you. You weren't scared away by our misfortune, like some of them popinjay fellows from

New York, that were dangling after her when she had lots of money, and now have become invisible. I think I can trust her to you. Be good to her. Be kind. If you were to treat her as some men treat their wives, an old man's curse would smite you even from the grave!' and he wrung my hand in his emotion as if he would crush it. But God do so to me, and more also," added the Doctor solemnly, "if it be not my chief joy to make her happy!"

In the excess of his new-found happiness, it seemed a necessity of his nature to pour into the sympathizing ears of his friends rhapsodies of talk about his plans and prospects.

"I am so glad," he said, "for one thing, that the dear girl is not to be disappointed of her trip to Europe, although it will be made in a very different style from what she anticipated; yet I doubt not she will enjoy it just as well, and perhaps learn a good deal more. For professional reasons I have long desired to visit the great hospitals and institutions of London, Paris, and Vienna: I have saved a little money, and in no way can I invest it better than in professional studies abroad, and at the same time fulfil the life-dream of us both."

Soon after, a quiet wedding took place at Oil-Dorado. The surroundings were utterly prosaic—the charred and blackened valley, the skeleton derricks, the rusty oil-tanks. But the budding trees and flowers of spring were clothing with beauty the desolate scene; and love's young romance suffused with radiance the austerities of the present, and spanned with a rainbow of hope the future. The old man, but late a millionaire, was now a foreman in extensive oil-works, but full of indomitable energy, and determined to make another fortune for his "little girl," as he persisted in calling her. While proud of his daughter, and caressing her with a yearning tenderness, he seemed half jealous of the stalwart fellow who had come to carry her off.

"It's only for a year, father," said the affectionate girl, returning his caresses; "and when we come back,

you must come and live with us, and never work any more."

"That would be poor rest for me, my dear," he said with a flickering smile; "I've worked as long as I can remember, and expect to work as long as God gives me strength. It is a necessity of my nature; fortune or no fortune makes no difference to me; I must work while I live." And in this he was but a type of a vast number of his countrymen, and of our own as well.

Another year rolled swiftly round. Lawrence's three years on the Fairview Circuit had been uncommonly successful. The societies were built up in numbers and in piety. A neat church had been erected for the growing cause at the village of Morven, and had just been successfully opened. A gallery had been added to the church at Fairview, and a parsonage built, which would be ready for the occupancy of the next preacher. For, more than any other class of men, the Methodist itinerants build houses in which other men live, and sow fields which other men reap.

*"Sic vos non vobis nificatis aves," etc.*

The Mechanics' Institute had become a great success, a centre of intellectual light and knowledge to the neighbourhood. The "Dog and Gun" tavern was almost deserted. Its sign still creaked drearily in the wind, but the sign-post leaned suggestively out of the perpendicular, as if symbolizing the effect of the potations procured within. The whole place had an air of decay and dilapidation, quite in keeping with the aspect of the miserable creatures who lounged about the bar, or hung around the door. Among these was Phin Crowle, more and more slouchy and degraded-looking than ever; resisting every effort of his brother Bob, now a zealous temperance worker, and of the preacher and his wife, to reclaim him.

"'Tain't no use tryin'," he would say to every loving remonstrance and appeal: "the devil's got his hooks into me and won't let go. It's too late, I tell ye; I

ain't got no power to reform, an' I ain't got no will, nayther. 'Ephraim's jined to his idols'—ain't that what the preacher said?—'let him alone. There's no hope for him.' I'll be found dead in the ditch some day. I've lived the life of a beast, let me die the death of a dog."

Still his brother Bob prayed for him, and besought him, and hoped against hope; but, to all human appearance, without the least prospect of his reform.

William Saunders, after his fearful relapse, walked very carefully and humbly before God, praying daily with impassioned earnestness, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." His good wife, Mary, rejoiced with trembling. Conscious of his weakness, he gave her all his money to keep, and kept steadily at his work; avoiding, as he would the mouth of hell, the temptation of the tavern door. When he had occasion to pass it, he would ask his wife, as the guardian angel of his life, to bear him company and save him from the tempting fiends.

Again a little company were assembled at the hospitable house of Father Lowry—this time to bid, not a welcome, but a farewell to the preacher and his wife. Good Mother Lowry looked more motherly than ever, with here and there a thread of grey in her hair, but with her heart youthful and happy as ever. Mr. Manning and Uncle Jabez were congratulating themselves on the fulfilment of their predictions of three years ago, as to the success of the preacher.

"I knowed," said Uncle Jabez, "that he had the right sort of grit in him by the way he shook hands the first time I saw him—as if he meant it, you know. Now some folk, you know, has no more soul in their shake-hands than if you were to shake a cod-fish by the tail."

Even Mrs. Marshall smoothed her austere front for the time, and admitted in confidence to Mrs. Manning that she had been mistaken about the preacher's wife, that she "wasn't a bit stuck up, for all she had been

to college. I'm afeard we won't see another like her," she added.

"Why, my gals," replied Mrs. Manning, "just dote on her. They think nobody can be like her. I wuz afeard at first she wuz a-goin' to spile 'em—lending 'em books, and showin' 'em how to trim their bonnets, and the likes. But I don't see but they make just as good butter as ever they did: an' if the preacher's wife hadn't got into their good graces that way, I don't believe they would have been brought into the church at the revival last winter."

To Lawrence's great surprise, besides a very handsome present from the members and friends of the Mechanics' Institute, a well-filled purse was given him in the name of the Circuit on the occasion of the farewell assembly. He was completely, he said, "taken aback." He stammered and stumbled in his speech, and never before made so miserable an attempt at an address; yet the most fluent eloquence would have touched the people less than his evident emotion as he strove to reply. When he recovered his voice and his composure, he exhorted his friends to receive his successor as kindly, and to work with him as harmoniously, as they had received and worked with him. "Don't tell him," he said, "either all the faults or all the virtues of his predecessor. If you tell him the first, he will think that you will say the same of him when he leaves; if you tell him the second, he will think that you mean to contrast him with his predecessor. No man can walk comfortably in another's shoes. 'Let him gang his ain gait.' Accept him as the messenger of God to you for good; and God bless you all, and bring us all to the great gathering-place, the Father's house, the home of the soul on high."

Sweet Carrie Mason was not forgotten on this occasion, and good Mother Lowry let fall a tear as she spoke to Edith of her winsome presence on their first meeting in that place. The village folk were deeply interested in the romance of Dr. Norton's marriage,

and were glad to learn from Edith that he and his bride would soon be back among them, but were sorry to hear that the probabilities were that he would make his future home in the fast growing city of Wentworth, where he would find an ampler field for his professional skill. By a curious coincidence Lawrence was also appointed to one of the churches of that city, which had already, to himself and his wife, so many interesting associations. Edith had many delightful letters from her old friend Nellie Norton, describing, with all the zest of a brilliant and sympathetic woman, her visit to London, the great heart of the world; to Paris, the beautiful; to Switzerland, the sublime; and to the stately splendour of Vienna and Berlin. She was looking forward with eager delight to renewing her intimate association with Edith in the same city where they had so singularly become acquainted a few years before. Her father was no longer foreman, but partner, in the firm with which he engaged after the loss of his property; but made no change in his intense devotion to business.

“How strangely God weaves the web of our lives!” wrote Nellie Norton in one of her letters. “Ofttimes so tangled seem the threads that we know not what the pattern will be like. But we see here only the wrong side of the web, and only part of that. When from the vantage ground of a higher life we shall see the whole pattern in its beauty and completeness, I believe that every seeming snarl and tangle in the skein of life will be found to have been essential to the perfect whole. God has frustrated some of my plans only to fulfil them more blessedly. Henceforth I can trust to the uttermost my unknown future with Him, Who has dealt so graciously and lovingly with my divinely guided past.”

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